

Council	
Meeting Date	31 March 2021
Report Title	Review of Members' Allowances Scheme – Area Committees Special Responsibility Allowance - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Swale
Portfolio Holder	Leader – Councillor Roger Truelove
SMT Lead / Head of Service	David Clifford – Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services
Lead Officer	Jo Millard – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendation	That Council notes the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and agrees to amend the Scheme of Members' Allowances to include the Panel's recommendation for Area Committee Chairmen Special Responsibility Allowance.

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Panel to consider the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and make recommendations to Full Council.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Regulations require Councils to undertake a review of their Members' Allowances Scheme every four years. The last full review for Swale was undertaken in March 2020 and the recommendations agreed at Full Council in June 2020.
- 2.2 At the time of the 2020 review the Panel recommended a further review in 2021 to consider the Special Responsibility Allowance for Area Committee Chairmen, once the terms of reference had been set and Area Committees had been established. Area Committees commenced in September 2020.
- 2.3 The panel met in February 2021 to consider the Special Responsibility Allowance for Area Committee Chairmen.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 The attached report of the Panel sets out their recommendation in full, and provides commentary on the reasoning behind their recommendation.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Council is required to set a Members' Allowances Scheme and in doing so, it must have regard to the Panel's recommendations. However, the Council does not have to approve the exact recommendations made by the Panel.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Panel interviewed the former Area Committee coordinator and a current Area Committee Chairman.
- 5.2 The Panel's report has been circulated to Group Leaders for comments.
- 5.3 In accordance with Regulations, a notice has been published in three newspapers which are circulated across the Borough. The Notice advised that recommendations had been made by the Panel, a summary of which was included, and that these would be considered by the Full Council on 31 March 2021.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	None for the purposes of this report
Financial, Resource and Property	If the recommendation within the panel's report is agreed, there is a total yearly increase on the current allowance scheme of £8,217.13 (£8,381.46 from April 2021 to include the 2% cost of living award for 2021), for which there is provision in the budget. This then becomes a funding pressure in the 2021/22 financial year and for the 2022/23 base budget. If agreed, the increase should be backdated to September 2020).
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out the rules regarding allowances schemes for Members and the requirement to establish an Independent Panel and to consider their recommendations.
Crime and Disorder	None for the purposes of this report
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	None for the purposes of this report
Health & Wellbeing	None for the purposes of this report
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None for the purposes of this report
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this time.
Privacy and data protection	None identified at this time.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following appendices are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

8 Background Papers

Reports and Minutes considered by previous Council meetings:

[Link to Review Panel report 2020](#)