

# NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

## EXECUTIVE

15 October 2024

### Report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Member Allowances for 2025-26

#### 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 13 November 2024.

#### **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 2025-26, which is the third 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 inflation rates.
  - 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 repeated last year's invitation to all councillors to make representations. Information was also sought from the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Area Planning Committees and members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel regarding their workload and their roles and responsibilities.

3.3 The Independent Remuneration Panel has proposed:

- The Basic Allowance (BA) paid to each councillor should increase to £17,340, a 2% inflationary increase over the 2024-25 allowance of £17,000.
- There should be no general increase in the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) paid to those councillors who take on additional duties and responsibilities.
- New SRAs are recommended for the Vice-Chairs of the six Area Committees and the new Development Plan Committee.
- The SRA paid to the Chair of the Licensing Sub-Committees should be amended so that it is apportioned between the Chair and other members hearing appeals.
- The SRAs paid to the councillor members of the North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel should be reduced.
- The remuneration received by councillor directors of Yorwaste Ltd., a company owned by North Yorkshire Council (the Council), should be reduced.

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 7 October 2024 and also on the 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 The proposed 2% inflationary increase in the Basic Allowance will cost an additional £30,600 per annum, increasing the total cost from £1,530,000 to £1,560,600 per annum.

5.2 The proposed changes to the Special Responsibility Allowances will result in an additional £2,698 per annum increasing from £459,702 to £462,400 per annum.

5.3 The overall increase in cost of the recommended changes to the allowances paid to councillors in 2025-26 would, therefore, be £33,298.

5.4 The financial implications are also 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. 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 13 November 2024 regarding the recommended Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2025-26.

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Background papers: North Yorkshire Council Constitution - [NYC Constitution - Version 8 - July 2024.pdf \(northyorks.gov.uk\)](#)

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7 October 2024