

A Review of Members' Allowances

For

Rushmoor Borough Council

**The Seventh Report by the Independent
Remuneration Panel**

**Owen Durrett
Dr Declan Hall (Chair)
Darren Nicholl**

January 2022

Executive Summary: Recommendations 2022/23

Rushmoor BC Review 2021	Basic Allowance and SRAs: Recommended Maximum Payable 2022/23			
POSITION	Nos. Paid	Basic Allowance	Total P/Member (BA+SRA)	Sub Total Per Category
BASIC ALLOWANCE	39	£6,200	£6,200	£241,800
Special Responsibility Allowances		SRAs 2022/23		
Leader of Council	1	£17,200	£23,400	£17,200
Deputy Leader of Council	1	£9,900	£16,100	£9,900
Cabinet Members	5	£8,550	£14,750	£42,750
Chairman Development Management Committee	1	£5,800	£12,000	£5,800
Chairman Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee	1	£5,800	£12,000	£5,800
Chairman Overview & Scrutiny	1	£4,300	£10,500	£4,300
Vice-Chairmen Overview & Scrutiny	2	£1,300	£7,500	£2,600
Chairman Policy & Project Advisory Board	1	£4,300	£10,500	£4,300
Vice-Chairmen Policy & Project Advisory Board	2	£1,300	£7,500	£2,600
Cabinet Champions	3	£1,750	£7,950	£5,250
Chairman of Council (Mayor)	1	£1,650	£7,850	£1,650
Main Opposition Group Leader	1	£3,500	£9,700	£3,500
Other Opposition Group Leader[s] If have >3 Members	0	£3,500	NA	
Licensing Members serving > 4 Sub-Committees per year	Variable	£500	NA	Variable
Sub Total - Basic Allowance	39			£241,800
Sub Total - Standing SRAs	20			£105,650
Total (BA + SRAs)				£347,450

Other Recommendations: The IRP also recommends that:

The Information & Telecommunications Allowance

The IRP recommends that the current Information Technology & Telecommunications (ITT) Allowance of £392 is discontinued from start of 2022/23 municipal year.

Other SRAs considered – Group Secretaries/Whips

The Group Secretaries/Whips are not paid an SRA.

Other SRAs considered – Other Committee Vice-Chairmen

The Vice-Chairmen of other Committees/Boards are not paid an SRA.

Maintaining the 1-SRA only rule

The Council maintains the 1-SRA only rule within the Rushmoor Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme so that a Member cannot receive more than one SRA.

Co-optees' Allowances

The Co-optees Allowance is reset at £550 for 2022/23.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances

The conditions and maximum rates under the Travel and Subsistence Allowances are maintained for 2022/23 with the exception of adding a clarification to the scheme by including travel by hybrid/electric vehicles at mileage rates equal to those set by HMRC AMAP rates.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

The DCA is maintained at the current rates and terms and conditions.

Issues arising – Adopting a Parental Leave Policy

The allowances scheme is amended to include a statement that clarifies the continued right of remuneration for a Member when they are required to take maternity, paternity or adoption leave for up to a period of 12 months, subject to the legal attendance requirements.

Confirmation of Indexing

The following allowances are indexed for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26, on the grounds that the Basic Allowance has been reset for 2022/23 and the SRAs pre-emptively indexed for the same year, without reference to the IRP as follows:

- **Basic Allowance, SRAs and Co-optees' Allowances:**
 - Updated annually in line with the annual percentage pay increase given to Rushmoor Borough Council employees (and rounded to the nearest £) as agreed for each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff.

- **Out of Council Area Mileage Allowance:**
 - Indexed to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) mileage rates.

- **Out of Council Area Other Travel and Subsistence:**
 - Reimbursement of actual costs taking into account the most cost effective means of transport and/or accommodation available and the convenience of use with the maximum rates indexed to the same periodic percentage increase that may be applied to Officer Travel and Subsistence Allowances.

- **Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA):**
 - The maximum hourly rates to be indexed to the government's national living wage applicable to the age of the carer (childcare) and Hampshire County Council's hourly rate for a Home Care Assistance (care of other dependants).

Implementation

The new scheme of allowances based on the recommendations contained in this report is adopted from the date of the Annual Meeting on 24th May 2022 except for the implementation of indexation which should be from the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council 2023.

Independent Remuneration Panel:
The Seventh Report of Members' Allowances
For
Rushmoor Borough Council
January 2022

Introduction: The Regulatory Context

1. This report contains the recommendations arising out of the independent review, October/November 2021, of Members' Allowances for Rushmoor Borough Council by the Council's statutory Independent Remuneration Panel ('IRP' or 'Panel'). It also lays out the deliberations of the IRP to show elected Members, Officers and the public the rationale for the Panel's recommendations.
2. The Panel was convened under The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) (the 2003 Regulations). These regulations, arising out of the relevant provisions in the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to maintain an independent remuneration panel to review and provide advice on the Council's Members Allowances. This is in the context whereby the Council retains powers to determine the scope and levels of Members' Allowances.
3. All Councils are required to convene their IRP and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their Members' Allowances Scheme. They must 'pay regard' to their IRP's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme. On this particular occasion, the IRP has been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations [10. (5)], which states:

Where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the independent remuneration panel established in respect of that authority on the application of an index to its scheme.

4. It is this mechanism, known as the '4 year rule', that ensures IRPs are convened at least every four years if a council wishes to continue indexing their allowances. It

also provides an opportunity for IRPs to publicly scrutinise their councils' allowances schemes and enhance public accountability.

5. This mechanism is the means by which all councils are required to reconvene their Panel thus ensuring a degree of public scrutiny and accountability vis-à-vis their Members' Allowances schemes. It is under this requirement that the Panel has undertaken this review of members' allowances for Rushmoor Borough Council.

Terms of Reference

6. In accordance with the requirements of 2003 Members' Allowances Regulations Rushmoor Borough Council has reconvened its statutory Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to review the Council Members' Allowances Scheme. Specifically the Panel has been asked to make recommendations to the Council on the following:

- a) The amount of the Basic Allowance that should be payable to elected Members;
- b) The responsibilities or duties for which should lead to the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and as to the amount of such an allowance;
- c) The responsibilities or duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowances can be paid and as to the amount of such allowances;
- d) whether a Co-optees' Allowance should be paid and as to the amount of such an allowance;
- e) Whether Dependants' Carers' Allowance should be payable to elected Members, and as to the amount of such an allowance;
- f) Whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with regulation 10(6);
- g) Whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed;

7. In addition the IRP has been asked to consider a number of Rushmoor Borough Council Specific requirements, namely:

- a) To consider the level of allowances within the Scheme in the context of:

- The Council’s medium term financial strategy and budgetary issues (e.g., Cost Reduction and Efficiencies Programme (CREP))
 - The changing environment for local authorities
 - The Council’s Business Plan
- b) To review the scope and structure of special responsibility allowances particularly in light of the recommendations in the 2018 Report.
- c) To benchmark the existing allowances scheme including special responsibility allowances.
- d) To review the allowance provision for IT and telecommunications and to consider the implications for the Members’ Allowances scheme if the Council introduces an arrangement to provide Members with IT equipment.
- e) To consider any implications for the Members’ Allowances scheme of the evolving responsibilities of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, particularly in light of the recent review and the request made by the Committee.

The IRP

8. Rushmoor Borough Council reconvened its IRP and the following Members were appointed to carry out the independent review of allowances, namely:
- Owen Durrett: Formerly Head of IT, BT International Global Division and a JP, currently Chair of Parity for Disability, a local charity.
 - Dr Declan Hall (Chair): A former academic at the Institute of Local Government, The University of Birmingham, now an independent consultant specialising in Members’ Allowances and support with experience of reviews across the United Kingdom
 - Darren Nicholl: Warrant Officer, 1st Class (Payments) at Aldershot Garrison
9. Logistical and practical support to the Panel was provided by Jill Shuttleworth, Service Manager – Democracy at Rushmoor Borough Council.

Process and Methodology - Evidence Reviewed by the IRP

10. The IRP met at the Council Offices, Farnborough on 13th and 14th October 2021. The meetings were in private session to enable the IRP to meet with Members and

Officers and conduct deliberations in confidence. In accordance with the terms of reference, in arriving at its recommendations, the IRP took into account a wide range of evidence, both oral and written. All Members who wished to meet with the IRP were accommodated as far as practically possible. In addition all Members were sent a short questionnaire so that no Member was denied a voice in the course of review. The IRP received five written responses. The questionnaire was also used as the template for Member interviews to ensure a common set of questions were being asked.

11. The IRP met with relevant Officers for factual briefings on the Council, governance structures and challenges facing the Council.
12. The IRP also reviewed relevant written information, such as council and committee meetings schedules, relevant reports and information on the new governance arrangements, the 2006 Statutory Guidance on Members' Allowances, etc.
13. For full details of whom the IRP met and full range of information reviewed see:
 - Appendix 1: for Members who met with the IRP
 - Appendix 2: for Officers who provided factual briefings to the IRP
 - Appendix 3: for a list of the full range of evidence considered by the IRP
 - Appendix 3: for more details on the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances (2020/21) paid in the 11 Hampshire District Councils and the three District Councils adjacent to Rushmoor BC referred to by the IRP for benchmarking purposes, referred to as the benchmarking group.¹

Key Messages and Observations – Case for change - limited

14. By and large the IRP did not receive a great deal of feedback that the allowances scheme was in need of fundamental reform. The broad view was that the recommendations of the IRP regarding the new roles at the time of the 2018 review were appropriate. Where there was a distinctive view, albeit not overwhelming, was regarding the Basic Allowance and also the Leader's SRA. In general, these two allowances were seen as being on the low side and not reflective of the demands placed on them. The IRP also received the message that even where there was a case for change now was not the time to do so due to the budgetary constraints facing the Council, and the need to find savings going forward.

¹ The IRP has maintained its benchmarking group consisting of the 11 Hampshire District Councils and three District Councils adjacent to Rushmoor BC as the most relevant comparator group or peer councils. The South East Employers annual survey of allowances was not utilised for this review, partly due to the unreliability of some of the data, which in turn arises out of the survey being filled in by the districts with no cross referencing for veracity.

15. The IRP has not completely accepted this argument. To do so would automatically lead to recommending lower allowances which would undermine the whole purpose of a Members' Allowances scheme, which is to support the roles that all elected Members are required to undertake.

Questioning the roles in place

16. The IRP did receive a number of comments that questioned the necessity of certain posts and therefore their respective remuneration. It is beyond the remit of the IRP to comment on how the Council has set up its political governance structures. All it can do is make recommendations regarding the posts that are in place.

Parity with peers

17. Another key theme emerging from the representations received was the allowances paid in Rushmoor Borough Council should be on a par with those paid in peer councils. It is noted that benchmarking shows the only noticeable area where Rushmoor Borough Council is paying less than peers is in regards to the Basic Allowance; generally this is not the case regarding SRAs. As such, this has led the IRP to concentrate on revising the Basic Allowance with only marginal changes in the levels and scope of SRAs payable.
18. Nonetheless, despite the recommendations leading to an increase on the total spend on Members' Allowances, the IRP feels that it is justifiable, defensible and fair and equitable which in turn was another key message emerging from the representations received.
19. As such the main task of the IRP has been not to fundamentally restructure the allowances scheme but to address anomalies.

Recommendations – recalibrating the Basic Allowance

20. To test the robustness of the 2021/22 Basic Allowance (£5,425) the IRP has recalibrated the Basic Allowance by replicating the original methodology that forms the basis of the current Basic Allowance. This methodology is laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 67) which states:

Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which, councillors ought to be remunerated.

21. The Statutory Guidance (paragraphs 68-69) expands on the above statement by breaking it down to three variables for Panels to consider in arriving at a recommended Basic Allowance, namely time, an element of public service to be recognised in the Basic Allowance and a rate of remuneration. The IRP has

recalibrated the Basic Allowance by bringing the three operative variables up to date as set out below.

Time required in carrying out duties associated with the Basic Allowance

22. The Basic Allowance is primarily a time-based payment (see 2006 Statutory Guidance paragraph 10). Obviously Members work in different ways and have varying commitments and the time spent on council duties varies. Yet, the Basic Allowance is a flat rate allowance that must be paid equally to all Members in the first instance so the time assessment is typically taken that which is deemed necessary at a minimum to carry out all those duties for which the Basic Allowance is paid, including preparing for and attending meetings of the Council and its committees/panels (formal and informal), addressing constituents' concerns, representing and engaging with local communities, external appointments and other associated work including telephone calls, emails and meetings with Officers.
23. In the last review (June 2018) for the purposes of recalibrating the Basic Allowance in line with the 2006 Statutory Guidance the IRP adopted 12.5 hours per week, or 650 hours per year, as the expected time input from Members in return for the Basic Allowance. The LGA 2018 Councillor Census shows that on average Members of district councils who hold no positions of responsibility put in 14.3 hours per week on "Council business". The IRP has decided to maintain the expected time input at 12.5 hours per week as the Councillors Census figure of 14.3 would be bumped up by those individuals who choose to put in more time than was necessarily required. Thus, this average figure is inflated by those who have the capacity and wherewithal to put in more time than demanded.
24. Thus, for the purposes of recalibrating the Basic Allowance the IRP has maintained the time assessment of 12.5 hours per week as the required minimum input per week on average for a Member to fulfil all duties associated with the Basic Allowance. This equates to 650 hours per year.

The Public Service Discount (PSD)

25. The 2006 Statutory Guidance advises that not all the time expected from Members should be remunerated to recognise there is a public service element to being an elected Member. To recognise the public service principle an element should be unpaid, known as the Public Service Discount (PSD). The normal range for this public service discount is between 35% - 40%, largely on the basis this is broadly in line with the proportion of time backbenchers spend dealing with constituents and ward issues and local and community matters. The historical PSD that has been applied in Rushmoor Borough Council is 40%. The IRP received no evidence to revise this historical figure.

26. Thus, of the expected time input of 650 hours per year 40% of that time, or 260 hours per year, are deemed to be public service and not paid, leaving 390 remunerated hours per year.

The rate for remuneration

27. This variable refers to the worth of a Councillor's time. The IRP has historically based the rate for remuneration on the average earnings of the full time employed residents of the Borough as the figure that is the most robust and readily defensible. The most recent data available shows that in 2020 the median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) of Borough residents who are in full time employment is £16.49.²
28. Following the methodology as set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance with the updated variables produces the following recalibrated Basic Allowance:
- 650 annual hours minus 40% PSD (260 hours)
 - = 390 remunerated hours multiplied by £16.49 per hour
 - = £6,431

Benchmarking the Basic Allowance

29. The IRP in its reviews of 2016 and 2018 highlighted that the Rushmoor Basic Allowance was falling behind peers when benchmarked. Benchmarking for this review shows that this is still the case with a mean Basic Allowance in the benchmarking group of £6,181 and a median Basic Allowance of £6,286 (2020/21).³
30. A Basic Allowance below that paid to peers is not necessarily a compelling reason to recommend an increase to the Basic Allowance but the case is reinforced by recalibration. It is also noted that the Basic Allowance has not been fundamentally revisited for a number of years and with three fewer Members since May 2012 and extra costs imposed on eligible Members through closure of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) in 2014 then the case for revision becomes more persuasive. The IRP did not revise the Basic Allowance in 2016 or 2018 despite the case to do so arising from recalibration and benchmarking. No change was made because representations received made it clear that there was no appetite to increase the Basic Allowance at the time.

² This is based on median weekly earnings of £659.40 which equates to £16.49 per hour when divided by 40 working hours in a week. See Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 8.2a, Weekly pay – excluding overtime – for full time employee jobs (home geography), Office of National Statistics, provisional results 2020. The ONS advises that the median rather than the mean figure is a better measure of the average due handful of very high earners which skews the statistical mean.

³ For benchmarking purposes the allowances schemes for 2020/21 have been used as the latest figures available when the IRP met. However, the allowances quoted for Rushmoor refer to 2021/22 figures as they have already had indexation applied despite the pay agreement for staff for 2021/22 not yet being finalised. .

31. However, the gulf in value between the current Rushmoor BC Basic Allowance and the recalibrated (£6,431) and benchmarked (£6,181/£6,286) Basic Allowance has increased over the years, to the point that the IRP has decided that the Basic Allowance needs to be adjusted to make it more equitable.
32. As such the IRP has decided not to recommend the recalibrated Basic Allowance but rather it has taken the mid-point between the mean and median benchmarked Basic Allowance, which is £6,200. By opting for the lower figure the IRP feels that it has addressed the low Basic Allowance yet balanced it to some extent against the representation received while also being cognisant of cost implications.
33. **The recommended Basic Allowance for 2022/23 is £6,200.**

Discontinuing the Information Technology & Telecommunications (ITT) Allowance

34. Currently all Members receive an annual Information Technology & Telecommunications (ITT) Allowance of £392 as a contribution to cover such council related costs incurred by Members such as
 - Use of personal landline and mobile telephones
 - Broadband
 - IT hardware, peripherals and consumables
 - Other ICT related costs
35. The rationale behind this approach is to allow freedom of choice and give Members independence. It also reduces the resource implications for the Council. However, it can now be questioned whether this level of support in an era when it is commonplace to have mobile phones, PCs and broadband can still be justified. This questioning of the ITT Allowance is even greater with the recommended enhanced Basic Allowance. Benchmarking shows that such an allowance is identifiable in only two other comparator Councils (Hart and Havant).
36. Moreover, the IRP was informed that taking account of the restoration process from the pandemic, for the foreseeable future there will be a hybrid approach to meetings. Those meetings that legislation requires to be carried out in person will be done so but most others are likely to be carried out remotely. As such, this increases the need for a common and consistent approach to IT equipment that meets the Council protocols and security standards. In turn, this has led to discussions by the Council to provide a solution for Members to develop a standardised solution for IT equipment for all Members. This will help ensure the Council meets the necessary and emerging security/protection requirements around information governance. As part of the current ITT Allowance pays for IT equipment again the rationale for its continuation is lessened. Consequently, the IRP has decided to discontinue a separate ITT Allowance.

37. **The IRP recommends that the current Information Technology & Telecommunications (ITT) Allowance of £392 is discontinued from start of 2022/23 municipal year.**

Special Responsibility Allowances – Pre-empting Indexation

Leader of the Council

38. There was a consensus in the representations to the IRP that there has been a change in the style of leadership at the Council during the last four or five years. In particular, there was agreement that the Leader is now more involved in taking the Council in a new direction and being more pro-active. For example the Leader along with the Deputy Leader and other leading Members where relevant have driven the Council Business Plan 2021- 2024 which sets out the priorities of the Council to ensure it makes best use of resources in the delivery of services and progress towards meeting the Council's long term objectives.
39. The IRP discussed whether being the Leader of Rushmoor Borough Council was a full time role, for which there was some support in the representations received. Clearly it could be made into a full time role, with the current Leader at times putting in the equivalent of a full time working week. Being Leader certainly precludes having full time employment in the normally accepted sense. However, while recognising that being Leader is a significant role that requires a substantial time commitment the IRP concluded it does not demand a full time professional Leader. In turn this has impacted on the recommended SRA for the Leader of the Council.
40. In considering the SRA for the Leader, the IRP noted that it had reset it at the 2018 Review to place it at the median SRA paid to Leaders in the benchmarking group. Benchmarking shows that the current SRA (£16,861) was not so far out of line with peers to justify any significant revision, with a mean Leaders SRA in the benchmarking group of £17,510 and a median SRA of £16,964.
41. However, as the IRP had reset the recommended Basic Allowance for 2022/23, with indexation only applicable from the following year the IRP has decided that in order to be consistent to apply 'pre-emptive' indexation to the Leader's SRA. There is precedent for this as the current Basic Allowance and SRAs payable in Rushmoor were 'pre-emptively' indexed for 2021/22. The applicable index, namely the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff as agreed each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff (known as the 'NJC' index) has not yet been agreed, as is often the case. However, as the likely increase will be 1.75 per cent (based on the latest employers offer) the Council has decided to take that as the applicable index for this year. Thus the current Basic Allowance and SRAs have already by indexed by 1.75 per cent for 2021/22 despite the actual index to be yet settled upon.

42. The IRP has taken the view that indexation for 2022/23 will be at least the same, 1.75 per cent, and has applied that index to the Leader's current SRA to arrive at the recommended SRA for 2022/23, and rounded it up to the nearest £50. In turn this places the Leader's SRA more close to the benchmarked mean and median Leaders' SRAs. Uplifting the current SRA (£16,861) by 1.75 per cent increases it to £17,156, and rounded up to the nearest £50 equals £17,200.
43. **The IRP recommend Leader's SRA for 2022/23 is reset at £17,200.**

Other SRAs – applying pre-emptive indexation

44. Similarly, the IRP has after taking into account representation received and the benchmarking picture that there was not a strong case to alter the rest of the SRAs payable. As such, to be consistent the IRP has applied pre-emptive indexation to all the other SRAs payable as set out below. Where there was a great deal of discussion surrounding a particular SRA, the IRP has discussed it and set out its rationale for the recommended SRA.

Recommended SRAs with pre-emptive indexation applied

SRA	Current SRA	Uplifted by 1.75%	Rounded up to nearest £50
Deputy Leader	£9,712	£9,882	£9,900
Other Cabinet Members (x5)	£8,372	£8,519	£8,550
Chair Overview & Scrutiny Committee	£4,215	£4,289	£4,300
Chair Development Management Committee	£5,655	£5,754	£5,800
Chair Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee	£5,655	£5,754	£5,800
Chair Policy & Project Advisory Board	£4,215	£4,289	£4,300
Main Opposition Group Leader	£3,398	£3,457	£3,500
Other Opposition Group Leaders (if have 4 Members)	£3,398	£3,457	£3,500

Cabinet Champions (X3)

45. In December 2017 the Council was subject to a Peer Challenge Review which highlighted the importance of revising scrutiny arrangements (see below) and changes in cabinet working arrangements to better meet the objectives of the Council. Alongside the Peer Review recommendations, the Cabinet was also keen

- that there were development opportunities for Members not on Cabinet. As a result, three Cabinet Champions were appointed at a Cabinet Meeting on 29th May 2018.
46. In the 2018 Review the IRP recommended that these roles were paid an SRA set at 20 per cent of the SRA paid to Other Cabinet Members, currently their SRA is £1,674. The IRP specifically noted in 2018 that it would revisit these roles at the time of the next review.
 47. The IRP did receive some representations challenging the SRA for Cabinet Champions, questioning whether their role was significant enough to merit an SRA. Moreover, it is noted that similar roles are only remunerated in one of the other comparator Councils (East Hampshire - £3,000).
 48. Cabinet Champions have been established to drive forward initiatives that are cross cutting or do not naturally sit within a Cabinet portfolio. Each year there are three Cabinet Champions appointed to lead work on issues identified by the Cabinet. In 2021/22 these remits are Military, Health and Wellbeing and Equality/Diversity.
 49. While they have no decision making powers they do as a general rule feed back into Cabinet and much of their work is in the day. They also make annual reports through the Council structure regarding their activities. There is also an element of succession planning involved. It is recognised that in practice there appears to be some variation in the work carried out by Cabinet Champions but the IRP views this as more of a political management issue rather than a fundamental problem with the concept.
 50. The IRP is content the role of Cabinet Champion is above and beyond what is required from an ordinary Member and merits an SRA. Moreover, the current SRA while relatively low is still appropriate (except for pre-emptive indexation) as there is no decision making powers and the role contains an element of succession planning. Consequently, the IRP has decided to retain the SRA for the three Cabinet Champions and apply the pre-emptive indexation of 1.75 per cent (£1,703) and round up to the nearest £50, which equates to £1,750.
 51. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the three Cabinet Champions is reset at £1,750 for 2022/23.**

Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (X2) and the Policy and Project Advisory Board (x2)

52. Currently, there is a somewhat unusual arrangement regarding Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board in that each have two Vice-Chairmen who each receive an SRA of £1,265, set at 30 per cent of their respective Chair's SRA. There were questions raised in the representations to the IRP regarding the validity of paying SRAs to these Vice-Chairmen, particularly considering no other Vice-Chairmen are paid an SRA.

53. It is noted that the establishment of the single Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a Policy and Project Advisory Board replaced a more extensive set of scrutiny and policy development arrangements so the new structure actually worked out cheaper than the structure in place prior to 2018. Nevertheless, the IRP recommended that the Vice-Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board were to be paid an SRA on the grounds that, unlike other Vice-Chairmen, they had discrete tasks to undertake. The Rushmoor Borough Council Constitution (Part 3 – Section 7 and 8) specifically assigns to these Vice-Chairmen the responsibility to “lead on specific projects and to chair task and finish groups.” Each Vice-Chairman is expected to present reports of their task and finish groups to their respective committee and support their Chairman in preparing and presenting reports from their Committee/Board to Council and Cabinet. In addition, the Vice-Chairmen are responsible along with their respective Chairman in co-ordinating their committee’s work programme.
54. Again it is noted that, in practice, there is some variation in the extent to which each of the Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Policy and Project Advisory Board actually carry out these discrete tasks assigned to them. However, the IRP views this more of a political management issue and remains of the view that the principle is sound.
55. The responsibilities of the Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Policy and Project Advisory Board clearly provide sufficient basis to continue to recommend paying them an SRA. The IRP has not received any evidence that the current SRA of £1,265 is no longer appropriate, subject to pre-emptive indexation of 1.75 per cent (£1,287) and rounding up to the nearest £50, which equates to £1,300.
56. **The IRP recommends SRA for the two Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and two Vice-Chairmen of the Policy and Project Advisory Board is reset at £1,300 for 2022/23.**

Other Committee Vice-Chairmen

57. There was some representation received that argued the Vice-Chairmen of the other committees merited an SRA. Historically, the IRP has not recommended SRAs for the Vice-Chairmen of the other committees and boards on the basis that the role has largely been a traditional one. In particular, these vice-chairmen’s duties have largely been limited to standing in for their respective chairman when required, attending agenda setting meetings with their respective chairman and relevant Officer[s] and generally supporting chairs. At Rushmoor, other Committee Vice-Chairmen have not been assigned specific additional discrete responsibilities for which an SRA would be paid. The IRP remains of the view that there is not a strong case to recommend an SRA be paid to Vice-Chairmen of other Committees/Boards.

58. **The IRP does not recommend that SRAs are paid to Vice-Chairmen of other Committees/Boards.**

Members of the Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments)

59. Currently there is provision in the allowances scheme to pay an SRA (£453) to Members of the Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments) (excluding the Chairman) if they serve on four or more hearings in a municipal year. This SRA was recommended on the basis that sitting on four or more Licensing Sub-Committee hearings constituted a workload above and beyond that of the ordinary Member.
60. It is noted that due to rotation of Members appointed to Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments), drawn from the membership of the parent Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, that this SRA is rarely paid in practice. However, there remains the potential that a Member could be appointed to four or more to Licensing Sub-Committee hearings in a municipal year and therefore the SRA remains valid, subject to the pre-emptive 1.75 per cent indexation (£461) and rounded up to the nearest £50, which equates to £500.
61. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for Members excluding the Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee who sit on four or more Licensing Sub-Committee (Alcohol and Entertainments) hearings in a municipal year is reset at £500 for 2022/23.**

Mayor/Chairman of the Council

62. The IRP notes that the current SRA (£1,579) paid to the Chairman of the Council is below that paid in the comparator councils, with a mean SRA of £3,616 and median SRA of £3,709. However it is difficult to accurately benchmark this SRA. It is not paid in all the comparator councils, 10 Council Chairmen are paid such an SRA out of a comparator group of 14. This SRA is paid specifically for chairing Council.
63. As such the IRP received no evidence to revise the current SRA (£1,579) paid to the Mayor (Chairman of the Council), subject to applying the 1.75 per cent pre-emptive indexation (£1,607) and rounded up the nearest £50 which equates to £1,650.
64. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chairmen of the Council is reset at £1,650 for 2022/23.**

Members of the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee

65. In accordance with the terms of reference, the IRP considered whether there was a case to recommend a SRA for members of the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee. The case presented to the IRP for recommending such an SRA was that there was additional training required on the part of members appointed to the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee. This is largely around the Audit (external and internal) function of the reorganised Committee – previously being the Licensing and General Purposes Committee.
66. However, the IRP notes that members of the Development Management Committee are required to undergo training and development and there is a wider expectation on all Members to undertake relevant training and development as a matter of course. The IRP does note that members of the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee do have a role description but was informed that a key function of this role description was to help ensure Members with relevant interests and skills are appointed to the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee.
67. As such, **the IRP is not recommending an SRA to be paid to members of the Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee.**

Other SRAs considered – Group Secretary/Whip

68. Once again, through the representations received, the IRP was asked to consider recommending an SRA for the Group Secretaries – a role which might also include being the Group Whip. The logic behind this submission was that in the House of Commons the only three remunerated posts in the Shadow Cabinet are the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition Chief Whip and the Deputy Chief Whip.
69. The IRP accepts that the Group Secretaries/Whips of both main groups on Council have a role in Council management, in assisting with the allocation of places on committees to ensure political balance. However, the IRP is not making a recommendation in this regard for the following reasons:
- Historically the IRP has eschewed making recommendations for posts that may be deemed primarily political in nature
 - The analogy with paid Opposition posts in the House of Commons is not strictly applicable as they are career politicians being paid salaries
70. **The IRP does not recommend that an SRA is paid to the Group Secretaries/Whips.**

Maintaining the 1-SRA only rule

71. The 2003 Regulations do not prohibit the payment of multiple SRAs to Members. However, since SRAs are not insignificant sums, Councils typically have adopted the '1-SRA only' rule. In other words, regardless of the number of remunerated posts individual Members may hold they can only be paid one SRA.
72. Rushmoor Borough Council has adopted a 1-SRA only rule and no evidence was received to change this position. **The IRP recommends that the Council maintains the 1-SRA only rule within the Rushmoor Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme so that a Member cannot receive more than one SRA.**

Co-optees' Allowances

73. Currently there is a Co-optees' Allowance of £523 per year. This is an allowance specifically permitted by the 2003 Regulations paid to non-voting independent members appointed specific committees, normally for adding an external expertise. Currently the only Co-optee eligible for the Co-optees' Allowance is the one appointed to the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee, who has made the personal decision to decline accepting this allowance. Regardless, the IRP received no evidence to revise the Co-optees' Allowance subject to the pre-emptive 1.75 per cent indexation (£532) and rounded up to the nearest £50, which equates to £550.
74. **The IRP recommends that the Co-optees Allowance is reset at £550 for 2022/23.**

The Allowances for expenses: Travel and Subsistence Allowances

75. The Panel received no evidence that the current scope, terms and conditions and maximum rates that are reimbursed under the Travel and Substance Allowances require revision except in one regard – the mileage allowances should be updated to take into account where a Member travels by a hybrid/electric vehicle. Although this scenario has yet to arise it is probably only a matter of time before it does and as such the mileage allowances should be clarified to future proof the mileage allowances. The Office of Low Emission Vehicles states that when business mileage is being claimed when driving hybrid/electric vehicles then the HMRC AMAP (Approved Mileage Allowance Payment) rates are applicable without attracting a tax liability.
76. **The IRP recommends that the conditions and maximum rates under the Travel and Subsistence Allowances are maintained for 2022/23 with the exception of adding a clarification to the scheme by including travel by hybrid/electric vehicles at mileage rates equal to those set by HMRC AMAP rates.**

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

77. The Local Government Act 2000 explicitly clarifies the right of local authorities to pay a Dependant Carers' Allowance (DCA), which Members can claim to assist in meeting costs for care of their dependants while on approved Council duties. It is an allowance explicitly designed to enable a wider range of candidates to stand for and remain on the Council. The IRP notes that the vast majority of councils now pay a DCA. Although it is rarely claimed in Rushmoor, in the representations received there was overwhelming support to maintain the DCA largely on the grounds that it helps to reduce barriers to public service for traditionally underrepresented groups. No evidence was received to recommend any amendments to the DCA which is paid at two rates: a childcare element paid at the National Living Wage and other care element paid at the hourly rate charged by Hampshire Adult Services for a carer.
78. **The IRP recommends that the DCA is maintained at the current rates and terms and conditions.**

Issues arising – adopting a Parental Leave Policy

79. Finally, the issue was raised with the IRP that there was lack of clarity regarding allowances payable if and when a Member had to take maternity leave. It is noted that as Members are not legally classified as employees they have no statutory maternity (or paternity or adoption) leave rights.
80. However, there is nothing to stop a Council voluntarily agreeing to pay allowances for when a Member is required to take maternity leave. As long a Member abides by the requirement of the six month rule (which requires them to attend an approved duty at least once every six months unless given an exception by the Council) they can continue to be paid their Basic Allowance and if applicable their SRA. The IRP supports such a policy and it should also be extended to include not just maternity leave but also paternity and adoption leave.
81. **The IRP recommends that the allowances scheme is amended to include a statement that clarifies the continued right of remuneration for a Member when they are required to take maternity, paternity or adoption leave for up to a period of 12 months, subject to the legal attendance requirements.**

Confirmation of Indexing

82. **The IRP confirms and recommends that the following allowances are indexed for three years from 2023/24 to 2025/26, on the grounds that the Basic Allowance has been reset for 2022/23 and the SRAs pre-emptively indexed for the same year, without reference to the IRP as follows:**

- **Basic Allowance, SRAs and Co-optees' Allowances:**
 - Updated annually in line with the annual percentage pay increase given to Rushmoor Borough Council employees (and rounded to the nearest £) as agreed for each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff.

- **Out of Council Area Mileage Allowance:**
 - Indexed to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) mileage rates.

- **Out of Council Area Other Travel and Subsistence:**
 - Reimbursement of actual costs taking into account the most cost effective means of transport and/or accommodation available and the convenience of use with the maximum rates indexed to the same periodic percentage increase that may be applied to Officer Travel and Subsistence Allowances.

- **Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA):**
 - The maximum hourly rates to be indexed to the government's national living wage applicable to the age of the carer (childcare) and Hampshire County Council's hourly rate for a Home Care Assistance (care of other dependants).

Implementation

83. **The IRP recommends that the new scheme of allowances based on the recommendations contained in this report is adopted from the date of the Annual Meeting on 24th May 2022 except for the implementation of indexation which should be from the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council 2023.**

Appendix One: Members who met with the IRP

Cllr J. Canty:	Chairman of Policy & Advisory Project Advisory Board (Conservative)
Cllr S. Carter:	Chairman of Corporate Governance, Audit & Standards Committee and Licencing Sub-Committee Member (Conservative)
Cllr D. Clifford:	Leader of Council and Conservative Group
Cllr K. Dibble:	Deputy Leader of Main (Labour) Opposition Group
Cllr C. Guinness:	Leader of Main (Labour) Opposition Group
Cllr S. Masterson:	Vice-Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Cllr A. Newell:	Cabinet Portfolio Holder – Democracy & Community (Conservative)
Cllr S. Porter:	Labour Group Member
Cllr C. Stewart:	Chairman of Development Management Committee (Conservative)

Written Submissions - Elected Members

The IRP received five written submissions

Appendix Two: Officers who provided factual briefings to the IRP

Paul Shackley:⁴ Chief Executive
Andrew Colver: Head of Democracy and Community
Jill Shuttleworth: Services Manager – Democracy

⁴ Due to other commitments the Chief Executive briefed the IRP Chair via MS Teams on 5th October 2021 and the Chair then updated the IRP on the Chief Executive’s briefing when it met in person at Farnborough.

Appendix Three: Information Pack Index

The IRP received an Information Pack containing the following information and data that was referred to in its considerations and deliberations:

1. IRP Terms of Reference
2. Rushmoor Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme 2021
3. Rushmoor Borough Council, statutory publication of allowances and expenses paid to Members, including sub-totals for each category 2020/21
4. "A Review of Members' Allowances for Rushmoor Borough Council" the Sixth Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel, June 2018, including minutes of RBC meeting 21st June 2018 where report was considered and accepted by Council
5. Rushmoor Borough Council, relevant sections of Part 3 of Constitution showing roles and responsibilities, functions and terms of reference of main committees, namely Sections 6, 7 and 8
6. Rushmoor Borough Council Business Plan 2021 to 2024
7. Rushmoor In Numbers paper
8. Flow Diagram of Rushmoor Borough Council Committee Structure and decision making process
9. Calendar of Meetings 2021/22 including
 - Meetings that were cancelled in 2020/21
 - Licensing Sub-Committee meetings for the last 4 years including who chaired
10. Membership of Cabinet, Committees and Panels 2021/22 including who chairs
11. 2021 IRP Briefing Paper summarising main governance changes and issues for the IRP to consider
 - a. Future of LAGP Committee – March 2021
 - b. LGAP Committee Minutes - March 2021
12. Hard copies of written submissions by Members (x4)
13. South East Employers (SEE), Annual Survey of Members Allowances 2021 final version:
 - a. Basic Allowances
 - b. SRAs
 - c. Other Allowances

d. Extra Information

14. Power point presentation by Panel Chair (Dr Declan Hall), "Reviewing Members' Allowances: Patterns, Approaches and Issues to Consider"
15. National Census of Local Authority Councillors 2018 (LGA), breakdown of weekly hours by councillors by number of positions held and type of council, in email from S. Richards, LGA 21 October 2019.
16. National Employers for Local Government Services: Local Government Pay July 2021, National Employers pay offer of 1.75% (on all NJC Pay points 2 and above, 27th July 2021
17. Office for Low Emissions Vehicles, Ultra Low Emission Vehicles Tax Benefits, 2018
18. New Council Constitutions; Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances, 5 May 2006, Department of Communities and Local Government (extract)
19. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021)
20. Hard copies of allowances schemes from 13 other district councils included in the benchmarking group - Other Hampshire and adjacent District Councils, 2020/21
21. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 8.2a, Weekly pay – excluding overtime – for full time employee jobs (home geography), Office of National Statistics, provisional results 2020, showing median weekly salary of £659.40 or £16.49 per hour (on a 40 hour week)
22. Rushmoor Borough Council Constitution, Article 2 – Councillors and Role Descriptions for all Members and post holders
23. Armed Forces Champion role description
24. Equality and Diversity Champion role description
25. Cabinet Champions Reports to Overview and Scrutiny Committee 25th March 2021
26. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Vice-Chairman Activities since May 2020

Appendix Four: Rushmoor BC Benchmarking 2020/21

BM1 Rushmoor - Other Hants/adjacent DCs: BA + Exec + Scrutiny SRAs (20/21)										
Comparator Council	Basic Allowance	Leader	Leader Total Package	Deputy Leader	Exec Mbrs	Deputy Execs or Lead Mbrs	Chair Main O&S	V/Chr Main O&S	Chairs or Lead Scrutiny	Vice Chairs Scrutiny
Basingstoke & Deane	7,299	24,312	31,611	16,200	12,159		6,075	612	6,075	612
East Hants	5,200	18,000	23,200	10,000	6,000	3,000	2,000			
Eastleigh	7,012	20,765	27,777	9,602	8,229				2,742	686
Fareham	7,278	21,834	29,112	12,130	12,130				7,581	910
Gosport	6,701	14,853	21,554	NA	committee system				4,757	
Guildford*	7,405	15,994	23,399	8,663	5,924		5,924			
Hart	4,875	17,067	21,942	8,532	7,680		3,193			
Havant	5,430	14,800	20,230	10,018	8,425		5,692			
New Forest	6,602	20,948	27,550	10,474	10,474				5,238	
Surrey Heath	5,288	13,749	19,037	8,249	5,500		3,712		3,712	
Test Valley	7,036	13,339	20,375	9,118	8,499		7,036	1,408		
Waverley	5,014	14,729	19,743	10,197	6,798				3,399	1,701
Winchester	5,970	17,892	23,862	9,762	8,133		8,133		1,629	
Rushmoor	5,425	16,861	22,286	9,712	8,372	1,674	4,215	1,265		
Mean	6,181	17,510	23,691	10,204	8,333		5,109		4,392	977
Median	6,286	16,964	22,743	9,762	8,229		5,692		4,235	798
Highest	7,405	24,312	31,611	16,200	12,159		8,133		7,581	1,701
Lowest	4,875	13,339	19,037	8,249	5,500		2,000		1,629	612
Mean Ratios	mean Leaders SRA 2.83 X mean BA	100%		58%	48%		29%		25%	

* Guildford Leader & Deputy Leaders' SRA includes group leader variable SRA estimation

BM2 Rushmoor - Other Hants/adjacent DCs: Planning & Licensing/Regulatory SRAs (2020/21)										
Comparator Council	Chair Planning	Vice Chair Planning	Planning Members	Chair Lic'ng &/or Regulatory	Lic'ng V/Chair	Chair Audit	Vice Chair Audit	Chair HR or Employment	V/Chair HR or Employment	Chair Standards
Basingstoke & Deane	7,299	726		6,075	612	6,075	576	6,075	612	6,075
East Hants	6,000	3,000	250	2,000		2,000		2,000		2,000
Eastleigh	Area Based			1,717		2,742	686			
Fareham	10,917	910		7,581	910	4,549				
Gosport	4,757			4,757		4,757				4,757
Guildford	5,924			3,703						3,703
Hart	5,121	1,705		1,708		2,561		1,708		1,662
Havant	5,009			1,116		6,831		3,643		
New Forest	7,331			2,158		2,158				
Surrey Heath	4,812	2,640		3,712		3,712		3,712		
Test Valley	5,291	1,070		4,235	847			2,308	450	
Waverley	3,399	1,701		3,399	1,701	3,399	1,701			3,399
Winchester	8,133	2,439		3,255		2,439		3,255		1,629
Rushmoor	5,655			5,655		*Note 1		*Note 1		*Note 1
Mean	6,127	1,774		3,648	1,018	3,748		3,243		3,318
Median	5,655	1,703		3,551	879	3,399		3,255		3,399
Highest	10,917	3,000		7,581	1,701	6,831		6,075		6,075
Lowest	3,399	726		1,116	612	2,000		1,708		1,629
Mean Ratios	35%			21%		21%		19%		19%

*Note 1: In Rushmoor some of these functions are undertaken by the Chairman of the Corporate Governance, Audit and Standards Committee

BM3 v1 Rushmoor - Other Hants + adjacent DCs: Group & Misc. SRAs (2020/21)						
Comparator Authority	Main Opposition Group Leader	Minor Opposition Group Leader	Chairs Areas or Local Forums	Chair Council	Council V/Chair	Other or Comment
Basingstoke & Deane	7,299	3,642		4,851	1,401	<i>Vice Chair Standards £408</i>
E. Hants	3,000			3,000		<i>Chair Development Policy £2,000, Licensing Members £250 each, BA inc IT allowance</i>
Eastleigh	5,487		3,430			<i>Area Vice Chairs £856, ICT provided direct</i>
Fareham	7,278	3,634		4,859	910	<i>Opposition Spokespersons £303</i>
Gosport	6,108	873				
Guildford	£74 p/group Mbr	£74 p/group Mbr		5,924	3,703	<i>All Group Leaders get £74 p/group Mbr., Chairs Executive Advisory Boards + Guildford Joint Committee £3,703, Vice Chair Guildford Joint Committee £1,481, Licensing Sub Chairs £280 p/meeting</i>
Hart	2,561	£107 /group Mbr		4,266		<i>IT Allowance £250 p/yr</i>
Havant	2,732	£911-£1,822				<i>"Modernisation" (IT & Tel) Allowance £461</i>
New Forest	7,857	1,114				<i>Main Opposition Group Deputy Leader £1,114, BA includes ICT Allowance automatic uplift of £435</i>
Surrey Heath	4,812	3,712		5,500	1,650	
Test Valley	3,151			3,151	620	<i>2 Area Planning Committees ea Chair £5,291 & V/Chair £1,070, BA inc ICT & Tel costs</i>
Waverley	3,399			594		<i>2 Area Planning Committees ea Chair £3,399 & V/Chairs £1,701, Vice Chair Standards £1,701</i>
Winchester	8,133	2,439	1,629	2,439		<i>Group Manager £1,629, Chairs T&F £1,629</i>
Rushmoor	3,398	3,398		1,579		<i>If Chair >4 Licensing Panels £453, ICT Allowance £392, If Other Opposition Group has ≥4 Members Leader gets SRA £3,398, Chair & Vice Chair Project Advisory Board £4,215 + £1.265</i>
Mean	5,017	2,687		3,616	1,657	
Median	4,812	3,398		3,709	1,401	
Highest	8,133	3,712		5,924	3,703	
Lowest	2,561	873		594	620	
Mean Ratio	29%	15%		21%		