



## **Report for: Council**

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Date of Meeting:	22 February 2024
Subject:	Member Allowances 2024/25
Responsible Officer:	Jessica Farmer Interim Director of Legal and Governance Services
Exempt:	No
Wards affected:	All Wards
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 – The Remuneration of Councillors in London – Report of the Independent Panel – January 2022  Appendix 2 - Proposed Members Allowances Scheme 2024/25

## **Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations**

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This report sets out a proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 and for amendments to the current scheme to be backdated to 1 January 2024.

### **Recommendations:**

That

- (1) the current Members' Allowances Scheme be amended to reflect the proposed changes in Appendix 2, backdated to 1 January 2024.
- (2) Council approve the Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25, attached at Appendix 2.

## **Section 2 – Report**

- 2.1 The Council is required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) to agree on an annual basis a schedule of allowances payable to Members' for the following financial year. Under the regulations, when making or amending a scheme, the Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (Regulation 19). The Regulations state that before the beginning of each year the authority shall make a scheme for the allowances for that year.
- 2.2 The Members' Allowance Scheme is comprehensive and includes Basic Allowances, Special Responsibility Allowances (for posts which carry specific responsibilities) and other allowances and expenses that may be claimed.
- 2.3 Council at its meeting on 23 February 2023 approved the current schedule of allowances. The adopted scheme forms part of the formal Members' Allowance Scheme which is incorporated within the Council's Constitution.
- 2.4 Following consideration of the London-wide Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) convened by London Councils published revised recommendations (Appendix 1), the allowances provided to Members in Harrow falls significantly short of that and most other London boroughs.
- 2.5 The proposed scheme has regard for the report published by London Councils and is based on the median figures for London Boroughs to ensure a better degree of consistency in the allowances provided to Members.
- 2.6 The proposed scheme will still be significantly less than the allowances strongly recommended by the IRP.
- 2.7 It is further proposed that the current Members' Allowances Scheme be amended to reflect the proposed basic and special responsibility allowances, with effect from 1 January 2024. A similar backdating happened with the staff pay award, although that was backdated to April 2023.
- 2.8 This report is proposed by the Leader of the Council and seconded by the Leader of the Labour Group.

## Legal Implications

- 3.1 There is a requirement that Councils must make any scheme for the following year to commence on 1 April. The approval of Council is necessary to any amendments to existing schemes or the adoption of new schemes.
- 3.2 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 the requirements of the scheme are:

### **10.— Requirements for schemes**

*(1) Before the beginning of each year, an authority shall make the scheme required by [regulation 4\(1\)\(a\)](#) for the payment of basic allowance for that year.*

*(2) The scheme shall also make provision for the following allowances if an authority intends to make such payments in respect of the year—*

- (a) special responsibility allowance;*
- (b) dependants' carers' allowance;*
- (c) travelling and subsistence allowance; and*
- (d) co-optees' allowance.*

- 3.3 The scheme can be amended under regulation 3 and 6.

*(3) Subject to [regulation 12](#) the scheme may be amended at any time but may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a year.*

*(6) Where an amendment is to be made which affects an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, the scheme may provide for the entitlement to such allowance as amended to apply with effect from the beginning of the year in which the amendment is made.*

- 3.2 Responsibility for adopting a Members' Allowances Scheme is attributable to Council in accordance with Part 3A of the Council's Constitution.

## Financial Implications

- 4.1 The 2024/25 Budget (set out elsewhere on the agenda) includes provision of £1.283m for the 2024/25 Members Allowances scheme set out in Appendix 2.

## **Risk Management Implications**

Risks included on corporate or directorate risk register? **No**

Separate risk register in place? **No**

The following key risks should be taken into account when agreeing the recommendations in this report:

<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>	<b>RAG Status</b>
Failure to agree a scheme may render the Council in breach of its statutory duty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Seek a formal Council decision before the beginning of the new financial year</li></ul>	Amber

### **Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Was an Equality Impact Assessment carried out? **No**

If no, state why an EqIA was not carried out below:

These proposals do not adversely compromise the Council's public sector equalities duty under the Equality Act 2010.

### **Council Priorities**

The proposals contribute towards all of the Council's corporate priorities.

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

**Statutory Officer: Sharon Daniels**  
Signed by the Chief Financial Officer

**Date: 16 February 2024**

**Statutory Officer: Jessica Farmer**  
Signed by the Monitoring Officer

**Date: 12 February 2024**

Mandatory Checks

**Ward Councillors notified: NO, as it impacts on all Wards**

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

**Contact:** Vishal Seegoolam, Democratic, Electoral & Registration Services Manager, [vishal.seegoolam@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:vishal.seegoolam@harrow.gov.uk)

**Background Papers:** [Member Allowances Scheme 23/24](#)

If appropriate, does the report include the following considerations?

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| 1. Consultation | NO  |
| 2. Priorities   | YES |