

**REPORT OF THE
INDEPENDENT
REMUNERATION PANEL**

**TO READING BOROUGH COUNCIL ON 25
JUNE 2019**

**ON AMENDMENTS TO THE
COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME**

Introduction

1. Councillors are entitled to receive allowances as set out in the councillors' allowances scheme. The Council's current scheme came into force on 1 April 2019, following consideration of the Independent Remuneration Panel's interim recommendations at the Council meeting held on 26 March 2019 (Minute 54 refers). The scheme is set out on the Council's website and detailed in the Minutes of the Council meeting where the scheme was agreed.
2. The Independent Remuneration Panel's report to Council on 26 March 2019 made it clear that the scheme being put to that meeting was an interim finding pending the completion of their more thorough review, which was still ongoing at the time of the Council meeting in March.

Legal framework

3. The recommendations set out in the report have been made in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2000, and The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
4. The Regulations state that councils have a duty to consider the findings of an independent remuneration panel before determining the councillors' allowances scheme. The regulations place a statutory obligation on the Council to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to look at councillors' allowances and report its views to the council. There is a statutory obligation for a panel of at least three members, none of whom is also a member of the council or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of the council, nor disqualified from being an elected member of the council (s.80 of the Local Government Act 1972, and s.79 of the Local Government Act 2000).
5. In addition to the regulations, the Government has issued guidance to councils on councillors' allowances. This guidance deals with the types of allowances which can be paid and what the allowances cover, the setting up, appointment and work of independent remuneration panels, and the making and publication of allowances schemes.

The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel

6. On 22 May 2019, Council re-appointed independent members to its Independent Remuneration Panel until May 2020. The current panel consists of four members:

Francis Connolly - member with experience of the local voluntary sector and local business

Lady Audrey Durant - member with experience of the local voluntary sector

Linda Fort - member with experience of the local media

Mick Pollek - member with experience of the local trade union movement

Methodology

7. During the Municipal Year 2018-19, the Panel met to review the councillors' allowances scheme. To assist in its deliberations the panel had regard to the following information:
 - the Local Government and Housing Act 1989
 - the Local Government Act 2000
 - the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (and subsequent amendment regulations)
 - Guidance on Members' Allowances for Local Authorities in England
 - Details of the Council's governance arrangements, which include the operation of a Committee system arrangements, which were agreed by Council in May 2013
 - Details of councillors' allowances paid by other councils, including geographical unitary neighbours in Berkshire and 'statistical' neighbours throughout England
 - Details of inflation rates and the staff pay increase.
8. All councillors were advised of the review of the scheme and were invited to submit their comments in writing via a questionnaire (Appendix A). Twenty three councillors responded. The panel also interviewed the Leader of the Council and the leaders of the Conservative and Green groups as well as the Lead Councillor for Children. This enabled the panel to gather information on councillors' roles on council business, views on the current scheme, comparisons with other authorities, the cost of the scheme to the council, and comments on what activities and roles warrant a special responsibility allowance.
9. The aim of the councillors' allowances scheme is to recognise the different roles and responsibilities to be undertaken by councillors within the Council's decision making structure. The allowances scheme should aim to compensate councillors fairly and equitably for their time and effort they need, or can be expected, to devote to their work as elected members of the council. Whilst the Panel recognises that some element of a councillor's time should be voluntary, this must be balanced against the need to ensure councillors do not suffer financial loss, that local people are encouraged to come forward as elected members, and that their service to the community is retained.
10. A common theme in the responses to the questionnaire was that although councillors were seldom put off by the level of allowances from becoming a councillor there was often a reluctance to take on more leading roles due to the time commitment this would entail. The time that lead councillors and other councillors had to commit when taking on additional responsibilities was regularly cited as limiting career prospects, which could create affordability issues and reduce the talent pool for the more senior councillor roles at the Council.

11. The current allowances scheme was introduced in April 2019 as an interim measure. The Panel recognise that the councillors' allowances scheme is now in urgent need of review and amendment, with the last adjustment to the scheme being made on 25 May 2010, where it was agreed to reduce Councillors' Special Responsibility Allowances by 10%. The scheme has remained unchanged since that decision to lower SRAs, including not making any inflation-related adjustments or up-rating in line with the national pay award for Council employees.
12. However, the issue of low allowances had persisted prior to 2010. Since the new governance arrangements set out in the Local Government Act 2000 came into effect in September 2001, members' allowances in Reading have remained pretty much static. This is especially true for those councillors in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances. The scheme agreed for 2002/03, gave the Leader a SRA of £6,721 and in the 17 years that have passed since then this figure has risen to just £7,004. Similarly the Deputy Leader and Lead Councillors' allowances have risen from £5,491 and £3,661 respectively in 2002/03 to £5,722 and £3,816 today.
13. The Panel has also compared the allowances of councillors at Reading with those of other similar councils in England, with a particular focus on the other unitary authorities in Berkshire, and concluded that Special Responsibility Allowances in Reading had fallen massively behind the other Berkshire councils due to years of being frozen and were now far too low for the level of responsibility attached to them.
14. By way of comparison in 2018/19, Leader's SRAs ranged from £18,300 in West Berkshire to £28,954 in Bracknell; Deputy Leader's SRAs ranged from £9,155 in West Berkshire to £17,372 in Bracknell; and Lead Councillors' SRA ranged from £9,155 in West Berkshire to £15,926 in Bracknell. The average SRA allowances received across the Berkshire authorities (excluding Reading) are £11,653 for a Lead Councillor role and £22,337 for the Leader.
15. These figures demonstrate that there is now a considerable discrepancy in the allowances scheme in relation to SRAs compared with the neighbouring Berkshire authorities. Therefore, this year provided a timely opportunity to review Reading's scheme to reflect the level of commitment and time required by particularly those councillors performing leadership roles, which attract SRAs.
16. There are other sources of information available on members' allowances, which include the Local Government Association; the Local Government Information Unit; and a recent independent report on Councillors' remuneration in London. These sources also demonstrate that Reading's SRAs are comparatively low, including with other unitary authorities of similar size and demographic.

17. The Panel also considered that introducing an index by which Members' Allowances are increased each year would be a positive development. A contributory factor to the comparatively low SRA level in Reading has been the fact that Councillors have to decide at full Council each year whether or not to award themselves an increase in allowances. These decisions were taken partly to demonstrate budgetary restraint in financially difficult times for Reading and local authorities generally, resulting in a reluctance to approve increases even in some circumstances where previous Remuneration Panels had recommended them. Introducing incremental increases would also guard against Reading's allowances scheme falling so far behind comparable local authorities in the future. The possibility of linking future increases to the national pay awards for staff would be in line with the practice in some other Berkshire authorities.

Basic allowance

18. The basic allowance is a flat rate allowance payable to each councillor to recognise their time and commitment to the Council. It covers all meetings of the authority, meetings with officers, meetings with electors/residents, political group meetings, and travel time to and from those meetings. It also covers incidental costs of a councillor using their home or working away from council premises, for example telephone, computer use, paper, and printing costs.

19. The Panel took account of the basic Councillor allowance in Reading being broadly comparable at £8,220 with other Berkshire authorities. The basic allowance in Reading was just over £700 above the lowest (West Berkshire) and just under £500 below the highest figure (Bracknell). The average basic allowance for Berkshire is £8,001, slightly below Reading's figure.

The 2018/19 comparative figures are set out below:

	Basic Allowance
Bracknell Forest Council	£8,687
Reading Borough Council	£8,220
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£8,143
Slough Borough Council	£7,626
West Berkshire Council	£7,546
Wokingham Borough Council	£7,784
Berkshire Average	£8,001

20. An assessment of the overall picture also shows that Reading has the lowest overall budget for Councillors Allowances and the lowest cost per councillor of the Berkshire Unitaries, which have provided data:

	No. of Councillors	Average cost per Councillor	Total Budget
Bracknell Forest Council	42	£13,683	£574,680
Reading Borough Council	46	£9,752	£448,597

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	57	-	-
Slough Borough Council	42	£11,276	£473,600
West Berkshire Council	52	£10,890	£566,290
Wokingham Borough Council	54	£11,273	£608,740

RECOMMENDATION

That the total sum provided for the payment of Basic Allowance to all councillors remain at £378,125; and the Basic Allowance paid to individual councillors remain the same at £8,220 a year, in recognition of the current amount being slightly above the Berkshire average. The allowance would be up-rated in line with the Local Government Pay Settlement in future years to prevent the current level of allowance slipping behind other Berkshire authorities over the duration of the scheme.

Special responsibility allowances

21. The councillors' allowances scheme can include the payment of special responsibility allowances to councillors who have significant responsibilities above basic allowance responsibilities. The Panel considered in detail which roles should receive a special responsibility allowance, basing its recommendations on the level of responsibility, and comparisons between different roles.

The Councillors currently in receipt of SRAs are as follows:

- The Leader and Deputy Leader;
- Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors and to the Leader of the main opposition Group;
- Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of Committees and the Leader of the other political groups; and
- Tier 3 to be paid to Vice-Chairs of Committees.

22. The comparative figures for 2018/19 are set out below:

	Leader's SRA	Deputy Leader's SRA	Lead Councillor's SRA
Bracknell Forest	£28,954	£17,372	£15,926
Reading	£7,004	£5,722	£3,816
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	£24,428	£13,434	£12,215
Slough Borough Council	£19,827	£13,878	£10,905
West Berkshire Council	£18,865	£11,319	£9,433
Wokingham Borough Council	£20,000	-	£10,000

23. The current scheme states that where a councillor is entitled to more than one special responsibility allowance, only the higher or highest allowance shall be paid. The Panel has retained this in the recommended scheme.

24. The Panel believes that the existing special responsibility allowances should be subject to a cost of living increase in future years and recommends an increase in line with the Local Government Pay Settlement. This should be applied to all special responsibility allowances.

25. The special responsibility allowance for the Leader of the Council is currently £7,004 per annum. The Panel compared this with other unitary authorities in Berkshire and statistical neighbours in particular and considers the current allowance to be too low. The Panel considers that this allowance should be increased significantly due to the high level of responsibility of this role. The Panel recommends an increase of 183 per cent, meaning the new allowance should be £19,846 per annum.

26. In addition to the Leader, there are nine Lead Councillors one of whom is also the Deputy Leader. The Deputy Leader and Lead Councillors are awarded a special responsibility allowance, which the Panel considers is also too low for the level of responsibility required to fulfil these roles. It is therefore recommended that the Deputy Leader and Lead Councillors should receive £12,000 and £10,799 respectively.

27. The Panel reviewed the special responsibility allowance for chairs of the various Committees. The Panel was particularly concerned at the allowances paid to the Chairs of the main regulatory committees, dealing with planning and licensing matters. Consequently, it is recommended that the Chairs of the Planning Applications Committee and Licensing Applications Committee should receive £6,076 to recognise the number of meetings and other responsibilities that needed to be carried out by these members.

28. The Panel also considered other Committee Chairs and believed that they should also receive an increase in allowance due to the level of responsibility of these roles and the relatively low amount in comparison to the other Berkshire unitary authorities and statistical neighbours. The Panel therefore recommended an increase in SRA to £3,039.
29. The Panel reviewed whether Vice-Chairs should receive a SRA for their roles. The Panel was of the view that the Vice-Chairs of Planning Applications and Licensing Applications Committees should receive these additional payments due to the heavy workload of these committees. In the case of Licensing Applications Committee, it was recommended that the Council should consider appointing two Vice-Chairs to this Committee as a means to spread the workload more widely due to the high number of Sub-Committees that needed to be populated by councillors drawn from the main Licensing Applications Committee. The Panel therefore recommended an increase in SRA to £3,039 for the Vice-Chairs of Planning Applications and Licensing Applications Committees.
30. The Panel agreed that the Council should continue to pay special responsibility allowances to opposition group leaders to recognise their additional responsibility and recommended continuing this practice on the basis of the Leader of the main opposition group receiving Tier 2 payment and other group leaders being in receipt of Tier 3.
31. In relation to other vice-chairs and councillors carrying out other activities and functions requiring the commitment of equivalent time and effort which could qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance, the Panel was content for the Council to decide which other councillors should qualify for an SRA. The Panel created a fourth tier of SRA at £1,074 to be payable to the Independent Person, which would be largely consistent with the other Berkshire authorities, and also allow the Council to identify any other councillors that it considers should receive it.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That the Special Responsibility Allowances payments be amended to the amounts set out, as follows:
- (a) the amount paid to the Leader to be £19,846 (an increase of £12,842);
 - (b) the amount paid to the Deputy Leader to be £12,000 (an increase of £6,278);
 - (c) the amount paid to SRA Tier 1 to be £10,799 (an increase of £6,983 per Lead Councillor);
 - (d) the amount paid to SRA Tier 2 to be £6,076;
 - (e) the amount paid to SRA Tier 3 to be £3,039;

(f) the amount paid to SRA Tier 4 to be £1,074.

No councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance;

(2) That the existing categorisation of tiers should be amended, as follows:

- Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors;
- Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of the Planning Applications and Licensing Applications Committees and the Leader of the main opposition group;
- Tier 3 to be paid to the Chairs of the Committees, Vice-Chairs of Planning and Licensing Applications Committees and Leaders of the other political groups;
- Tier 4 (NEW) other councillors carrying out other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require the commitment of equivalent time and effort as for other categories of activity which would qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance under Paragraph 5(1)(i) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and to the independent person appointed in accordance with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to carry out the functions specified in that Act in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct and Local Standards Committee.

Travel and subsistence allowances

32. Travel and subsistence allowances are intended to reimburse councillors for expenditure incurred when undertaking the approved duties. The Panel considers that the Council should continue to pay these allowances at the same level as paid to officers.

33. The Panel received a representation from a councillor suggesting that Councillors could be offered parking permits for any parking zones in the ward for which they had been elected. This was particularly relevant where the Councillor did not live in the Ward which he or she represented. The Panel decided to include this suggestion in its recommendations as a low cost solution to assist councillors' ward presence, whilst accepting that other forms of transport to the private car would be preferable where they were a viable alternative.

RECOMMENDATION

(1) That the level of travel allowances be set as the same as officers receive, as follows:

- Travel by councillor's own motor vehicle - 45 pence per mile
- Travel by councillor's own bicycle - 37 pence per mile
- Travel by councillor's own motorcycle - 40.9 pence per mile
- Bus travel - cost of the ordinary fare, cheap fare or portion of any weekly ticket;

- (2) That Councillors be offered parking permits for any parking zones in the ward for which they had been elected;
- (3) That, subject to (4) below, the level of subsistence allowances, with the exception of overnight subsistence, remain the same as officers receive. The allowances are currently:
- **Subsistence**
 - Breakfast allowance £8.26
 - Lunch allowance £11.41
 - Tea allowance £4.52
 - Evening meal allowance £14.13
 - Overnight subsistence £82.21 a day outside London
£93.77 a day in London or at LGA Annual Conferences
- (4) That the subsistence limits referred to in (3) above be exceeded in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, e.g. to enable a Councillor and an officer attending a conference to stay at the same accommodation, subject to there being sufficient budget provision.

Childcare allowance and dependant carer's allowance

34. The childcare allowance and dependants' carers' allowance are payable to councillors who incur expenditure on the care of their children or dependant relatives whilst the councillor is undertaking approved duties, which are set out in Appendix C. The panel recognises that it is important to offer these allowances to councillors so they are not discouraged from carrying out council work by their personal responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the 2019-20 arrangements for the payment of Dependant Carers' Allowance be raised by a cost of living increase of 2.8%, paid in line with the 'real' living wage, as follows:

- (a) Up to £9 per hour for childcare for up to 15 hours a week
- (b) Up to £9 per hour towards the cost of a care attendant for an elderly or disabled relative (including a disabled child) for up to 15 hours a week

The person providing the care may not be a close relative defined as spouse, partner (opposite or same sex cohabitantes), parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren. The paid care attendant must sign a receipt to show that they have cared for the dependant during the hours claimed for.

Annual adjustments and amendments

35. The allowances payable under the scheme are normally adjusted at the beginning of each financial year. The panel considers that these allowances should increase in line with the Local Government Pay Settlement for the subsequent three years. This would act to prevent councillors' allowances in Reading falling behind other comparable authorities in the future.

RECOMMENDATION

That the basic allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances set out in the Councillors' Allowances scheme be increased at the beginning of each new financial year from April 2020 in accordance with the Local Government Pay Settlement for the remaining period of the scheme (ie the subsequent three years until 2022).

Conclusions and Recommendations

36. The Panel found that Special Responsibility Allowances in Reading had fallen far behind those paid to councillors in the other Berkshire unitary authorities and its comparable group 'statistical neighbours'. The Panel does not believe that Reading's councillors are worth less than their counterparts in other parts of the county. The Panel was of the view that it was time to redress historic political decisions taken by different parties over the years, which have meant that Reading's councillors are now effectively valued less. An increase of 183 per cent to the Council leader's Special Responsibility Allowance may appear excessive as a headline figure, but in reality will only bring the rate up to the Berkshire average and that is what the Panel is recommending for this demanding and important role.
37. The Basic Allowance in Reading has kept up with neighbouring and similar unitary authorities and so the Panel has not recommended an increase this year, but does recommend annual rises thereafter in accordance with the Local Government Pay Settlement.
38. The Panel recommends that the Councillors' Allowances scheme, attached as Appendix B, updates and amends the interim scheme adopted from 1 April 2019. Although, the updated scheme has a significant budgetary impact, the Panel would urge the Council to increase the allowances in their entirety in 2019/20 to address the disparity in allowances in Reading compared with other similar authorities and to avoid the allowances in Reading falling behind the Berkshire average again over the period of the scheme. The Panel felt that it is a matter for the Council to decide whether to introduce any increases from the beginning of the year or part way through, such as from 1 October 2019, in order to mitigate the cost of the scheme in the first year.

COUNCILLOR SURVEY 2018/19

Name:

Q. Are you:

Employed full time	
Employed part time	
Unemployed	
Self-employed	
Retired	

Q. Please indicate the number of hours you spend on average each month on your duties as a Councillor:

	No time	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 hours or more
Ward work (surgeries, visits, emails, phone calls etc.)					
Preparation/attendance at council/committee meetings					
Preparation/attendance at other RBC meetings					
Preparation/attendance at other meetings (outside bodies etc.)					

Q. Please tell us about any other RBC related duties you undertake (including an estimate of the time spent on them in an average month) or any further information on the above:

Q. If you are employed, does your employer provide any paid or unpaid leave to enable you to undertake your duties as a Councillor? If so, please provide details:

Q. Do you feel the current Councillors' allowances scheme adequately covers the expenses you incur as a Councillor?

Yes	
No	

Please provide any further information:

Q. Do you receive a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)?

Yes	
No	

Q. For which role(s) do you receive a Special Responsibility Allowance?

Q. Please indicate the number of hours you spend on average each month on your SRA role:

	No time	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 hours or more
Attending RBC meetings					
Attending external meetings					
Meeting external stakeholders/partners					
Preparations/research					

Other, please specify:

Q. Do you consider the level of your SRA payment to be appropriate for the role?

Yes	
No	

Please provide any further information:

Q. Please provide details of training you have attended which enables you to carry out your role as a Councillor:

Q. Would you support Councillors' allowances being increased in line with local government pay awards?

Yes	
No	

Please provide any further information:

Q. Was the level of remuneration a consideration when you first decided to become a Councillor?

Q. Would the present level of remuneration discourage you from standing at the next election?

Q. Please provide any comments on the Councillors' allowances scheme, such as the level of basic allowances, the level of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), the level of expenses that can be claimed (such as childcare and travel):

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please return completed forms to Committee Services.

RECOMMENDATION

That, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Councillors' Allowances scheme 2019/20-2020/23, Council be recommended to amend the interim scheme adopted from 1 April 2019, in accordance with the provision set out in Regulation 10(3), as follows:

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL**AMENDED SCHEME FOR COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES - 2019/20**

- (1) That, for 2019-20, the total sum for the payment of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to councillors be set at £550,000;
- (2) That, within this total sum, the provision for the payment of Basic Allowance to all councillors remain at £378,125; and the Basic Allowance paid to individual councillors remain the same at £8,220 a year;
- (3) That the Special Responsibility Allowances payments be amended to the amounts set out, as follows:
 - (a) the amount paid to the Leader to be £19,846;
 - (b) the amount paid to the Deputy Leader to be £12,000;
 - (c) the amount paid to SRA Tier 1 to be £10,799;
 - (d) the amount paid to SRA Tier 2 to be £6,076;
 - (e) the amount paid to SRA Tier 3 to be £3,039;
 - (f) the amount paid to SRA Tier 4 to be £1,074.
 No councillor shall receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance;
- (4) That the existing categorisation of tiers should be amended along with the introduction of a fourth tier, as follows:
 - Tier 1 to be paid to the Lead Councillors;
 - Tier 2 to be paid to the Chairs of Planning Applications and Licensing Applications Committees and to the Leader of the main opposition group;
 - Tier 3 to be paid to the Chairs of Committees, Vice-Chairs of Planning and Licensing Applications Committees and Group Leaders of the other political groups;
 - Tier 4 to be paid to councillors carrying out such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require the commitment of equivalent time and effort as for other categories of activity which would qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance under Paragraph 5(1)(i) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and to the independent person appointed in accordance with Section 28 of the Localism Act 2011 to carry out the functions specified in

that Act in relation to the Members' Code of Conduct and Local Standards Committee;

- (5) That the 2019-20 arrangements for the payment of Dependant Carers' Allowance be raised by a cost of living increase of 2.8%, paid in line with the real living wage, as follows:
- (a) Up to £9 per hour for childcare for up to 15 hours a week
 - (b) Up to £9 per hour towards the cost of a care attendant for an elderly or disabled relative (including a disabled child) for up to 15 hours a week

The person providing the care may not be a close relative defined as spouse, partner (opposite or same sex cohabiters), parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents and grandchildren. The paid care attendant must sign a receipt to show that they have cared for the dependent during the hours claimed for;

- (6) That, subject to (8) below, the level of subsistence allowances, with the exception of overnight subsistence, remain the same as officers receive. The allowances are currently:
- Subsistence
 - o Breakfast allowance £8.26
 - o Lunch allowance £11.41
 - o Tea allowance £4.52
 - o Evening meal allowance £14.13
 - o Overnight subsistence £82.21 a day outside London
£93.77 a day in London or at LGA Annual Conferences
- (7) That the level of travel allowances be set as the same as officers receive, as follows:
- Travel by councillor's own motor vehicle - 45 pence per mile
 - Travel by councillor's own bicycle - 37 pence per mile
 - Travel by councillor's own motorcycle - 40.9 pence per mile
 - Bus travel - cost of the ordinary fare, cheap fare or portion of any weekly ticket;
- (8) That the subsistence limits referred to in (6) above be exceeded in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Monitoring Officer, e.g. to enable a Councillor and an officer attending a conference to stay at the same accommodation, subject to there being sufficient budget provision;
- (9) That provision for Co-optees' Allowances are payable solely to non-councillor members of the Standards Committee attending meetings of the Committee or any Sub-Committee set up by the Committee as part of

its process of assessing, investigating and hearing complaints about Councillors; the allowances to be paid at the daily rate equivalent of the Councillors' Basic Allowance; the Monitoring Officer to be authorised to settle the rate to be paid on each occasion;

- (10) That the salary sacrifice schemes available to Council staff also be made available to Councillors;
- (11) That Councillors be offered parking permits for any parking zones in the ward for which they had been elected;
- (12) That, in view of the exceptional frequency and length of meetings, two vice-chairs be appointed to the Licensing Applications Committee;
- (13) That the Council be urged to increase the allowances in their entirety in 2019/20 to avoid the allowances in Reading falling behind the Berkshire average again over the period of the scheme;
- (14) That the basic allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances set out above be increased at the beginning of each new financial year in accordance with the Local Government Pay Settlement for the period of the scheme (ie the subsequent three years to 1 April 2022).

Approved Duties are defined as:

- a meeting of the executive
- a meeting of a committee of the executive
- a meeting of the authority
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the authority
- a meeting of some other body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
- a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of a body to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
- a meeting which has both been authorised by the authority, a committee, or sub-committee of the authority or a joint committee of the authority and one or more authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the authority is not divided into political groups)
- a meeting of a local authority association of which the authority is a member
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- duties undertaken on behalf of the authority in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996
- any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.