



Telford & Wrekin
C O U N C I L

Addenbrooke House Ironmasters Way Telford TF3 4NT

FULL COUNCIL

Date	Thursday, 19 September 2019	Time	6.00 pm
Venue	The Place, Limes Walk, Oakengates, Telford, TF2 6EP		

I am now able to enclose, for consideration at the above meeting of the Full Council the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

AGENDA No.

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BOROUGH OF TELFORD & WREKIN

COUNCIL: 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

SENIOR & STATUTORY FUNCTIONS & ALLOCATIONS

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FINANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES

1. PURPOSE

To approve the appointment of the Chief Executive and agree further interim arrangements until the new Chief Executive takes up their appointment.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

To agree the following recommendations as detailed in this report:

- 2.1 That the appointment of the new Chief Executive is made as recommended by the Personnel Board on the proposed terms and conditions set out in this report.
- 2.2 That the new Chief Executive is designated as Head of Paid Services from their commencement date
- 2.3 That the new Chief Executive fulfils the role of the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer from their commencement date
- 2.4 That, the Director of Customer, Neighbourhood and Well-Being Services continues to be designated Head of Paid Services and Council note that this arrangement will continue up until 1st Dec 2019 or until the new Chief Executive commences employment and that these dates can be amended by the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader.
- 2.5 That, the Monitoring Officer continues to fulfil the role of the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer and that Council note that this arrangement will continue up until 1st Dec 2019 or until the new Chief Executive commences employment and that these dates can be amended by the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader.
- 2.6 That the Council's Pay Policy be amended to reflect the permanent deletion of the Managing Director post and the permanent addition of the Chief Executive post including details of the salary of the new post.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

25th July 2019

4. **BACKGROUND**

The selection of a new permanent Chief Executive, who will be Head of Paid Services, has now been completed by Personnel Board following a rigorous external recruitment process.

The appointment of the permanent Head of Paid Service is a decision that needs to be approved by full Council on the recommendation of Personnel Board.

The approval of further interim arrangements of the role of the Head of Paid Service and that of Electoral Registration and (Local) Returning Officer is also required.

6. **NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The new post of Chief Executive was advertised nationally in the Municipal Journal and various on-line sites. External consultants were not employed, all recruitment and selection activities were completed in house.

In order to attract and secure the best candidate the salary of the post was advertised as 'competitive' with delegation to the HR manager after consultation with the leader to negotiate the remuneration package.

Four well qualified and experienced candidates were invited for assessment and following a rigorous process a preferred candidate was chosen by the Personnel Committee. The preferred candidate is an experienced Chief Executive in another local authority. In order to secure this candidate a salary of £155,000 per annum plus additional holiday entitlement was negotiated. It is also proposed that the new Chief Executive will be the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer, however it has also been negotiated that the Chief Executive will not receive any fees in respect of Borough and Parish Council elections. It is also noted that no relocation expenses are required.

The preferred candidate has a contractual notice requirement of 6 months, however it is anticipated that he will be released from his current employment to take up the Chief Executive post in December 2019.

7. **INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS**

It is proposed that the following arrangements are in place from 19th September 2019.

The Director of Customer, Neighbourhood and Well-Being Services will continue to be the most Senior Officer in the Council. He will have

responsibility as Head of Paid Service including all responsibilities delegated to the Chief Executive in the Council's Pay Policy Statement. The title of this interim role will be continue to be 'Chief Operating Officer'.

He will undertake such duties and responsibilities of the Chief Executive as agreed with the Leader of the Council and will be paid an honorarium equivalent to 50% of the difference between his current role and that of the new Chief Executive, £1,612 per month, with effect from 19th September 2019. This arrangement will be until 1st December 2019 or the commencement of the new Chief Executive whichever is the sooner. These dates can be amended by the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader.

The Monitoring Officer will continue to take on the role of the Local Returning Officer and Local Registration Officer on a temporary basis to ensure any potential elections can be completed in accordance with legal requirements. He will paid any necessary fees as set out in Council's Pay Policy. This arrangement will be until 1st December 2019 or the commencement of the new Chief Executive whichever is the sooner. These dates can be amended by the Assistant Director of Finance and Human Resources in consultation with the Leader.

8. LEGAL

The designation of Interim Head of Paid Service is a decision that needs to be approved by full Council on the recommendation of Personnel Committee and the appointment of the Local Registration Officer and Local Returning Officer are Council decisions.

The change in salary of the Head of Paid Service which has been recommended by Personnel Committee to full Council will require the Pay Policy to be amended accordingly.

The appointment of the permanent Head of Paid Service is a decision that needs to be approved by full Council on the recommendation of a Member Appointment Board.

9. FINANCE

There is, in the short term a salary saving from the Director acting up on an interim basis.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL

There are no environmental issues arising from this report.

11. EQUALITIES

The appointment was undertaken within the framework of the Council's Recruitment & Selection policy which addresses Equality and Diversity issues. The appointment was widely advertised nationally to attract a range of candidates. The successful candidate demonstrated a

personal commitment to equality of opportunities during the selection process and will be expected to do so during their tenure.

12. LINKS TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The appointment of a permanent, high quality Head of Paid Service is central to the delivery of all the community ambitions and in the realisation of the key priority areas

13. WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are Council wide implications in relation to this matter

Report prepared by Sue Wilson, HR Manager, 01952 38351

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL – 19 SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT FROM THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GOVERNANCE, PROCUREMENT AND COMMISSIONING

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR SHAUN DAVIES

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

Full Council is asked to consider the report received from the Independent Remuneration Panel with regards to Members’ Allowances.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that

2.1 Members consider the report received from the Independent Remuneration Panel and decide whether or not to accept the recommendations contained therein;

2.2 Members agree an implementation date for the new approved scheme, implementing it with effect from the start of the new administration in May 2019;

2.3 That Council record its thanks to Professor Steve Leach, Graham Wynn and Caro Hart for their hard work in undertaking and producing their report for consideration by Council; and

2.4 that Members consider the level of Civic Allowance to be paid to those holding the role of Mayor and Deputy Mayor and decide whether or not to accept the recommendations contained in this report.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	<i>These proposals contribute to all Council priorities as members’ allowances link to the ability to recruit, and therefore contribution to the priorities by, a broad cross-</i>

		<i>section of the community as Councillors.</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	<i>Not applicable</i>
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	Full Council is asked to consider the date for adoption of the proposals, if approved.	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	<i>The implementation of this new scheme will result in an additional £123k of cost in 19/20 which will be met by the Council contingency. The full year impact of the changes will be built into the Councils Service & Financial Planning Strategy as an ongoing cost.</i> <i>TAS 12.9.19</i>
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	<i>Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, a local authority must have in place a scheme setting out the level of allowances payable to Members. Prior to setting and/or amending any allowance scheme, a local authority must have regard to the report from an Independent Remuneration Panel.</i> <i>AL 9/9/2019</i>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	<i>Not applicable</i>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	<i>Borough-wide impact</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 At the Annual Council meeting in May, the Monitoring Officer strongly recommended that the authority convene an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to make recommendations regarding Members' allowances. This was because there had been no IRP meeting since 2010, the scheme could no longer take account of indexation provisions and it is best practice to review the scheme at least every four years.
- 4.2 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a copy of the report from the IRP. Attached at **Appendix 2** is a copy of the revised Members' Allowance Scheme that is being proposed by the IRP. A copy of the suggested Parental

Leave Policy referred to in the report of the IRP is attached at **Appendix 3**. A copy of the current Members' Allowances Scheme is available on the Council's website.

- 4.3 Having considered the contents of the report from the IRP, the Monitoring Officer takes the view that it is a well-reasoned report which clearly outlines the rationale behind the recommendations reached. The Council has discretion to accept the recommendations of the IRP in their entirety, in part or to reject them. In the event that Members choose to reject the recommendations, they should carefully consider the reasons for reaching that decision.
- 4.4 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, a local authority must have a Members' Allowance scheme setting out the level of basic allowances payable to elected Members. The Members' Allowance Scheme can also make provision for additional allowances. The allowances payable under the legislation are:-
- (a) Basic Allowance
 - (b) Special Responsibility Allowance
 - (c) Dependent Carer's Allowance
 - (d) Travelling and Subsistence Allowance
 - (e) Co-optee Allowance
- 4.5 The legislation requires a local authority to have regard to the recommendations made to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel before setting or amending a Members' Allowance Scheme. A notice publicising receipt of the IRP's report has also been placed in the Shropshire Star.
- 4.6 The guidance regarding members' allowances indicates that, whilst there is an element of voluntary time associated with the work undertaken by elected members, allowances should be set at a rate that encourages a broad cross-section of the local community to become Councillors so that everyone in the community is represented and local politics does not become the domain of the wealthy and retired.
- 4.7 In June 2019, the Council appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to consider the matter of Members' Allowances. The members of the IRP consisted of an independent chair, Professor Steve Leach, a senior member of the local voluntary sector, Caro Hart and a senior member of the local business sector, Graham Wynn.
- 4.8 The IRP's report sets out the consultation that has taken place with regards to Members' Allowances.
- 4.9 The Council must also decide the effective date for implementation of the recommendations. The Council held elections in May 2019 and it

would be appropriate to implement the recommendations of the Panel backdated to the commencement of the new administration in May 2019.

- 4.10 As well as considering the recommendations contained within the report from the IRP, Council must also consider whether or not to maintain, remove or amend the civic allowances paid to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Again, these have remained unchanged since 2010. The principle to be adopted for the civic allowance is that those who fulfil the role should not be 'out of pocket' by virtue of their role as Mayor/Deputy Mayor. Given that the IRP report sets out that there has been a real decrease in the value of allowances for Members, it is reasonable to think that the same rationale would apply to the Civic Allowances. Members may, therefore, consider it appropriate to adopt a similar approach in relation to these allowances.
- 4.11 Since 2010, the civic allowance payable to the Mayor has been £4,644 with the allowance payable to the Deputy Mayor being £2,479. Applying the same rationale as that set out in the IRP report would result in these being increased to £5,572 and £2,974 respectively.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Full Council Minute Number 18 – 23 May 2019
Full Council Minute Number 44 – 7 October 2010

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel - June 2010

**Report prepared by Anthea Lowe, Governance and Legal Service
Delivery Manager, 01952 383219**

1. Introduction

1.1 In June 2019, Telford and Wrekin Council requested the Independent Review Panel (IRP) to carry out a review of members allowances. The Panel was chaired by Steve Leach (Emeritus Professor of Local Government, De Montfort University) and included Dr Graham Wynn (local businessman and Chair of the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership) and Caro Hart (Chief Executive officer of Citizens Advice, Telford and Wrekin).

1.2 The Panel met on two occasions in 2019: July 15th, when it interviewed 17 council members: and on August 19th, when it discussed in private session the content of its draft report. The Panel is grateful to all the councillors who gave it the benefit of their experience and views, and to the council officers who arranged meetings and provided briefings and support.

1.3 The previous meeting of the Panel (same chair, different composition) was in June 2010, at a time when the coalition government's austerity programme had been announced. This Panel was asked to carry out a selective rather than a comprehensive review, primarily to make recommendations to respond to the post-2008 recession and the onset of austerity, and to focus on the structural changes introduced in the authority since 2008, when the last comprehensive review of members' allowances had taken place.

1.4 The 2010 Panel's view was that, in the economic circumstances of the time, no net increase in members' allowances should be recommended, a view which the council accepted (and had indeed advocated). Since 2010, no increase of any kind in members' allowances in the authority has taken place. This degree of abstinence is unusual; most councils have allocated small annual increases in members allowances which match those sanctioned by the government in relation to officers' pay, which over the period have varied between 0 and 3%. Had Telford and Wrekin followed this practice, members' allowances would have increased by around 8% between 2010 and 2019.

1.5 Over the period 2010-18 (the last year for which figures are available), there has been some variation in the calculation of the cumulative rate of inflation, depending on the criteria used. The retail price index indicates a 26% increase, average earnings 17% and the GDP inflator 14%. These three figures average out at 19%. Given that there is a further year of inflation to be added on (2018-19), the Panel felt it would be appropriate to use a figure of 20% in its calculations, which would, if anything, probably be an underestimate. The implication is that over this nine-year period the real value of members' allowances in the authority has fallen by the same figure – 20%.

2. Context and Analysis

2.1 In carrying out their reviews, IRPs typically adopt the following set of principles:-

*an assumption that part, but not all, of the time commitment of councillors should be viewed as an unpaid, voluntary input, reflecting a 'public service ethos'. The appropriate proportion is typically set at 50% of total time spent. The 50% that is earmarked for remuneration should be broadly comparable with parallel positions in other public sector bodies (e.g. the NHS).

*it is important to design the allowances system in such a way as to maximise the feasibility of as wide a range of people standing for election as possible, in order to facilitate a more representative mix of councillors (age, sex, social class, ethnicity etc). There are other considerations affecting such choices (e.g. provision for childcare or care of dependents) but the level of allowances paid is widely acknowledged to be an important factor, particularly for those in part-time work, shift work or who would otherwise face loss of earnings if they were to become a councillor.

*although panels may wish to take into account the economic climate in which councils operate, their primary task is to make recommendations reflecting what they consider to be fair rates of remuneration for the various roles concerned. If a council does not wish to implement such recommendations (e.g. in times of austerity), that is their choice.

* levels of remuneration in an authority should be broadly in line with those paid in comparable local authorities.

* if a councillor holds more than one position for which a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) has been designated, then he or she should be eligible for only one such payment (the higher of the two).

2.2. All these principles were adopted by the Panel, although the last (only one SRA claimable) has been challenged in some recent panel reports. The Panel was particularly impressed by the fact that, in the recent (2019) election, considerable progress was made in Telford and Wrekin towards the goal of a more diverse and representative council. There are now more women and more younger members on the council than was previously the case. But there is still some way to go. The Panel was concerned to ensure that its recommendations contributed to the achievement of this goal.

2.3. In examining the evidence on the comparability principle, the Panel collected data on allowances paid in the fifteen authorities with which Telford is seen to have most common characteristics. It also accessed similar data from the West Midlands MDCs (excluding Birmingham) and the two counties to the east of Telford (Shropshire and Herefordshire: the three make up the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership area), In each case, across the whole range of allowances (Basic Allowance and SRAs), the conclusion was that those paid in Telford and Wrekin were substantially below the average, as the Table below illustrates.

Table of Allowances paid in comparable authorities.

	Telford and Wrekin	15 Comparator Authorities	Shropshire	Herefordshire	West Midlands [^] MDCs
Basic Allowance	7,870	10,188	11,514	7,423	10,450
Leader's SRA	23,768	31,440	23,028	29,692	23,806
Deputy Leader	15,898	17,332	14,392	12,990	16,457
Opposition Leader	9,837	11,119	5,757	----	7,412
Minority Party Leaders	3,664	2,238	-----	1,634	----

Cabinet Member	11,805	14,509	11,514	12,990	11,507
Scrutiny Chair	7,139	7,648	11,514	9,279	8,296
Chair of Planning	7,870	8,651	17,250*	9,279	8,596
Chair of Licensing	7,870	8,223	5,750**	5,567	7,545
Chair of Audit	7,870	6,393	5,750	5,567	6,714
Chair of Standards	3,935	5,487	-----	----	4,807

Notes

^excluding Birmingham, on account of its untypically large population size

**Shropshire operates an area-based system of planning control. The three chairs each receive 5,750.*

***The licensing function in Shropshire is split between two committees, whose chairs each receive 2,875.*

2.4 Furthermore, over the period 2010-2019, when member allowances in Telford and Wrekin were at a standstill, it became clear to the Panel from the evidence it received that pressures on members' time – both at executive and constituency level – have increased significantly, as have the responsibilities attached to their roles. The main reasons are as follows:-

- *the growth in Telford's population and economic infrastructure during this period, with all the development pressures involved.

- *the challenges of managing austerity – arguably more difficult than managing in a time of financial growth, because of the painful resource allocation decisions which have to be made.

- *the increased scope and demands of partnership working – particularly for the executive- both in Telford itself, and in the wider context of the West Midlands Combined Authority, and being a member of the Marches LEP.

- *because of cutbacks in staffing at all levels, there will inevitably have been less support and advice available from the officer structure (though the quality of officer support is

widely recognised). As a result, members have had to spend more time 'filling the gaps' themselves (e.g. in relation to overview and scrutiny).

*the increased use of social media has increased the pressure on councillors at both executive and constituency levels, and the time needed to respond to such communication. Many councillors told us that the expectations amongst their constituents that they would get a speedy (if not instant) response to the problems they raised meant that being a councillor felt increasingly like a 24/7 job!

2.5 For all these reasons, the Panel was clear that substantial increases in members allowances across the board in Telford and Wrekin were justified. In particular, the Panel placed emphasis on the need to encourage a more representative mix of candidates (see 2.2 above), the need to respond to the 20% reduction in the real value of member allowances since 2010, the evidence on the increased pressures on members roles responsibilities and time commitment (see 2.4 above) and the importance of remedying the disparities between the allowances paid in Telford and Wrekin and those paid in comparable authorities. (see 2.3 above).

2.6 All the evidence is that councillors in Telford have responded positively and responsibly to these increased pressures. Members of all parties referred to ways in which they had sought to enhance public involvement in their patches, one example being the 'ward walkabouts' The importance of the role of councillors and the responsibilities they exercise should not be underestimated, particularly at a time of austerity, and when there are formidable challenges in dealing with child safeguarding, and social care. Councillors are responsible for managing a multi-million-pound enterprise. Levels of remuneration are derisory compared with those received in the private sector. The Panel's view is that this is the right time to acknowledge the value of the roles they play and to update and upgrade the allowances system accordingly.

2.7 The starting point for the Panel in framing its recommendations was that at the very least, the 20% fall in value of councillors' allowances since 2010 should be fully restored (a minimum increase would be 8% , to retain parity with the increase in offices pay since 2010, although the Panel felt that this would be an inappropriately limited response). As it happens, a 20% increase would also bring Telford and Wrekin closer to the average value of allowances paid in comparable authorities. In principle, there is a case for a higher level of

increase to respond to the increased responsibilities which have faced councillors at all levels since 2010 (see 2.4 above) but the Panel felt that, until there is an end to austerity, to recommend increases of more than 20% would risk public misunderstanding and opposition.

2.8 Although a 20% increase is the baseline, the Panel felt that in some cases, an increase of more than 20% was justified, and in others an increase of less than 20%. Also, it heard evidence that since 2010, there were some positions to which SRAs were attached where the responsibilities involved in the post had clearly diminished, whilst other positions created since 2010 merited an SRA which had not to date been allocated. The Panel, in these circumstances, felt it was right to vary the level of increase recommended, within an overall 20% guideline.

3. Recommendations

The Basic Allowance

3.1 The current basic allowance in Telford and Wrekin is set at £7,870. Applying the 20% increase figure would increase it to £9,444, which is the Panel's recommendation. This change would move the basic allowance closer to the mean (10,188) in Telford's 15 comparator authorities.

Leader and Cabinet

3.2 Applying the same 20% increase criterion would result in the Council Leader's SRA being increased from £23, 678 to £27,704 and the Deputy Leader's SRA from £15,898 to £19 067. But the Panel was aware that the Deputy Leader's SRA was much closer to the mean (8% below) than was the Leader's (25% below). Although the challenges facing the local authority leadership group (see 2.4 above) has affected all its members, some of those challenges were likely to have fallen on the shoulders of the council leader him (or her) self, particularly the demands associated with Telford's membership of the West Midlands Combined Authority. For both these reasons, the Panel felt it to be appropriate that the allocation of the increases in the SRAs for these two positions should be weighted in favour of the leader, on a two -thirds/one third basis. This would result in the leader's SRA being increased by £5,295 from £23,768 to £29,063, and the deputy leader's SRA by £2,648, from £15,898 to £18,647. These are the Panel's recommendations.

3.3. A similar argument was made to the Panel that it should recommend differential increases amongst the other members of the cabinet. Although all the portfolios involve significant responsibilities, with their associated vulnerabilities, it was argued that three of the portfolios: 'Finance, Commercial Services and the Borough Economy', 'Children, Young People and Education' and 'Health and Social Care' are at the present time particularly stressful and demanding roles (consider for example the pressures involved in the responsibility for vulnerable young people, dealing with the growing demand for social care in the borough on a budget that can't keep pace with it, and the difficulties of recommending cuts to valued services at a time of austerity). The Panel considered that there was substance in this argument, but that to recommend a differential increase amongst cabinet members, it would need more detailed evidence regarding the time commitments and scope of responsibilities involved in the different cabinet posts. As a result, the recommendation of the Panel is that the SRA for all other cabinet posts should be increase by 20% from £11,805 to £14,166.

Opposition and minority party leaders

3.4 The Panel's recommendation is that the SRA of the principal opposition leader be raised by 20% from £9,837 to £11,804, and that of the leader of any minority party with a membership of four or more (7.5% of council membership) be raised on the same basis from £3,664 to £4,397.

The Overview and Scrutiny function

3.5 Overview and scrutiny plays a crucial role as a democratic 'checks and balance' mechanism at a time when decision-making power has been concentrated within the cabinet. It is important that its contribution is recognised in the allowances system. In 2010, when the last IRP exercise took place, the arrangements for overview and scrutiny were in a state of transition, with the role of the Scrutiny Management Board (then the Scrutiny Commission) in the process of being allocated a much more limited role than it had previously enjoyed. Following the May 2019 election, the new administration has revived the strategic and coordinative roles of the Management Board, In these circumstances, the Panel felt it was appropriate to reinstate the SRA for the chair of the Management Board, at

a higher level than that for the chairs of the five separate scrutiny panels, currently set at £7,139.

3.6 However it would appear the council has not responded to the concerns expressed in para 2.11 of the Panel's 2010 report, which noted that all the chairs of scrutiny panels were to be allocated to members of the majority party and added 'this arrangement, although not unique, is now unusual and is not regarded as 'best practice'the Panel was concerned that the crucial role of 'holding the executive to account' could (in these circumstances) be adversely affected'. This still appears to be the situation.

3.7 It is also the case that, unlike most other SRAs, those attached to chairs of scrutiny panels in Telford and Wrekin are close to the mean value of SRAs in such positions for the authority's 15 comparator authorities. For both these reasons, the Panel felt it would not be appropriate to apply the 20% increase to SRAs for chairs of scrutiny panels, as to do so would result in their ending up 10% above this mean value. The Panel's view is that an increase of 10% should be recommended for these positions, raising the SRAs from £7,139 to £7,843, which is close to the mean comparator value. However, to recognise the higher profile now given to the chair of the Scrutiny Management Board, the panel recommends that for this position, the 20% criterion should be applied, which would result in an SRA of £8,557.

Regulatory and Governance Committees

3.8 There are in Telford and Wrekin, as elsewhere, a number of regulatory and other committees, some of which have SRAs assigned to them under the current scheme, others of which do not. Of the two regulatory committees, the Panel was left in no doubt as to the high levels of time commitment and responsibility involved in the work of the Planning Committee, heightened by the amount of new development taking place in the council's area. The 20% criterion should, it felt, certainly be applied in this instance; the Panel's recommendation is that this SRA should be increased from £7,870 to £9,444.

3.9 Although a view was expressed to the Panel that the workload and responsibilities of the Licensing Committee were not commensurate with those of the Planning Committee, the Panel again felt it would need more substantive evidence if it were to differentiate between

the two positions. As a result, the Panel's recommendation is that the SRA for the Chair of Licensing should also be increased from £7,870 to £9,444.

3.10 With regard to the role of the Audit Committee, the Panel was informed that its range of responsibilities had significantly reduced in recent years. In this case, the Panel felt that a status quo recommendation was appropriate, which means that the reduction in workload is reflected in the de facto reduction implied by not compensating for inflation over the 2010-2019 period. There may be a case that a further reduction in SRAs for this position could be justified, but the Panel would need more detailed evidence of the changes in workload involved to move in this direction.

3.11 There are three other positions to which SRAs have been allocated in Telford - the Chair of Standards, the Chair of Appeals and the Speaker. An SRA for the Speaker was not recommended in the Panel's 2010 report but has since been reintroduced at its former level of £2,606. The evidence presented to the Panel argued that this position did indeed play a valuable role in the planning and smooth-running of council business, and was felt to justify a relatively modest SRA. The SRA for the Chair of Standards was reduced in 2010 to £3,935, and the current Panel saw no reason to reverse that change. The chair of Appeals currently receives an SRA of £2,361. No arguments were presented to the Panel that this figure should be increased; indeed, there was a view that it should be discontinued. Again, the Panel would need more detailed evidence if it were to recommend this proposal. If, in any municipal year, it was to transpire that no meetings were required of either or both of the Appeals and Standards Committees, then the SRA should not be paid.

3.12 There are three other committees in Telford whose chairs do not currently receive an SRA – the Council Constitution Committee, the Boundary Review Committee and the Personnel Committee. The same is true of the chair of the Health and Well-Being Board. No representations were received by the Panel that chair of the Council Constitution Committee should be allocated an SRA, so no such recommendation has been made. It is understood that the council leader chairs the Personnel Committee as and when it meets. Whilst this remains the practice, there is no case for allocating an SRA for this role. The Panel learned that there was a significant workload involved (and planned) in the Boundary Review Committee, with a parish boundary review scheduled within the next year. The Panel was of the view that a (relatively modest) SRA was appropriate for the chair of this committee.

3.13 The Health and Well-Being Board is an increasingly important and influential element in Telford's decision-making structure, bringing together as it does the key partners and stakeholders concerned with this wide-ranging agenda. Currently, the Board is chaired by the cabinet member for social care and health (who would not be able to claim the SRA for this role, if one were made available), but this is not a requirement, and if the Board were to be chaired by another councillor, the Panel was clear that the payment of an SRA would be justifiable. This is the practice in an increasing number of authorities (although by no means all).

3.14 The Panel then had to make judgements as to the levels of responsibility involved for those committee (or board) chairs, where it felt that an SRA payment was justified. On the basis of the evidence presented to it, it concluded that the responsibilities of the Health and Well-Being Board were broadly equivalent to (although different from) those held by the chairs of the Licensing and Audit Committee and would recommend an equivalent SRA (£7,870) for this position. The chairs of the Boundary Review and Standards Committees it felt should be pitched at half this figure – that of £3,935 currently allocated to chair of Standards. The SRAs of the Speaker and the chair of the Appeals Committee should be set at the current level allocated to the former, plus 10%, which comes to £2,867.

3.16 There are several co-optee positions included in the membership of committees and panels in Telford and Wrekin, for which an SRA of £260 per annum is currently payable. It would be consistent that this SRA should also be increased by 20% to £312 per annum, which is the Panel's recommendation

3.16 The various recommendations discussed and set out in this section are listed in summary form in Section 5 of this report, together with the Panel's other recommendations, which are discussed below

4. Other Issues and Recommendations

4.1 There were a range of other remuneration and allowances issues which the Panel was asked to consider. These include the allowances for the mayor and deputy mayor: the criterion that should be used for the annual updating of members allowances: the level at

which allowances for child care and dependent adult carers allowances should be set: the provision that should be made for councillors eligible for maternity or paternity leave: and the case for backdating the allowances recommended by the panel to May 2019.

4.2 Technically, the allowances paid to the mayor and deputy mayor do not form part of the formal schedule of allowances; they are considered separately and specified at the discretion of the council itself. The only point the Panel would wish to make is that, having heard from previous incumbents of these roles that their allowances did not cover the expenses incurred, it was clear that this discrepancy needs attention. If it is actually costing council members who take on this role (i.e. that the allowances paid do not cover requisite expenditure), then the implication is that councillors who might be eligible for these roles and would perform them admirably may be dissuaded from taking them on, if they are on low incomes and feel they could not afford the expenditure involved. The Panel recommends that the council undertake a review of the actual expenditure involved in carrying out the duties of mayor and deputy mayor and pitches the level of allowances accordingly. If necessary, the allowance could be regulated flexibly by using receipts to determine actual, as opposed to assumed expenditure. The aim should be that neither mayor nor deputy mayor should be out-of-pocket at the end of his or her term of office.

4.3 Since the onset of austerity in 2010, the government has each year specified the maximum allowable percentage increase in salary for local government officers. Almost all authorities have adopted this level of increase as the criterion for annual updates of members allowances. The Panel recommends that this criterion – parity with the percentage increase in the NJC scale officers award – should be used in Telford, until such time as the government has ceased to specify annual permissible levels of officer salary increase, in which case an index based on changes in annual cost of living should be deployed.

4.4 As a contribution to the aim of encouraging as wide a diversity of candidates for election as possible, the Panel recommends that the hourly living wage should be used as the basis for claims for childcare and dependent adult carers' allowances. The council may wish to regulate such claims by requiring the production of receipts. But the Panel felt that a degree of flexibility should be encouraged here. If a councillor was a de facto dependent carer, and needed more extensive coverage, when engaged on council business than would normally

be the case, then they should be able to make a special case to the council and expect a sympathetic response.

4.5 The Panel was asked to consider what provision should be made for maternity and paternity leave. It studied a Labour Party document entitled 'Parental Leave Policy for Councils' and concluded that this document provided helpful and appropriate guidance, and recommends its adoption as council policy, as part of the Allowances Scheme. One important element in this guidance is that if a member is required to replace a member on maternity or paternity leave in a position which qualifies for an SRA, for a significant period of time (3-12 months) then the replacement councillor should be paid the relevant SRA, proportionally to the time they hold the position concerned. At the same time, the relevant SRA should continue to be paid in full to the councillor on maternity or paternity leave.

4.6 If the council wished to backdate the allowances recommended by the Panel to May 2019, when the local election took place, this would be acceptable to the Panel. Other alternatives would be to introduce the new schedule in September 2019, following the council meeting of that month, or to introduce it at the start of the 2020-21 municipal year.

4.7 No representations were made to the Panel regarding travel, subsistence or other expenses for councillors. As a result, no changes are proposed by the Panel.

Summary of Recommendations

- (1) The Basic Allowance should be increased from £7,870 to £9,444
- (2) The SRA for the Leader of the Council should be increased from £23,768 to £29,603.
- (3) The SRA for the Deputy Leader should be increased from £15,898 to £18,647.
- (4) The SRAs for all other members of the cabinet should be increased from £11,805 to £14,166
- (5) The SRA for the Leader of the Opposition should be increased from £9,837 to £11,804.
- (6) The SRA for the Leaders of other minority parties should be increased from £3,664 to £4,397, for party groups of four or more.
- (7) The SRA for the Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board should be set at £8,557.
- (8) The SRAs for the Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels should be increased from £7,139 to £7,843.

- (9) The SRA for the Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees should be increased from £7,870 to £9,444.
- (10) The SRA for the Chair of the Audit Committee should remain at £7,870.
- (11) The SRA for the Chair of the Health and Well-Being Board should be set at £7,870
- (12) The SRAs for the Chairs of the Standards Committee and the Boundary Review Committee should be set at £3,935.
- (13) The SRAs for the Chair of the Appeals Committee and the role of Speaker should be set at £2,867.
- (14) The SRA paid to co-optees on council committees and panels should be increased from £260 to £312.
- (15) The allowances paid to the mayor and deputy mayor should be reviewed by the council and set at a level which ensures that neither should be out-of-pocket in carrying out their duties.
- (16) The criterion used in the annual updating of members allowances should be equivalence with the pay award permitted by the government to officers. As and when such restrictions cease, a criterion based on annual cost-of-living increases.
- (17) The hourly maximum Carers Allowance and Dependent Adult Carers Allowance payable should be set at the level of the living wage (currently £9). In exceptional circumstances it should be possible for a councillor to make a special case to the council and expect a sympathetic response.
- (18) The document 'Parental Leave Policy for Councils' should be adopted as council policy and form part of the Allowances Scheme. .
- (19) The Panel would support a decision on the part of the Council to backdate any changes in allowances agreed at the September Council meeting to the start of the 2019-20 municipal year.
- (20) If a member qualifies for more than one SRA by virtue of positions held, he or she should only be paid one such allowance (the higher)

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the overall cost to the council of the proposals made by the Panel would be close to £123,000, an increase of 20% on the current allowances figure. The new total allowances figure represents .175% of the council's total revenue budget, in the Panel's view a perfectly acceptable 'cost of democracy'. In the interviews with councillors, a clear pattern emerged of the time commitment put in by councillors of various categories. Those operating at cabinet level argued that it was close to

the equivalent of a full-time job – 30-35 hours per week. Those not holding positions of responsibility typically claimed that they spent 20-25 hours a week on council business. If the principle that councillors should be expected to give half their time commitment on a voluntary basis, and be remunerated for the other half, then the hourly rate they would receive if the Panel's proposals were to be implemented would work out at £16 for the former and £28 for the latter, arguably meagre reward for the importance of the work they do. To re-iterate the point made above (2.4) 'Councillors are responsible for running a multi-million-pound enterprise. In the Panel's view this is the right time to acknowledge the value of the roles they play, and to update and upgrade the allowances they receive'.

DRAFT Members' Remuneration Scheme

The Members Remuneration Scheme for 201X/XX provided for:-

1. All Members to receive a basic allowance, currently £9,444
2. The following positions attract a special responsibility allowance (SRA) (in addition to the basic allowance).

Speaker	£ 2,867.00
Chairman of Cabinet/Leader	£29,603.00
Deputy Leader	£18,647.00
Cabinet Member (Cabinet must consist of between 3 and 10 members including the Leader)	£14,166.00
Chairman of Scrutiny Management Board	£ 8,557.00
Chairman of Scrutiny Panels	£ 7,843.00
Main Opposition Group Leader	£11,804.00
Minority Opposition Group Leaders (groups of 4 or more)	£ 4,397.00
Chairman of Planning Committee	£ 9,444.00
Chairman of Licensing Committee	£ 9,444.00
Chairman of Audit Committee	£ 7,870.00
Chairman of Health and Wellbeing Board	£ 7,870.00
Chairman of Standards Committee	£ 3,935.00
Chairman of Boundary Review Committee	£ 3,935.00
Chairman of Appeals Committee	£ 2,867.00

It is a condition of the Scheme that a Member can receive no more than one SRA even if he/she occupies more than one position which has an SRA entitlement.

3. The Council also appoints to the following positions where an SRA does not apply:-

Deputy Speaker
Chairman of Council Constitution Committee
Chairman of Personnel Committee (traditionally the Leader)

4. Allowances are also paid to Members appointed to:-

Combined Fire Authority	£ 2,716.00
Police & Crime Panel	Reasonable reimbursement of expenses

5. The Council also appoints to the following positions which are paid a "Civic Allowance":-

Mayor	£ XXXX
Deputy Mayor	£ XXXX

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Parental Leave Policy for Councils

Introduction

This Policy sets out Members' entitlement to maternity, paternity, shared parental and adoption leave and relevant allowances.

The objective of the policy is to ensure that insofar as possible Members are able to take appropriate leave at the time of birth or adoption, that both parents are able to take leave, and that reasonable and adequate arrangements are in place to provide cover for portfolio-holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) during any period of leave taken.

Improved provision for new parents will contribute towards increasing the diversity of experience, age and background of local authority councillors. It will also assist with retaining experienced councillors – particularly women – and making public office more accessible to individuals who might otherwise feel excluded from it.

There is at present no legal right to parental leave of any kind for people in elected public office. This applies to MPs as well as councillors, and has been the subject of lengthy debate. These policies can therefore only currently be implemented on a voluntary basis, although Labour Councils are encouraged to implement them as per the Labour Party Democracy Review which has called for Labour-controlled councils and Labour Groups to adopt a parental leave policy. Discussions are ongoing about changing the law to enable compulsory provision, but until then these policies constitute best practice which Labour Groups (and the councils they control) are strongly advised to adopt.

Legal advice has been taken on these policies, and they conform with current requirements.

1. Leave Periods

1.1 Members giving birth are entitled to up to 6 months maternity leave from the due date, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.

1.2 In addition, where the birth is premature, the Member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition to the 6 months' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial 6 months.

1.3 In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total 52 week entitlement.

1.4 Members shall be entitled to take a minimum of 2 weeks paternity leave if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).

1.5 A Member who has made Shared Parental Leave arrangements through their employment is requested to advise the Council of these at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to replicate such arrangements in terms of leave from Council.

1.6 Where both parents are Members leave may be shared up to a maximum of 24 weeks for the first six months and 26 weeks for any leave agreed thereafter, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.

1.7 A Member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to six months adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by agreement if required.

1.8 Any Member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six month period unless the Council Meeting agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six month period.

1.9 Any Member intending to take maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.

1.10 Any member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.

2. Basic Allowance

2.1 All Members shall continue to receive their Basic Allowance in full whilst on maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

3.1 Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance shall continue to receive their allowance in full in the case of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave.

3.2 Where a replacement is appointed to cover the period of absence that person shall receive an SRA on a pro rata basis for the period of the temporary appointment.

3.3 The payment of Special Responsibility Allowances, whether to the primary SRA holder or a replacement, during a period of maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave shall continue for a period of six months, or until the date of the

next Annual Meeting of the Council, or until the date when the member taking leave is up for election (whichever is soonest). At such a point, the position will be reviewed, and will be subject to a possible extension for a further six month period.

3.4 Should a Member appointed to replace the member on maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave already hold a remunerated position, the ordinary rules relating to payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowances shall apply.

3.5 Unless the Member taking leave is removed from their post at an Annual General Meeting of the Council whilst on leave, or unless the Party to which they belong loses control of the Council during their leave period, they shall return at the end of their leave period to the same post, or to an alternative post with equivalent status and remuneration which they held before the leave began.

4. Resigning from Office and Elections

4.1 If a Member decides not to return at the end of their maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave they must notify the Council at the earliest possible opportunity. All allowances will cease from the effective resignation date.

4.2 If an election is held during the Member's maternity, paternity, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.

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