

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2019/20

Council	28 March 2019
Report Author	Nicholas Hughes – Committee Services Manager
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Coastal Development
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	All Wards

Executive Summary:

This report gives Members the feedback from the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (EKJIRP) on the amendments to the 2019/20 Members' Allowances scheme and allows Council to amend the scheme based on the feedback from the EKJIRP.

Recommendation(s):

That the Thanet District Council Members' Allowances Scheme for 2019/20 and the comments of the EKJIRP be noted.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	<p>If Members agree the draft scheme of Members allowances as outlined at annex 1 to this report, then there will be no direct financial implications as a result of this report.</p> <p>The changes being proposed within the report can be funded with no additional cost to the scheme previously agreed in July 2018.</p> <p>Council will have to identify savings to other budgets if they wish to make any changes to the proposals that result in additional expenditure.</p>
Legal	<p>The Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of EKJIRP in making a scheme of allowances.</p> <p>The Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of EKJIRP in making a scheme of allowances.</p> <p>Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 permits the Secretary of State, by regulations, to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance, an attendance allowance and a special responsibility allowance to members of a local authority. Section 100 of the Local Government Act 2000 permits the Secretary of State, by regulations,</p>

	<p>to provide for travelling and subsistence allowances for members of local authorities, allowances for attending conferences and meetings and reimbursement of expenses. In exercise of these powers the Secretary of State has made the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.</p> <p>The Regulations require the council to make a scheme before the beginning of each year for the payment of basic allowance. The scheme must also make provision for the authority's approach to special responsibility allowance, dependants' carers' allowance, travelling and subsistence allowance and co-optees' allowance. The scheme may also provide for other matters of the kind dealt with in the proposed scheme.</p> <p>The recommendations if approved would mean the majority of the members of council would receive a special responsibility allowance. The Government guidance on allowances says that where this is the case, <i>'Local authorities will wish to consider very carefully the additional roles of members and the significance of these roles, both in terms of responsibility and real time commitment before deciding which will warrant the payment of a special responsibility allowance.'</i></p> <p>When considering the scheme, the Council must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to advance equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic and those who don't (the public sector equality duty). This consideration should be supported by a proportionate level of equality analysis.</p>								
Corporate	The level of allowances may be seen as both impacting on the public's perception of the Council and a factor in making public services as a Councillor attractive to a broad range of potential candidates.								
Equalities Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	<p>Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p> <p>Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="432 1738 1390 1998"> <tr> <td colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Although it does not directly relate to protected groups, the draft scheme contains the ability to pay a dependent carers allowance to Councillors.</p>	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.		Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	✓	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	
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	This contributes to aims 1 and 2 of the Equality Act as it removes barriers to Councillors standing who have relatives that may be in need of dependent care.
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	

CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant) ✓	
Delivering value for money	
Supporting the Workforce	✓
Promoting open communications	

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 This report gives Members the feedback from the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (EKJIRP) on the 2019/20 Members' Allowances scheme and allows Council to amend the scheme based on the feedback from the EKJIRP.

2.0 East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel Review of 2019/20 Members' Allowances Scheme

2.1 The 2019/20 Members' Allowances scheme was approved at Council on 7 February 2019, subject to review by the EKJIRP. The EKJIRP has now independently reviewed the scheme at its meeting on the 4 March and agreed the following motion:

“That the Panel would support either the proposed allowances set out in Annex 1 of the report or an increase of 1%. However, while the Panel would support an increase in the Members' Allowances Scheme it recognises that in light of budgetary pressures on local authorities the Council may not choose to implement this.”

2.2 As the EKJIRP have not raised any issues with the Allowances scheme previously approved, Council is asked to note the comments of the EKJIRP.

Contact Officer:	Nicholas Hughes, Committee Services Manager
Reporting to:	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance

Annex List

Annex 1	2019/20 Draft Scheme of Members Allowances
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Matthew Sanham, Interim Head of Financial Services
Legal	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance and Monitoring Officer