

Part A

Report to: Council

Date of meeting: Tuesday, 31 January 2023

Report author: Democratic Services Manager

Title: Members Allowances 2022/2023

1.0 Summary

1.1 Council is asked to review the recommendation of the Independent Members Remuneration Panel following the agreement on the local government national pay negotiations for 2022.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Members do not accept the panel's recommendation and reject any increase	Potential for discouraging individuals in coming forward to stand for elected office.	Members to have regard to the advice from the panel.	Treat	1x2=2
Members do not accept the panel's recommendation and approve a higher percentage increase than recommended	There would be more pressure on the council's budget	Members to have regard to the advice from the panel.	Treat	1x2=2

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 To consider the Independent Members Remuneration Panel's suggestion that members allowance, as indicated in paragraph 4.7, be increased by 5% from 1 April 2022.

Further information:

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Report approved by: Carol Chen, Group Head of Democracy and Governance

4.0 Detailed proposal

- 4.1 In January 2022 Council agreed the Independent Member Remuneration Panel (IMRP) recommendations set out in the quadrennial review. As part of those recommendations the Mayoral remuneration, members' basic allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) should continue to be linked to the level of local government pay settlements.
- 4.2 At the time of the last review local government pay settlements tended to be increased by a percentage rather than a lump sum. Many other local authorities' member remuneration schemes contain similar wording.
- 4.3 Following the announcement of the local government pay award for 2022/23 the Group Head of Democracy and Governance contacted the chair of the IMRP to inform him of the award of a specific sum and to arrange a meeting between him, the Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager. The effect of a flat rate increase would be an increase to the basic allowance of approximately 65%. It was felt that the IMRP should be consulted about the increase and asked for their view.
- 4.4 The Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager had a telephone meeting with the IMRP Chair on 15 November 2022. It was agreed that the Democratic Services Manager would forward all relevant information about the pay award, the scheme prior to any pay award for 1 April 2022 and the National Employers pay update.
- 4.5 The IMRP Chair contacted the other panel members and considered all the relevant data supplied by the Democratic Services Manager and information gathered from other panels.
- 4.6 On 22 December 2022 the IMRP Chair contacted the Democratic Services Manager and advised that the panel had considered all the associated paperwork and other panels' deliberations. He responded as follows –

“ Firstly this review should be applied for this year only in case a similar settlement is agreed for next year, should we revert to the more normal % increase our previous recommendations would stand for the rest of the period.

We see the main criteria to ensure any increase maintains the general position of councillors allowances in terms of their fellow officers in other councils and we retain the ability to attract new councillors as required from a wide spectrum of backgrounds.

In line with this we consider an increase of 5% as being a happy medium. 4.04% is the percentage increase for London weighting which establishes some sort of benchmark, plus the average increase to the salary bill is circa 5.9%.”

He also advised that as a guide he was aware of one IMRP that was planning to recommend an increase of 6%.

4.7 It is to be noted that the recommended increase of 5% would only apply to the following allowances –

- Basic Allowance
- Special Responsibility Allowance
 - Portfolio Holder
 - Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Finance Scrutiny Committee, Development Management Committee; Licensing Committee, Audit Committee; Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Chairs of Council Functions Committee and Chief Officer Pay Panel (pro rata)
 - Group Leaders
- Mayor’s Allowance

4.8 Council is asked to consider the recommendation from the IMRP. If agreed the increase will be backdated to 1 April 2022.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the increase above budgeted levels will be met from the Council’s contingency for pay.

5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that council has to have regard to the views of the IMRP when considering any changes to members’ remuneration, however council is not obliged to accept their recommendations.

5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

5.3.1 As required by the regulations councillors should have regard to the recommendations of the IMRP. The basic allowance must be the same for all councillors.

5.3.2 Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

5.4 Staffing

5.4.1 Not applicable

5.5 Accommodation

5.5.1 Not applicable

5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder

5.6.1 Not applicable

5.7 Sustainability

5.7.1 Not applicable

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Members Allowances rates from 1 April 2022 (based on 5% increase)

Background papers

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

Members Allowances Scheme 2022-2026

Email correspondence with the Chair of the IMRP

Information related to the local government pay settlement for 2022/23