

# Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority



<b>MEETING</b>	Executive Committee
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	5 February 2020
<b>OFFICER</b>	Graham Britten, Director of Legal and Governance
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Councillor Lesley Clarke OBE, Chairman
<b>SUBJECT OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>Members' Allowances</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<p>The Authority is required to adopt a Scheme of Members' Allowances before 1 April each year and, in so doing, have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panels of the constituent authorities when considering its own Scheme of Members' Allowances and confirm that it has done so when it gives public notice of the Scheme of Allowances.</p> <p>The Independent Remuneration Panel of the scheme for Milton Keynes Council undertook a review in January 2018 and this is attached at <b>Appendix A</b>.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire County Council's terms of reference required a review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances to be undertaken every four years and this was carried out in January 2015 following a part review which was undertaken in 2013. A scheduled review by a new Independent Remuneration Panel for 2019 was postponed due to the proposed changes to governance arrangements. The Buckinghamshire Shadow Authority 2019 Order requires the Shadow Authority to prepare and make a scheme for the payment of allowances. The Independent Remuneration Panel has met and its report is due to go to the Shadow Authority Meeting on 27 February 2020.</p> <p>If the report is made available prior to the meeting of the Authority on 12 February, its recommendations will be circulated to Members before or by the date of the meeting.</p> <p>The Authority agreed at its meeting on 14 December 2011 that the index linking for the period 2012/13 to 2014/15 – for basic and special responsibility (and co-optee) allowances – be the pay award for the Authority's staff on National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).</p> <p>It is recommended that the Authority continue this</p>

	<p>indexation for the period 2020/21.</p> <p>The NJC Circular NJC/3/19 of 5 September 2019 confirmed a 2% pay award effective from 1 July 2019. The effects of a 2% increase are reflected in <b>Appendix B</b>.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	Decision
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	That the Authority be recommended to adopt a Scheme for Members' Allowances for 2020/21 ( <b>Appendix B</b> )
<b>RISK MANAGEMENT</b>	The recommendation will have no adverse effect on the Authority's business.
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	<p>The current budget for Members' Allowances (Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) is £72,780, including National Insurance.</p> <p>Costs will be incurred in publishing a notice that the Authority has made a Scheme of Members' Allowances in a newspaper circulating in its area. The cost is estimated to be in the region of £800 (<i>£788.40 last year</i>).</p>
<b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</b>	The making or amendment of the Members' Scheme of Allowances is a function reserved to a meeting of the Authority. An amendment may be made by the Authority in year. Regulation 10(4) of Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provides that "A scheme may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to such index as may be specified by the authority and where the only change made to a scheme in any year is that effected by such annual adjustment in accordance with such index the scheme shall be deemed not to have been amended."
<b>CONSISTENCY WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DUTY TO COLLABORATE</b>	The making of a scheme of allowances is the responsibility of each individual authority defined in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The methodology for doing so is prescribed exclusively by those regulations.
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	Not applicable.
<b>EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY</b>	<p>The Authority's Scheme of Members' Allowances does not include any element for meeting costs incurred by a Member who has to arrange care in order to carry out their function as a Member of the Fire Authority.</p> <p>The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 exclude the Authority from including such a provision in its Scheme. However, with the exception of co-opted members, all Members are appointed by either Buckinghamshire County Council or Milton Keynes Council and are</p>

Members' Allowances

	entitled to claim "dependent carers' allowances" from their appointing authority. There are currently no co-opted members on the Authority.
<b>USE OF RESOURCES</b>	The recommendation is consistent with the extant Scheme of Allowances.
<b>PROVENANCE SECTION &amp; BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>	<a href="#">NJC/3/19</a> – NJC Circular 05/09/19
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix A: Milton Keynes Council report of the Independent Panel of Members' Allowances January 2018. Appendix B: Draft Scheme for Members' Allowances 2020/21.
<b>TIME REQUIRED</b>	10 minutes.
<b>REPORT ORIGINATOR AND CONTACT</b>	Katie Nellist <a href="mailto:Knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk">Knellist@bucksfire.gov.uk</a> 01296 744633

**REPORT BY  
THE MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL  
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

**An Independent Review of Members' Allowances  
January 2018**

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## **Executive Summary**

Milton Keynes Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has been asked to prepare this report in order to help the Council fulfil its statutory duty to review its scheme of allowances at regular intervals.

The Panel took account of a range of information prior to formulating their recommendations. This included information on the governance arrangements and structures of the Council, the views of councillors – via both face-to-face interviews, written submissions and a short survey – relevant benchmarking data, the economic and financial climate within which the Council operates and the desire to encourage citizens to participate in local democracy. The Panel also considered the statutory framework for members' allowances, including the relevant statutory instruments and the guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

The Panel took particular care to try to balance the need to ensure that citizens are able to participate in local democracy by standing for election against the reality of the prevailing financial climate. In doing so, the Panel have based their recommendations upon the existing scheme of allowances but have made a small number of recommendations in order to address the issues that they perceive to exist within the scheme.

In terms of the basic allowance, the Panel have also taken into consideration the increasing workloads of councillors and the demands in representing citizens and participating in decision making in one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing areas of the United Kingdom. While councillors expressed a general level of satisfaction with the level of the basic allowance, the Panel were conscious of the fact that the amount is not index linked and has therefore not changed for some time. The Panel hope that their recommendations will address this issue.

The Panel have given equally careful consideration to the special responsibility allowances payable to councillors who undertake additional duties, many of which are equivalent to a demanding full-time job. The Panel heard a range of views on these allowances, which they took account of alongside benchmarking data from other comparable authorities and the particular governance structures and political landscape at Milton Keynes Council. The Panel have taken the decision to leave this section of the scheme largely untouched, but have made some recommendations for the Council to consider. The first is the introduction of an index to ensure allowances keep pace with the rising cost of living. The second is the introduction of an allowance for the Deputy Leader of the Council as Milton Keynes is almost unique in not recognising this position within its scheme of allowances.

The Panel would like to thank all of the councillors who took part in the review by answering the many questions that the Panel posed. The Panel believes that these recommendations, if adopted, will result in a scheme of allowances that is fair, transparent and affordable. The Panel hope that the Council will approve these recommendations.

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 The Council is required to make a scheme of allowances for its councillors in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulation 2003. The process for making and reviewing such a scheme is regulated so that the public can have confidence in the independence, openness and accountability of the process involved. The process requires that the Council must establish an independent remuneration panel and, before making or amending its scheme of allowances, must have regard to the views of the Panel.
- 1.2 This report presents the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel to the Council for consideration and approval.

## **The Panel**

2.1 In accordance with the Council's constitution, the current Panel was appointed following a recruitment process established by the Council. The Panel comprises the following members:

- Ms Ruby Parmar. Ruby is the Senior Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers' Milton Keynes Office. Ruby also sits on the Board of Trustees of the Magic Bus India Foundation, a charity dedicated to providing children living in poverty the opportunity to shape their future.
- Ms Jan Flawn CBE. Jan is the founder and Chair of PJ Care, a leading Milton Keynes-based provider of specialist neurological care and neuro rehabilitation for people with progressive or acquired neurological conditions.
- Mr Stewart Bailey. Stewart is Managing Director of Virtual Viewing, a company specialising in computer generated work aimed at inspiring inward investment and interest in construction and design projects.

The Panel was assisted in their deliberations by Paul Hanson, Democratic Services Manager from the LGSS Northamptonshire office.

## **Terms of Reference for the Review**

- 3.1 The Panel's terms of reference were based on the relevant statutory instrument (Members Allowances (England) Regulations 2003), as well as guidance issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances). It should be noted that the Panel is required to take these documents into account when preparing recommendations on the Council's scheme of allowances.
- 3.2 In line with the statutory requirements relating to schemes, the Panel's agreed terms of reference were as follows:
  - To determine the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to councillors;

- To determine the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and the amount of such allowances;
- To determine the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and the amount of such allowances;
- Whether the Council's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and the amount of this allowance and the means by which it should be determined; and
- Whether annual adjustments of allowance levels should be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run.

3.3 The Panel also agreed the following set of broad principles within which the review of allowances was undertaken:

- In line with the statutory guidance, the Panel took into account the principle that an element of the role of councillor must be voluntary, but that should not mean that councillors should suffer significant financial loss as a result of undertaking the role;
- Allowances should not be designed to reward councillors, but neither should the level of allowances prohibit individuals from considering standing for election; and
- The Panel were mindful that a reasonable percentage of councillors that should be eligible to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance.

### **The Evidence Considered**

4.1 The Panel considered a range of qualitative and quantitative evidence, as well as benchmarking data. In the area of basic and special responsibility allowances, the Panel attributed greatest weight to the written and verbal testimony of councillors.

4.2 Benchmarking evidence was considered, however, the Panel had to be cautious in the application of this data. This was because the data, while helpful in determining the relative position of allowances paid by Milton Keynes Council in comparison to other comparable (statistical nearest neighbour) authorities, the data does not reveal the reasons for any discrepancies, nor the detail of the range of responsibilities covered by each post.

4.3 The Panel issued an open invitation to all councillors to meet with them and share their views. Individual interviews were conducted with ten councillors over the course of the review, representing all of the political groups on the Council. A simple questionnaire was also circulated at the Panel's request and nine responses were received. A range of opinions were heard, relating not just to allowances but also to the nature of the role of councillor, the time commitment involved and other forms of support that are available to councillors. Input was received from councillors who were employed, self-employed and retired.

4.4 There was a general consensus that the current rate of basic allowance is broadly sufficient, but some concerns were expressed about the lack of any form of indexation within the scheme and the long-term effect this could have on the viability of allowances. The Panel

felt that the basic allowance must be set at a level that allows councillors to make the not-inconsiderable time commitment required in order to fulfil their roles effectively, particularly now given the rapid growth within the Milton Keynes area.

- 4.5 On the issue of special responsibility allowances, a diverse range of opinions were expressed. There was a broad consensus on the level of allowances attached to such roles as group leaders and committee chairs, but rather less consensus about roles such as committee vice-chairs. The Panel took careful account of this information and used benchmarking data to determine how such roles were treated in other comparable authorities.
- 4.6 In terms of the expenses that may be claimed in the course of carrying out their roles, councillors were generally satisfied with the arrangements in place. Some small changes to the scheme were suggested, however, and the Panel has made recommendations based on their own views as to the fairness and transparency of this aspect of the scheme.
- 4.7 Some councillors expressed the view that a form of means testing could be used to ensure that the budget for allowances is apportioned efficiently. The Panel noted this issue but were mindful of the fact that the legislative framework which underpins local authority allowances provides no freedom to do this.
- 4.8 The Panel noted that most formal committee meetings take place in the evenings in order to make the best use of councillors' time and reduce the impact on those councillors who are in paid employment. The Panel welcomed the efforts made by the Council but felt that the Council could, and should, do more to support councillors who are also employed, particularly where they undertake additional roles within the Council.
- 4.9 In formulating recommendations about the special responsibility allowances within the new scheme, the Panel sought to examine the nature of the roles undertaken by councillors and determine the position of each role within the hierarchy of allowances. This approach was based on the principles that underpin every review of allowances and takes into account factors such as
- The level of decision making responsibility associated with each role;
  - Other responsibilities associated with each role (such as responsibility for chairing a committee, and attendance at outside meetings associated with the role);
  - The time requirement of each role; and
  - Any other specialist skills, knowledge or other factors needed to be able to carry out each role effectively.

## **The Panel's Conclusions and Recommendations**

- 5.1 In undertaking their review, the Panel were mindful of the fact that their recommendations would be subject to considerable internal and external scrutiny and would have to be supported by the evidence considered. The Panel also considered whether the current

financial and economic climate should inform their recommendations. The Panel took the view that this was an important factor and the public would rightly expect it to form part of the Panel's considerations. The Panel also felt, however, that it had to be balanced against other factors such as the need to encourage democratic diversity and participation in local democracy.

5.2 The councillors whose views were provided to the Panel represented a range of backgrounds, including employed, self-employed and retired members. The Panel took the view that no-one should be prevented from undertaking the role of councillor as a result of their personal circumstances. Having considered the range of information presented to them, they took the view that while there is evidence to suggest that allowances play a part in this issue, factors such as the time commitment required of councillors also has a direct bearing. The Panel have sought to make recommendations that will enable a diverse range of citizens are able to consider standing for election.

### **The Basic Allowance**

6.1 The Panel considered a range of evidence and opinion about the basic allowance. The Panel felt that, although there was general satisfaction with the level of basic allowance currently paid to councillors, care needed to be taken to ensure that the allowance properly covers the costs associated with undertaking the role of councillor, particularly for councillors in full or part-time employment who may need to take unpaid leave and experience a corresponding loss of pensionable pay in order to undertake their role. The Panel were also cognisant of the additional workloads placed on all councillors as a result of the rapid growth taking place in Milton Keynes and the increasing complexity of the role as a result of this.

6.2 The Panel feel that the basic allowance should be seen as covering the reasonable costs associated with holding the office of councillor. In light of the above, the Panel recommend that the basic allowance should be set at £10,500 per year from 1 April 2018

6.3 The Panel also recommend that the basic allowance should increase by 2% every year from 1 April 2019 for a period of four years. This increase is the same as that recently announced for local government staff. The Panel feels that this recommendation will address a shortcoming of the Council's current scheme of allowances in a sensible and sustainable way.

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

7.1 On the subject of special responsibility allowances (SRAs), the Panel heard a wide range of views on the different roles that are necessary in order to facilitate the operation of the new governance arrangements. In some cases the message was fairly clear and consistent, while in other cases – such as committee vice chairs - there was far less consensus.

7.2 The Panel reviewed each role individually, using the evidence supplied by councillors, as well as written material supplied by the Council, as the basis for evaluating each role and determining an appropriate allowance.

### 7.3 Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members

7.3.1 In the case of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet, the Panel were satisfied that councillors undertaking these roles continue to take on very significant decision making and other responsibilities. These include holding senior officers to account, negotiating with Government representatives and other external agencies and, in the case of the Leader, setting priorities for other decision makers and representing Milton Keynes at an international level. It was clear to the Panel that these roles also require a substantial time commitment. The Panel is satisfied that the allowance for both the Leader and members of the Cabinet are appropriate and should not be changed.

7.3.2 The Panel were, however, greatly concerned that the role of Deputy Leader is not recognised within Milton Keynes Council's scheme of allowances. The Panel have no doubt that the role of Deputy Leader is an important one which, by definition, is more onerous than that of Cabinet Member. The Panel also noted that Milton Keynes Council is the only one of the nearest neighbour authorities not to recognise the role of Deputy Leader within its scheme of allowances.

7.3.3 The Panel therefore recommend the following allowances:

Leader of the Council	£30,000
Deputy Leader of the Council	£15,000
Cabinet Member	£11,000

7.3.4 Additionally, the Panel could see no practical value in the application of a cap on the total cost of cabinet positions, particularly given the limitation on the size of the Cabinet prescribed by statute and the fact that no similar cap is in place for other positions such as scrutiny committee chairs. The Panel therefore recommend that the cap be removed from the scheme of allowances.

### 7.4 Overview and Scrutiny Committees

7.4.1 Unlike the Cabinet, roles associated with overview and scrutiny (Chair of Scrutiny Management Committee and Chairs of Scrutiny Committees) are not associated with significant decision making responsibility. The Panel felt that this continues to be an important distinction which must be taken into account. Nevertheless, the Panel acknowledge that scrutiny plays an important part in the governance of the Council, particularly at a time of significant challenge. It is clear to the Panel that the councillors responsible for leading the scrutiny function take on significant

responsibility in terms of holding decision makers (i.e. the Cabinet) and senior officers to account. The Panel acknowledges that chairing a scrutiny committee can be a time consuming role.

7.4.2 The Panel recommends no changes to the existing allowances:

Chair of Scrutiny Management Committee	£7,500
Chair of Scrutiny Committee	£4,500
Chair of Task and Finish Groups (pro-rata)	£4,500

## 7.5 Other Committees

7.5.1 The Panel acknowledged that chairing other committees (Licensing and Regulatory, Development Control, Audit Committee, Standards Committee and RegenerationMK Committee) are notable roles. The Panel are clear that councillors undertaking these roles are expected to carry out their duties diligently, but also acknowledged that the time commitment and level of subject matter knowledge required varied between committees.

7.5.2 The Panel heard a range of views about the role of vice chairs of these committees. Some councillors felt that vice chairs undertake an important and onerous role, while others felt that vice chairmanship of a committee is a developmental role which may be undertaken in preparation for a more onerous role in the future. The Panel considered this issue carefully but ultimately decided that, given the number of councillors who are already eligible to receive a special responsibility allowance, these roles do not merit an allowance

7.5.3 The Panel agreed that the allowances provided within the current scheme, and the relative hierarchy of roles, is correct. The Panel therefore recommend the following allowances:

Licensing and Regulatory Committee Chair	£8,000
Development Control Committee Chair	£8,000
Audit Committee Chair	£5,500
Standards Committee Chair	£3,000
RegenerationMK Committee Chair	£3,000

## 7.6 Opposition Group Leaders

7.6.1 The Panel felt that councillors undertaking the role of group leader undertake a responsible and demanding job, particularly given the current and historical political makeup of the Council.

7.6.2 The Panel recommend the following allowances:

Main Opposition Group Leader	£620 per group member
Smaller Opposition Group Leader	£620 per group member

## 7.7 Civic Allowances

7.7.1 Although civic allowances do not strictly form part of the Panel's remit, as they are included within the scheme of allowances the Panel saw fit to include these roles within their recommendations. The Panel recommend no changes to these allowances:

Mayor	£11,000
Deputy Mayor	£5,500

## 7.8 Indexation

7.8.1 The Panel considered the need to put in place a form of indexation for special responsibility allowances in order to ensure that the level of compensation provided to councillors who undertake these important roles does not fall behind the cost of living. The Panel discussed this point in depth and resolved to recommend that special responsibility allowances should increase by 2% every year from 1 April 2018 for a period of four years. It should be noted that one member of the Panel felt it was more appropriate to defer the introduction of this indexation until April 2019, for reasons of affordability. The remaining two members of the Panel, however, felt that this issue needed to be addressed immediately. This indexation should also apply to civic allowances.

## Other allowances and expenses

8.1 The Panel considered and reviewed all of the other allowances and expenses under their terms of reference (set out in section 3). They have decided to make the following recommendations:

- The dependents' and carers' allowance should be retained at the present rate (living wage in respect of child care, £10 per hour or Milton Keynes Council Home Help rate in respect of care for adults);
- The amounts payable for travel expenses should continue to be paid at the same rates as those paid to officers;
- The amounts payable for subsistence expenses should continue to be paid at the current rates; and

- The amounts payable to co-opted members should continue to be paid at the current rates.
- The Panel have recommended small clarifications to the list of approved duties for which expenses can be claimed.

### **Other recommendations**

9.1 The Panel heard much about the difficulties of balancing the demands associated with the role of councillor with employment and family life. The Panel were concerned to hear about the impact that this has on councillors, particularly when deciding whether to take on additional roles or even whether to re-stand for election once election.

9.2 The Panel therefore recommends that the Council should investigate ways of helping councillors manage their work-life balance effectively. This should extend to providing information about employment rights for councillors who are employed, as well as providing employers with information about the benefits of employing councillors.



**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON  
KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY**

***MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES  
2020/21***

# **THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND MILTON KEYNES FIRE AUTHORITY**

## **MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES**

### **Introduction**

1. This Scheme is governed by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 – “the regulations.”
2. Elected Members of the Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes Combined Fire Authority may claim basic allowances, special responsibility allowances, travelling allowances and subsistence allowances for approved duties in accordance with the provisions of this scheme.
3. Appointed (non elected) members may claim co-optees allowance, travelling allowances and subsistence allowances for approved duties specified in this scheme.
4. "Year" means the 12 months ending with 31 March.
5. The Scheme has four Schedules attached which are:
  - (a) Schedule 1 - Special Responsibility Allowances
  - (b) Schedule 2 - Payment of Travelling and Subsistence Allowances
  - (c) Schedule 3 - Duties Excluded from the Allowances Scheme
  - (d) Schedule 4 - Rates of Allowances

### **Creation and Amendment of the Scheme**

6. This scheme comes into effect on 1 April 2020.
7. For subsequent changes in basic allowances, special responsibility allowances and co-optees allowances, new rates will be payable from the date the amendment takes effect as set out either in this scheme or the Regulations.
8. The Fire Authority will be responsible for amending the scheme and in doing so will have regard to any recommendations to its constituent councils of the independent remuneration panels set up by them.

### **Basic Allowances**

9. The Fire Authority will pay equally to each Member of the Authority a basic allowance of an amount specified in Schedule 4.
10. Where the term of office of a Member begins or ends in the course of a financial year entitlement will be apportioned in accordance with the Regulations. The apportionment will not take place where a Member's term of office lasts less than one month.
11. Basic Allowances are payable monthly and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

12. The Fire Authority will pay each year to the Members of the Fire Authority who have special responsibilities by reason of the office(s) they hold the special responsibility allowances set out in Schedule 1.
13. Where a Member takes up or relinquishes any post that carries a special responsibility allowance in the course of a financial year the entitlement will be apportioned in accordance with the Regulations. The apportionment will not take place where a Member's term of office lasts less than one month.
14. Special responsibility allowances are payable in monthly instalments and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions. Where a Member is eligible for more than one special responsibility allowance (whether payable by the Fire Authority or another authority for Fire Authority duties) only the highest one will be payable, with the exception that a Lead Member may claim one Lead Member's Allowance in addition to one other Special Responsibility Allowance payable.

### **Approved Duties**

15. Travelling and Subsistence Allowances are payable monthly and are only payable to Elected Members of the Fire Authority for the approved duties set out in Schedule 2.

### **Co-optees Allowance**

16. A Co-optees Allowance may be paid to appointed members (i.e. non-Elected Members whether voting or not) for the performance of any approved duty as defined by this document.
17. The allowance will be payable in monthly instalments and are subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

## **Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**

18. The term "Member" for the purpose of travelling and subsistence allowances applies to any person who is a Member of the Fire Authority, or who is a member of any committee, sub-committee or panel of the Fire Authority, and so includes appointed non-elected members of those bodies. The payment of these allowances is dependent upon the performance of an "approved duty" which is an attendance as a member at a meeting, or the carrying on of a duty, set out in Schedule 2.
19. The rates for travel and subsistence allowances are specified in Schedule 4.

## **Allowances are Maxima**

20. The scales for all allowances are maxima and there is no obligation on any Member to claim any or all of the allowances.
21. A Member shall give notice in writing to the Chief Finance Officer that he/she elects to forego any part of his/her entitlement to an allowance under the scheme.

## **Social Functions and Occasions**

22. Elected Members on occasions are invited, or feel it necessary to attend functions, or occasions which have a social element. No allowances are paid to Members of the Fire Authority on these occasions unless the Member is undertaking the performance of a positive duty and one of significant size, e.g. making a speech or distributing prizes when travel and subsistence allowances may be paid. Merely to attend because the member is interested or represents people in the district is insufficient to justify payment of any allowances.

## **Conference Expenses**

23. If attendance at a conference has been approved by the Authority, conference expenses which are obligatory and outside the control of the Member, will be paid in advance on request or will be reimbursed. These expenses will include the conference fee. The actual cost of accommodation, meals and the like, will only be met or reimbursed if it is part of the inclusive charge for the conference or it is a requirement of the conference or its organisers that the Member should stay at a particular hotel.
24. Travel and subsistence allowances are payable where appropriate.

## **Telephones**

25. A mobile phone will be provided to the Chairman of the Fire Authority, with the cost of supply, rental and business calls being met by the Fire Authority.

## **Avoidance of Duplication**

26. A claim for an allowance under this scheme must include, or be accompanied by, a statement signed by the claimant that no other claim has been, or will be made for the matter to which the claim relates.

## **Records of Payments**

27. Records of payments made to Members are available for inspection free of charge by any local government elector of the Fire Authority.
28. A person entitled to inspect a record may make a copy of any part of it.
29. Details of total payments made to each Member for allowances under this scheme will be published as soon as practicable after the end of the year to which they relate.

## **Expense Claims**

30. All information requested for the expense claim must be provided, including the number of miles, the locations travelled from and to and the reason for travel. (It is always advisable for Members to make contemporaneous notes in their diary to assist in the completion of claims).
31. Claims for expenses should only be made when actually incurred, ie rail/bus, taxis, hotel accommodation. Receipts must be provided.
32. Claims for the same expenses (mileage, travel and subsistence etc) must not be made from more than one body.
33. Payments for basic and special responsibility allowances will be paid monthly in arrears and travel and subsistence payments will be paid monthly in arrears on the submission of a claim through the HR and Payroll Portal.
34. No claim from a Member for traveling or subsistence allowances which is submitted more than three months after the costs were incurred and no later than the end of April for the preceding financial year will be entertained, except in exceptional circumstances and approved in writing by the Chief Finance Officer.

## **SCHEDULE 1**

### **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES FROM APRIL 2020**

#### **Special Responsibility Allowance per annum**

• Position	£
• Chairman	12,708
• Vice-Chairman	4,259
• Chairman – Executive Committee	5,243
• Chairman – Overview and Audit Committee	3,434
• Chairman – Human Resources Sub-Committee	1,719
• Group Leaders	3,813
• Lead Members	3,314

## **SCHEDULE 2**

### **PAYMENT OF TRAVELLING AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES**

The duties in this Section have been approved for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances:

- (a) Attendance at a meeting of the Fire Authority;
- (b) Attendance at a meeting of any committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority;
- (c) Attendance at a meeting of any section, panel, working party or other meeting authorised by the Fire Authority or a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority or a joint committee of the Fire Authority and one or more other authorities to which the member has been specifically appointed provided that it is a meeting to which Members of at least two political groups have been invited.
- (d) Attendance at a meeting of an association of authorities of which the Fire Authority is a member and to which the member has been appointed by the Fire Authority to represent it.
- (e) Attendance at ad hoc meetings with other authorities, organisations or bodies authorised by a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable.
- (f) Attendance at briefing meetings to which Members of at least two political groups have been invited authorised by a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable.
- (g) Attendance at seminars and conferences arranged by the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable, about any of its functions.
- (h) Attendance at specific visits arranged by the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority, or the Director of Legal and Governance on the advice of the relevant Chairman or Vice-Chairman if this is not practicable, about any of its functions and where Members of at least two political groups have been invited.
- (i) Attendance at a meeting of any body or authority upon which the member has been appointed by the Fire Authority or a committee or sub-committee of the Fire Authority to represent it.

- (j) Attendance in connection with the discharge of any function of the Fire Authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Fire Authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises.
- (k) Attendance at meetings of bodies where the Fire Authority makes appointments, where the Fire Authority has a major influence at national, regional, county or district level. These bodies are listed below:
- (i) Local Government Association
  - (ii) Fire Commission
- (l) Attendance at any disciplinary, grievance, dismissal or appeals sub-committee or panel.
- (m) The following duties if approved by the Fire Authority or a Committee:
- Attendance at briefing meetings held for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the Fire Authority or any of its committees or sub-committees.
  - Attendance at the official opening of new Fire Authority establishments or projects.
  - Attendance by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Fire Authority and of committees at official functions in a representative capacity.
  - Duties undertaken by Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Fire Authority, committees or subcommittees acting in an official capacity.
  - Members' delegations to Government Departments.
  - Town Centre Management Meetings and Parishes.
- (n) Meetings organised by the Chief Fire Officer, Chief Finance Officer or Director of Legal and Governance or their nominated representatives with external bodies or persons to further the business and aims of the Fire Authority which the relevant officer certifies requires the attendance of members on the grounds of urgency which prevents approval being obtained from the Fire Authority, a committee or sub-committee

*Note: In authorising attendances in accordance with the above, no member, official or officer of the Fire Authority shall act in a discriminatory manner reflecting party political preference. Members, officials and officers should take care to ensure that their actions can not be construed as having been discriminatory.*

### **SCHEDULE 3**

#### **DUTIES EXCLUDED FROM THE ALLOWANCES SCHEME**

The duties in this Section are those for which the Fire Authority has decided that no allowances will be paid.

- Members' surgeries
- Political activities

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## **SCHEDULE 4**

### **RATES OF ALLOWANCES**

From April 2020 the following rates of allowances will apply

#### **Basic Allowance:**

£1,272 per annum

#### **Special Responsibility Allowances:**

See Schedule 1

#### **Co-optees Allowance**

£318 per annum

#### **Travel Allowances**

##### **(a) Car**

The rate for travel by a Member's own private motor vehicle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family or otherwise provided for his/her use, other than a solo motor cycle, shall be 45 pence for the first 10,000 miles and 25 pence for each mile after that.

##### **(b) Motorcycle**

The rate for travel by a Member's own motorcycle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family, or otherwise provided for his/her use, shall be 24 pence per mile.

##### **(c) Bicycle**

The rate for travel by a Member's own bicycle, or one belonging to a member of his/her family, or otherwise provided for his/her use, shall not exceed 20p a mile.

##### **(d) Public Transport**

Members can claim the full cost of travelling on public transport at standard class rates whilst carrying out Approved Duties, provided a valid receipt, bus ticket etc is produced to substantiate the claim.

#### **Subsistence**

The rate of subsistence allowance shall not exceed the amounts which can be claimed under the Buckinghamshire County Council Members Allowances Scheme applicable at the time when the cost is incurred.

#### **Uplift for Inflation**

Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-optees allowances will be adjusted for inflation each year until, but not beyond 1 April 2021, in line with the pay award for the Authority's staff on National Joint Council for Local Authorities' Fire and Rescue Services, Scheme of Conditions of Service (Grey Book).