



Extraordinary Council

2 May 2023

Title	Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24
Report of	Head of Governance
Wards	N/A
Status	Public
Enclosures	Appendix A: The Remuneration of Councillors in London – Report of the Independent Panel, January 2022 Appendix B: Proposed Members Allowances Scheme 2023/24
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Summary

The Council is required, if it wishes to pay such allowances, to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme on an annual basis with effect from 1 April each year. A scheme was adopted at Council on 28 February 2023 for 2023/24.

The Council is expected to change its governance arrangements from a Committee System to an Executive system effective from Annual Council on 23 May 2023. This change means that the existing scheme needs to be revoked and a new Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 needs to be adopted at this Extraordinary meeting where the final sections of the new Constitution are expected to be agreed to come into effect on 23 May 2023.

Recommendations

1. That Council have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London as attached as Appendix A.

2. That Council revoke the existing Scheme and approve the new Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24 attached as Appendix B with effect from 23 May 2023.

3. That Council note that following approval the Scheme, a notice will be advertised pursuant to Regulation 16 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The Council is required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) to agree on an annual basis a schedule of allowances payable to Members' for the following financial year. Under the regulations, when making or amending a scheme, the Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (Regulation 19). The Regulations state that before the beginning of each year the authority shall make a scheme for the allowances for that year.
- 1.2 The Members Allowance Scheme is comprehensive and includes Basic Allowances, Special Responsibility Allowances (for posts which carry specific responsibilities) and other allowances and expenses that may be claimed.
- 1.3 Council at its meeting on 28 February 2023 approved a schedule of allowances which were implemented on 1 April 2023. The adopted scheme forms part of the formal Members Allowance Scheme which is incorporated within the Council's [Constitution](#).
- 1.4 In January 2022, the London-wide Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) convened by London Councils published revised recommendations (Appendix A). Prior to this, the London Councils IRP made recommendations in 2014 and 2018 – Barnet have had regard to these recommendations each time a Members Allowances Scheme was adopted by Council. It should be noted that the London Councils recommendations do not explicitly consider the Committee System which Barnet now operates and, as such, some of the bands are not comparable (e.g., Leader and Deputy Leader). In the 2018 report and 2022 reports, the IRP recommend an annual update for inflation (in line with the local government pay settlement) – this has been applied in some years, but not all.
- 1.5 The London-wide IRP have stated that they will undertake a more detailed review of allowances in the summer of 2022 and conclude the review during the latter half of 2023. These will be reported to Council in due course.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Members Allowance Scheme for 2023/24 requires the approval of full Council. Council is required to ensure the Scheme meets all the requirements of statute including the period the scheme covers and consideration of the findings of the Independent Panel Report.
- 2.2 The Scheme chosen reflects the special responsibilities of Members under an Executive system which is due to be implemented from 23 May 2023.
- 2.3 The Scheme has been drafted on the basis that Council still wishes to pay the Basic and Special Responsibility allowances proposed and adopted by Council.
- 2.4 Full Council is also required to revoke the existing scheme.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Council could refuse to adopt the proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24. This is not recommended as the implementation of the Scheme is required to regulate the remuneration of Members in respect of Council business undertaken and the Regulations require a Scheme to be adopted annually.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Following approval by the Council of a Scheme, a notice will be advertised pursuant to Regulation 16 of the Regulations.
- 4.2 The approved Scheme will become operational with effect from 23 May 2023.
- 4.3 The Monitoring Officer will arrange for an updated version of the Members Allowances section of the Constitution to be published from 23 May 2023.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 None in the context of this report.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 For the main element of the Members Allowances budget (which comprises Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) the budget will remain at £1,008,910 for 2023/24.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 Under Regulations 10(3) and Regulation 12, schemes can only be revoked at

the beginning of the year except when changing governance arrangements. Under Regulation 10(8), where a scheme is revoked, an authority has to make a further scheme for the period beginning with the date on which the revocation takes effect and ending at the end of the year. .

- 5.3.2 Responsibility for adopting a Members' Allowances Scheme is attributable to Council in accordance with section 4.1 of Article 4 of the Council's Constitution.

5.4 **Risk Management**

- 5.4.1 Failure to agree a scheme may render the council in breach of its statutory duty.

5.5 **Equalities and Diversity**

- 5.5.1 These proposals do not adversely compromise the Council's public sector equalities duty under the Equality Act 2010.

5.6 **Consultation and Engagement**

- 5.6.1 An advertisement setting out details of the Scheme itself will be published as soon as practicable after Council has made its decision.

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1 Council, 28 February 2023, Item 12.3 – Members Allowances Scheme: [Agenda for Council on Tuesday 28th February, 2023, 7.00 pm \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 6.2 London Borough of Barnet website, Currently Elected Councillors Allowances and Expenses: [Barnet councillors' allowances and expenses | Barnet Council](#)
- 6.3 London Councils, Remuneration of Councillors in London Reports: [Remuneration of Councillors in London Boroughs | London Councils](#)