

# Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – Members’ Allowances Scheme

<b>Report number:</b>	<b>COU/WS/23/022</b>	
<b>Report to and date:</b>	<b>Council</b>	19 December 2023
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**Decisions Plan:** Not applicable as this is not an executive matter

**Wards impacted:** Not applicable

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that Council:

- 1. Notes the content of the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, as contained in Annex A to Report number: COU/WS/23/022.**
- 2. Adopts the new West Suffolk Council Members’ Allowances Scheme proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel, as contained in Appendix 1 of Annex A to Report number: COU/WS/23/022, for implementation from 1 February 2024.**

## 1. Background and context

1.1 In September 2023, an Independent Remuneration Panel (“the Panel”) was appointed by West Suffolk Council in order to advise on the levels of remuneration that should be paid to members elected to West Suffolk Council.

1.2 The Panel met on several occasions throughout October and November 2023 and considered a range of material to support its deliberations for recommending a new Members’ Allowances Scheme for potential adoption by the Council.

1.3 The following documents are attached to this covering report for consideration:

**Annex A:** A detailed report prepared by the Panel providing details on the rationale that supports their recommendations for the new scheme.

**Appendix 1 to Annex A:** A new Members’ Allowances Scheme, proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for the Council to consider and adopt, as appropriate.

**Appendix 2 to Annex A:** Supporting material considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel to assist their work.

1.4 The Council is requested to consider these documents and the recommendations set out on the first page of this report.

## 2. Alternative options that have been considered

2.1 The Council must take the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel into account when setting its Members’ Allowances Scheme, although the Council is within its right to agree alternative proposals. A new scheme must be adopted by December 2023 in order for it to be adopted before the current scheme expires in February 2024. The scheme will then be subject to annual review.

## 3. Consultation and engagement undertaken

3.1 Engagement has been undertaken with all members by way of an electronic survey to ascertain members’ views on the Members’ Allowances Scheme. A selection of interviews with specific members and members of the Leadership Team were also held.

## 4. Risks associated with the proposals

4.1 That a new Members’ Allowances Scheme is not adopted prior to the expiry of the existing scheme. However, the timeline that has been met which has

enabled a new scheme to be presented to members at this meeting has given some flexibility to help mitigate this risk.

## **5. Implications arising from the proposals**

- 5.1 Financial – see Appendix B regarding the financial implications for adopting a new Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 5.2 Legal compliance – the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme has been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 5.3 Equalities – The proposed scheme specifically allows the Council to grant additional expenses / allowances where required where the member has needs arising from a protected characteristic.

## **6. Background documents associated with this report**

- 6.1 [The Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)
- 6.2 [COU/WS/23/015](#): 26 September 2023: Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel
- 6.3 [COU/WS/23/011](#): 20 June 2023: Independent Remuneration Panel appointment process