

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	COUNCIL	
DATE OF DECISION	1 March 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Members' Allowance Scheme 2022/23 and 2023/24	
DIRECTOR:	Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services	
LEAD OFFICER:	Adrian May Interim Head of Democratic Services adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	[NO]	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	NA	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Councils each year, must approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for the next financial year. Croydon Council agreed their Members' Allowance Scheme for 2022/23 at Council 23 March 2022 and subsequently amended the scheme at the Annual Council meeting on 25 May 2022.
- 1.2 Part 3 Responsibility for Council Functions in the Constitution identifies the General Purposes Committee (GPC) as responsible for reviewing the Members' Allowance Scheme with any amendment / approvals to be made at full Council.
- 1.3 General Purposes Committee, 21 February 2023, reviewed an officer proposal that the 2022/23 Members' Scheme be increased in-line with the Local Government Pay Settlement. The GPC also considered the Members' Allowance Scheme proposed for 2023/24. This report presents the GPC recommendations.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in this report (and appendices), and as recommended by the General Purposes Committee, Council is recommended to agree:

- 2.1 that **no increase** is applied to the Member Allowance Scheme for 2022/23;
- 2.2 that the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix 3, being materially the same as the 2022/23 scheme;

2.3 that the Director of Legal Services is authorised to comply with the statutory requirements to publicise the 2023/24 Members' Allowances Scheme and make all necessary updates to the Constitution; and,

to note:

2.4 that the General Purposes Committee will review and bring proposals to Council with regards to the Basic and Special Responsibilities Allowances and other allowances, such as carer responsibilities, travel, maternity/paternity, and Subsistence, following the publication of the next report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on 'The Remuneration of Councillors in London'.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Following consideration at the General Purposes Committee, 21 February 2023, which included the financial context of the Council and feedback from groups around the proposed increase (who oppose the increase), GPC did not agree the proposed recommendation to Council for an increase to the 2022/23 Members' Allowance Scheme.

3.2 GPC agreed to recommend to Council that the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2023/24 be on the same terms as the 2022/23 scheme and agreed that a full review of the Members' Allowance Scheme be conducted following the next release of the Independent Remuneration Panel, later in 2023.

3.3 There is a legal requirement for the Members' Allowance Scheme to be advertised / published in the local press (albeit also being published on the internet) and it is considered good governance that the constitution be updated.

4 BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

4.1 The current Members' Allowances Scheme provides for the payment of Basic, Special Responsibility, Carers, Travel, Subsistence, and an Independent / Co-opted Chair allowances where applicable.

4.2 There is a legal requirement to have regard to the latest 'Remuneration of Councillors in London' report of the Independent Panel when agreeing an amendment or new scheme. Its latest report was published in January 2022 (Appendix 4) and informed the setting of Croydon's 2022/23 Members' Allowance Scheme at the March and May 2022 Council meetings.

4.3 The Croydon Members' Allowance Scheme has provision that the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances shall be subject to an annual adjustment in accordance with the annual local government staff pay settlement. This is a long-standing recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

- 4.4** Officers made recommendations that an increase to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2022/23 be recommended for agreement at Council as detailed in the GPC report, 21 February 2023 (Appendix 1).
- 4.5** After consideration and debate at the meeting, the Committee subsequently agreed that it would recommend to Council that the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowance amounts as detailed in the current 2022/23 allowance scheme were not increased.
- 4.6** Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Councils each year, must approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for the next financial year
- 4.7** General Purposes Committee also considered a report on the 21 February 2023 (Appendix 2) which considered a proposed Members Allowance Scheme for 2023/24 (Appendix 3). The report noted that no changes to Member roles, functions and responsibilities or Committee functions and business had been identified during the period from May 2022 year to sufficiently warrant a change to the basic or special allowances payable under the scheme.
- 4.8** The report highlighted that an updated 'Remuneration of Councillors in London' report by the Independent Remuneration Panel was anticipated to be released in late 2023, and that was considered a good time for the General Purposes Committee to review the Members' Allowance Scheme in full (i.e., not only the basic and special allowances, but all types of allowance within the allowance scheme).
- 4.9** The GPC agreed that Council be recommended that effectively the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2022/23 be carried over and agreed as the 2023/24 scheme. The GPC also agreed that a full review would start following the release of the Independent Remuneration Panel review, anticipated as late 2023.
- 4.10** Should Council wish to make any change to the Members' Allowances Scheme at a Council meeting, regard must be had to the Report of the Independent Panel 2022 (Appendix 4).

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1** *As detailed in the reports to General Purposes Committee (Appendix A and B).*
- 5.2** Before the General Purposes Committee meeting, both main groups of Council (Conservative Group and Labour Group had expressed opposition to agreeing any proposed increase to the Members Allowance Scheme for 2022/23).

6 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1** Through taking into consideration the recommendations of the current and future IRP report, it supports the Council to achieve, priority 4 of the Mayor's Business Plan: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

IMPLICATIONS

6.2 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Full details of the financial implications are detailed in the reports to GPC (Appendix 1 and 2).

6.3 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Full details of the legal implications are detailed in the reports to GPC (Appendix 1 and 2).

6.4 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Full details of the legal implications are detailed in the reports to GPC (Appendix 1 and 2).

7. APPENDICES

- 9.1 *1. Report to GPC - Scheme of Member's Allowances 2022/23 - Annual Increase (Includes Appendix showing impact of the proposed Basic and SRA increase)*
- 2. Report to GPC - Scheme of Members Allowances 2023-24*
- 3. Proposed 2023/24 Allowance Scheme with Tracked Changes*
- 4. Independent Remuneration Panel report 2022*

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 8.1 N/A