

TO: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority

FROM: Monitoring Officer – Shahin Ismail

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MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2022/23

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Fire Authority of a Members' Allowances Scheme for the next 12 months.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1.1 It is recommended that;

2.1.1 the allowance rates within Appendix 1 are agreed and applied for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023,

2.1.2 the Authority receives a further report at its next meeting on the options and costs of an independent review panel or other mechanism to determine future allowances as soon as practicable.

3. Risk Assessment

- 3.1 **Political** – the Scheme of Allowances must be published and should be set with regard to recommendations made by an independent review panel or other agreed mechanism.

- 3.2 **Economic** – the Authority has duties to ensure it complies with legislation and that such a scheme is managed efficiently, effectively and cognisant of any National Joint Council pay awards.

- 3.3 **Legal** – the Authority are required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to put in place a compliant scheme for the payment of allowances to its Members. Failure to do so would place the Authority in breach of its legal duty.

4. Review Methodology

- 4.1 Historically, the most cost effective method of reviewing Member allowances (required every four years) has been to ask Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to consider Authority requirements as part of its own review.
- 4.2 CCC commissioned and subsequently rejected the report findings of an Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances at their meeting in July 2018 and approved an alternative scheme. In view of this, the Authority agreed a twelve month extension of their existing scheme for 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. The current scheme is due to expire on 31 March 2022.
- 4.3 Whilst the Government White Paper is still awaited, the future of the Fire Authority is more certain than it has been previously. At its meeting in February 2021 the Authority discussed and approved the current scheme and also resolved that 'early in the life of the new Fire Authority, options and costs for a review of its allowances scheme' should be presented (Minute 164 of the Authority meeting held on 11 February 2021 refers); the recommendation at Paragraph 2.1.2 above seeks to address this.
- 4.4 As part of a wider piece of work on constitutional documents, at its meeting in November 2021, the Authority approved changes to the scheme wording to ensure the Member attendance process (Paragraph 11) was consistent with that in the Standing Orders as to Meetings document and better reflected the changes in membership (Schedule 1); Minute 15 of the Authority meeting held on 4 November 2021 refers.
- 4.5 In the current financial climate and cognisant of the uncertainty around national pay awards for fire service employees, it is felt that the Authority's existing scheme should prevail for a further 12 months with no increment applied. The travel and subsistence rates within the scheme reflect those currently paid to Officers.
- 4.6 The cost of the scheme, based on current membership and committee structure (excluding ad-hoc additional responsibilities, travel and subsistence and Type 3 Project Boards which will fluctuate throughout the year) will be £84,932 in 2022/23.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Documents	Location	Contact Officer
Members' Allowances Scheme The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 The National Association of Local Councils – The Good Councillor's Guide	HQ Hinchingsbrooke Cottage Brampton Road Huntingdon PE29 2NA	Shahin Ismail 01480 444500 shahin.ismail@cambsfire.gov.uk