

Council

27 January 2026



Reading
Borough Council
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Title	Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2026/27
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Executive Director / Statutory Officer commissioning report	Louise Duffield, Executive Director of Resources
Report author	Simon Hill, Acting Democratic Services Manager
Lead Councillor	Councillor Liz Terry
Corporate priority	Not applicable, but still requires a decision
Recommendations	1. A motion will be moved at the meeting to recommend the Councillors' Allowances scheme as set out in Appendix B.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report sets out a scheme of Councillors Allowances for 2026/27 as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel).
- 1.2. The Panel met on 19 November 2025 for their annual review of the scheme. No significant changes are recommended for the final year of the current four-year scheme which is in place until April 2027.
- 1.3. Appendix A sets out a report on the Panel's consideration of the Allowances Scheme and Appendix B sets out their recommendations.

2. Policy Context

- 2.1. The Panel reviews the Council's scheme for Councillors' Allowances and makes recommendations for a scheme to include:
 - The amount of Basic Allowance (BA) to be paid to all Councillors
 - The duties in respect of which Councillors should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), and the amount of such an allowance
 - Allowances for the care of children or dependents
- 2.2. The Panel was established to include at least three and no more than five independent members appointed to represent stakeholders of the Council. Its current membership is:
 - Mick Pollek – member with experience of the local trade union movement
 - Sally Swift - member with experience of the local media
 - Jeanette Skeats – member with experience of local politics

3. The Proposal

- 3.1. The recommendations of the Panel, set out in Appendix A, are reflected in the updated scheme at Appendix B.

- 3.2. The Panel considered that the Councillors' Allowances Scheme was still 'fit-for-purpose' and should continue for the final year of the current scheme. This would mean that the BA and SRAs continue to increase in line with the local government pay agreement.
- 3.3. The Panel noted that the 2025/26 Councillor allowances had been uplifted by the Local Government Services pay agreement and backdated to April 2025 in accordance with their previous recommendations.
- 3.4. Lady Audrey Durant, a member with experience of the local voluntary sector, stood down from the Panel during the year. It is planned to advertise for and recruit up to two new Remuneration Panel members to ensure a good range of stakeholder representation.

4. Contribution to Strategic Aims

- 4.1. The provision for the payment of allowances to Councillors gives local authorities the scope to set allowances schemes to suit local needs and to help ensure that Councillors are not financially disadvantaged in serving as elected Members.

5. Environmental and Climate Implications

- 5.1. There are no environmental or climate implications as a result of this report.

6. Community Engagement

- 6.1. Reading participates in the South East Employers annual survey of members' allowances which provides benchmarking data. The Panel was provided with the South-East Employers Members' Allowances Survey to allow a comparison of the level of allowances in Reading with other comparable authorities.

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1. Officers do not consider there to be any adverse implications.

8. Other Relevant Considerations

- 8.1. There are none.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1. The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities to set up and maintain an independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the authority concerning the allowances to be paid to councillors.
- 9.2. Any decision to amend, revoke or replace an allowances scheme will have to be taken by the Authority having regard to the recommendations of the Panel.
- 9.3. The Council may not delegate this function to a Committee or to an officer. The Council has to take all decisions relating to the adoption of its Scheme of Councillors' Allowances.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1. The 2025/26 budget for Members' Allowances is £709,400.
- 10.2. The Medium-Term Financial Strategy includes a provision for the base budget to be increased in line with the Local Government Services Pay Agreement. The budget will be adjusted accordingly based on any pay award agreed in 2026/27, subject to the number of councillors eligible for SRAs remaining similar to the current year.
- 10.3. The costs are reviewed annually as part of the Council's budget setting process.

11. Timetable for Implementation

- 11.1. Any changes to the Councillors' Allowances scheme would be effective from April 2026.

12. Background Papers

12.1. Council Report, 31/01/2023, [Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2023/24 – 2026/27](#).

12.2. Council Report, 28/01/2025, [Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2025/26](#).

Appendices

1. Appendix A – Report and Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel
2. Appendix B – Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2026/27