

**A REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES
FOR
GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**A REPORT BY THE
INDEPENDENT MEMBERS' REMUNERATION PANEL
JULY 2022**

Terms of Reference for the Panel	
1.0	To review the current Members' Allowances scheme, which was introduced in July 2002 and last reviewed in 2020.
2.0	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide for independent remuneration panels to have the primary functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make recommendations to the authority as to the amount of basic allowances which should be payable to elected Members • To make recommendations to the authority about the roles and responsibilities for which a special allowance should be payable and as to the amount of each such allowance. • To make recommendations as to whether the authority's allowance scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependents and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined.
2.1	The Panel has produced its report in accordance with the Regulations above and in paragraph 11 sets out its recommendations.
2.2	In line with the current scheme, no more than 50% of members of Gosport Borough Council are to receive Special Responsibility Allowances at any one time.
2.3	No member should be entitled to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.
2.4	The Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowance should be subject to an annual adjustment equal to the percentage in pay increase received by Gosport Borough Council staff and implemented in April each year.
2.5	Travel allowance should only be paid for travel outside of the Borough on approved duties at 40.9 pence per mile.
3.0	The Panel comprised of: Ian Reeves – Chair of Gosport Voluntary Action Kirstie Andrew-Power GFMAT Jon Bland – Managing Director Tecsew
3.1	The Panel met 4 times between May and July 2022 in private. The three Group leaders were invited to interview.
3.2	The Panel was provided with a copy of the current scheme of Member Allowances and documents detailing the new composition of the Council as well as information regarding current minimum/living wage figures
4.0	Benchmark Remunerated days

	The last Independent members Remuneration Panel indicated that Councillors worked 87.25 days a year on Council related work. The panel recommends that this should stay the same, but should be part of the next review to ascertain what changes to workload if any the increase in Ward size has created
5.0	The Voluntary Principle- or Public Service Ethos
	The panel agreed that the Voluntary principle, the notion that an important part of being a Councillor is the desire to serve the public and therefore not all of what a Councillor does should be remunerated, should be retained in the members Allowance Scheme. The panel felt that Members supported this discount and that the current level of 40% was still sufficient.
6.0	Expenses
6.1	The Panel reviewed the recommendations from previous panels regarding business expenses and saw no basis for change.
6.2	The Panel also felt that despite so much Council business now being carried out virtually the figure of £25 towards broadband costs should stay the same.
6.3	The Panel recommends that Travel Allowance should only be reimbursed for travel outside of the Borough for approved duties and should be reimbursed at the same rate as paid to Council Officers per mile
7.0	Index Linking
7.1	Currently any increase allowances are linked to any percentage increase in the pay of Gosport Borough Council staff. The Panel saw no reason to change this.
7.2	The Panel recommends that the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances be linked to any percentage increase in the pay of Gosport Borough Council staff.
8.0	Co-optees Allowance
	The current scheme does not include provision for payment of a Co-Optees Allowance and the Panel did not consider that this should change.
9.0	Suspension
9.1	The Panel agreed that where a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended, any allowance payable in respect of the period of suspension or partial suspension should be withheld.
9.2	The Panel recommends that where a Councillor is suspended or partially suspended, the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowance and Travel Allowance payable in respect of the period of suspension or partial suspension should be withheld.
10.0	Pension
	The Panel recognised that they would not need to determine Members pension entitlements as the LGPS Scheme for Councillors had been updated and superseded this requirement.

11.0	Summary of Recommendations				
11.1	The following is a summary of the recommendations made by the Independent Members' Remuneration Panel established by the Borough Council to review the current Members' Allowances scheme, which was introduced in July 2002 and last reviewed in 2015.				
11.2	Table: Summary of Recommendations				
Post		Number	Basic Allowance	Special Responsibility Allowance	Total Allowance Per Member
1	Basic Allowance All Councillors	28*	£7,068	NIL	£7,068
2	Leader of the Council **	1	£7,068	£15,112.45	£22,180.45
3	Chair of Housing, Community & Environment and Regulatory Boards	3	£7,068	£4,840.03	£11,908.03
4	Chair of Standards & Audit Sub Board	1	£7,068	£2,420	£9,488
5	Vice Chair of Policy & Organisation Board	1	£7,068	£2,420	£9,488
6	Vice Chair of Housing, Community & Environment and Regulatory Boards	3			
7	Opposition Group Leader Based on 10 members	1	£7,068	£5,397.67	£12,465.67
7	Opposition Group Leader Based on 2 members	1	£7,068	£1,079.54	£8,147.54
8	Childcare and Dependent Carers' Allowances budget provision				£2,500
8	Loss of Income provision				£2,500
TOTAL BUDGET REQUIRED					£243,853.75
* Total number of Councillors					
** The Leader of the Council chairs the Policy & Organisation Board for which the post receives the Leaders allowance only.					

11.3 Recommendation 1 Basic Allowance

11.3.1 The Panel reviewed the calculations and formulae regarding the daily remuneration rate and number of days.

11.3.2 The Panel wanted to reflect the possibility of an increase in workload brought about by the decrease in the numbers of Councillors.

11.3.3 The panel recommends an increase of £250 (3.6%) bringing the Basic Allowance to £7,068

11.4 Recommendation 2 The Leader of the Council's Allowance

11.4.1 The Panel believe that the Leader of the Council is responsible for setting standards of performance and engagement for his own party and the whole of the Council, and should ensure that all new Councillors receive a full and comprehensive induction programme, be assigned a mentor and that ongoing training is encouraged and monitored by means of annual return.

11.4.2 The Panel decided not to increase the allowance for the Leader of the Council

11.5 Recommendation 3 Chair of Housing, Community & Environment and Regulatory Board

The Panel decided not to increase the allowance for Board Chair.

11.6 Recommendation 4 Chair of Standards & Audit Sub Board

The Panel wished to award the Chair of the Standards & Audit Sub Board an allowance of 50% of that of the other Boards

11.7 Recommendation 5 Vice Chair of Policy & Organisation Board

The Panel were advised of the increase in reports going to the Policy & Organisation Board following the removal of the Economic Development Board, and the move of policy business from the Housing and Community & Environment Board to the Policy & Organisation. They wished to recognise the increase in workload those changes might put on the Vice Chair and recommend an allowance of 50% of that of the other Board Chair.

11.8 Recommendation 6 Vice Chair of Housing, Community & Environment and Regulatory Board

11.8.1 The Panel wanted to recognise the potential work required in the absence of the Chair on these Boards.

11.8.2 The Panel recommends a substitution payment of payment of £476 per meeting. This would apply in circumstances where the Vice Chair has to step in for a Board Chair and presides over the whole meeting up to a limit of 3 per municipal year.

11.9 Recommendation 7 Opposition Group Leaders

11.9.1 The Panel believe that the Opposition Group Leaders share responsibility with the Leader of the Council for ensuring that members are trained, developed and supported throughout their tenure. With no mechanism for monitoring of performance, it was down to the Group Leaders to identify training needs and ensure everything possible is done to maintain development and standards in

performance, participation and behaviour. Being able to show that this support exists would aid recruitment and retention.

11.9.2 The Panel reviewed the calculations currently in use to determine the Opposition Party Group Leaders Allowance and saw no reason to amend it. Therefore the allowance will be based on the number of opposition Councillors as a percentage of the total number of Councillors on the Council.

11.10 Recommendation 8 Childcare and Dependent Carers' Allowances budget provision and Loss of Income provision

11.10.1 The Panel felt that they were limited in what they could change or introduce to help Group Leaders make their recruiting more diverse, especially in terms of age and economic diversity, but wanted to address some of the barriers for recruitment of family or working candidates, and provide some tools to help candidates overcome them.

11.10.2 The Panel recommends Child Care and Dependent Carers' Allowances be paid at the hourly rate for the National Living Wage for attendance at formally approved meetings only (not constituency work). The number of hours to be paid per week is the lower of the total time spent at no more than 2 meetings in that week or 8 hours subject to a maximum Allowance of £2,500 per year.

11.10.3 The Panel recommends 50% of total salary to provide loss of income allowance up to a maximum of £2,500.

11.11 Recommendation 9 Amendments to Scheme

11.11.1 Allowances are paid in respect of the Scheme in operation on 1 April each year. Where amendments are made to the scheme after that date then the Scheme can only make provision for that amendment to apply from the beginning of the year i.e. 1 April. This is in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

11.11.2 Due to the changes in numbers of Council Members, and the subsequent reorganisation of the Boards, the Panel recommends that any amendments shall apply with effect from the date of the Council meeting and not be backdated on this occasion.

12.0 Future Independent Members Remuneration Panel

12.1 The term of office for a Panel is currently 4 years. The next panel will be due in 2026.

12.2 The current panel was convened to address changes in Councillor numbers and ward size following the changes made in May 2022.

12.3 The Panel should be given the authority to reconvene in the case of an Election or any significant change to the number of members or configuration of Boards and Committees, to consider the implications to the Scheme.