

# NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE

7 November 2023

### Report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances for 2024-25

#### Report of the Assistant Chief Executive Legal and Democratic Services

#### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To enable the Executive to consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances and to make recommendations to the meeting of Council on 15 November 2023.

#### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Member Allowances is attached at Appendix 1 for consideration by the Executive.
- 2.2 The report makes recommendations for the Basic Allowance and the Special Responsibility Allowances for councillors in 2024-25, which is the second year of the new unitary North Yorkshire Council.

#### **3.0 PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 In formulating its proposal, the Panel considered the following factors:
- a) Councillors are not remunerated as employees; they are elected to fulfil important roles on behalf of the public. Nevertheless, the proposed Basic Allowance reflects the considerable time commitment required for the proper and conscientious fulfilment of duties.
  - b) The reconfiguration of local government in North Yorkshire and the effect that the overall reduction in Councillors, from 319 to 90, has had on the workload of those elected to the new North Yorkshire Council.
  - c) The need to attract and retain high-quality candidates from a variety of backgrounds; the Panel considered that the Basic Allowance should not be a financial disincentive to those who might otherwise wish to serve as an elected Member.
  - d) The general economic climate, including recent increases in the cost of living.
  - e) The level of the Basic Allowance paid by comparable local authorities.
  - f) Budgetary constraints on North Yorkshire Council.
- 3.2 The Panel reviewed comparator data from other, similar local authorities regarding the basic and special responsibility allowances. The Panel also prepared and circulated a detailed questionnaire to all 90 Councillors. One of the key questions in the questionnaire was to offer an invitation to Councillors to meet with the Panel and elaborate upon the comments that they had made in the questionnaire.

3.3 The Independent Remuneration Panel has proposed:

- An increase in annual the Basic Allowance of £1,500, from £15,500 to £17,000. This will result in an increase in the total annual amount paid of £135,000 (from £1,395,000 to £1,530,000).
- An increase of 2% in the Special Responsibility Allowances paid, with the exception of sessional payments to Chairs of the Licensing Sub-Committees. This will result in an increase in the total annual amount paid of £10,514 (from £450,686 to £461,200).

3.4 The current and proposed Special Responsibility Allowances are listed in detail in the appendices to the attached report at Appendix 1.

3.5 The Panel also recommended that, if there are any increases in the travel and subsistence rates payable to staff, a similar increase should be made to the rates in the Members' Allowances Scheme to come into effect at the same time.

## **4.0 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION**

4.1 In line with the Members' Allowances Regulations and previous practice, a notice publicising the report of the Panel was placed in the Yorkshire Post on 18 October 2023 and also on the County Council's website – [Councillor allowances | North Yorkshire Council](#). A copy of the report has been made available for public inspection at County Hall.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 In total, the proposed increases to allowances for 2024-25 are £145,514 (from £1,845,686 to £1,991,200). This increase is in the context of savings of £714,621 made in 2023/24; and being 0.01% of the overall Council budget of £1.4 billion. The financial implications are detailed in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances, at Appendix 1.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The legal implications are detailed in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances, at Appendix 1.

## **7.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific climate change implications arising out of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances, at Appendix 1.

## **8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The equalities implications are detailed in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances, at Appendix 1. When setting the allowances, consideration is given as to how the allowances enable the Council to attract high quality candidates to stand as councillors, from a wide variety of backgrounds, whilst also ensuring that financial barriers to anyone who wishes to stand for election are minimised. A copy of the initial equality impact assessment screening form is attached at Appendix 2.

## **9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Executive consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances and to make recommendations to the meeting of Council on 15 November 2023 regarding the recommended Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2024-25.

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Background papers: North Yorkshire Council Constitution - [NYCConstitutionVersion3July2023.pdf](#)  
([northyorks.gov.uk](http://northyorks.gov.uk))

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