

APPENDIX A

**A Review
Of
Members' Allowances
For
Slough Borough Council**

The Eighth Report

By the

Independent Remuneration Panel

**Fred Ashmore
Pat Davis
Dr Declan Hall (Chair)**

February 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IRP Recommendations 2015/16 including 2.2% indexation W E F 1 Jan 2015					
Post	No Payable	BA	SRA per Post	Total per Member	SRA Sub Totals
Basic Allowance	42	£7,329			
SRAs					
Leader	1	£7,329	£19,055	£26,384	£19,055
Deputy Leader	1	£7,329	£13,338	£20,667	£13,338
Other Cabinet Members (Commissioner)	6	£7,329	£10,480	£17,809	£62,880
Chair Overview & Scrutiny	1	£7,329	£6,671	£14,000	£6,671
Vice Chair Overview & Scrutiny	1	£7,329	£1,334	£8,663	£1,334
Chairs Scrutiny Panels	3	£7,329	£2,858	£10,187	£8,574
Chair Planning Committee	1	£7,329	£4,767	£12,096	£4,767
Vice Chair Planning Committee	1	£7,329	£1,587	£8,916	£1,587
Chair Licensing Committee	1	£7,329	£2,858	£10,187	£2,858
Vice Chair Licensing Committee	1	£7,329	£952	£8,281	£952
Chair Audit & Risk	1	£7,329	£1,905	£9,234	£1,905
Chair Employment & Appeals	1	£7,329	£1,905	£9,234	£1,905
Chair Standards Advisory	1	£7,329	£953	£8,282	£953
Opposition SRAs					
Leader Majority Opposition Group	1	£7,329	£5,716	£13,045	£5,716
Leader Minority Opposition Group[s] ¹	1	£7,329	£3,811	£11,140	£3,811
Sub Totals					
SRAs	22				£136,306
Basic Allowance	42	£7,329			£307,818
TOTAL					£444,124

The Panel also recommends that:

Setting a qualification criteria for Leader of a Minority Group[s]

For the SRA for Leader[s] of the Minority Group[s] to be payable the group has to have at least 4 members.

The allowances scheme is clarified so that if a Minority Group reaches the qualifying criteria then that group's Leader should be paid a Minority Group Leaders' SRA.

¹ Subject to meeting qualification criteria of having 4 Group Members

Co-optees' Allowances

The 2015/16 Co-optees' Allowance remains at £516 per annum.

The Independent Person

The 2015/16 remuneration for the Independent Person remains at £1,239.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances

The current rates payable for the Travel and Subsistence Allowances and the terms and conditions by which they may be claimed are maintained.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances - Approved Duties

The Members' Allowances scheme is clarified to point out that where a Member is appointed to an outside body with its own allowances schemes or provision to pay travel and subsistence they should claim travel and subsistence allowances directly from that body.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

The current rates payable for the Dependants' Carers' Allowance and the terms and conditions by which it may be claimed are maintained.

Section 11 of allowances scheme - Suspension/Partial Suspension

Section 11 of the published Members' Allowances scheme is removed.

Indexation

- **Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, Co-optees' Allowances, the annual cap on the DCA and the remuneration of the Independent Person:**
 - Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 49) to be adopted from 1 April 2015 and to run for 4 years.
- **Travel Allowances (Outwith Borough Only):**
 - **Mileage:** indexed to the HMRC rates
 - **Other Travel:** actual costs subject to most cost effective provisions
- **Subsistence and Overnight Allowances (Outwith Borough Only):**
 - Indexed to the maximum rates payable under the South East Employers Subsistence scheme

Implementation

The recommendations contained in this report are implemented as follows:

- **Indices:** from 1 April 2015.
- **Other recommendations:** from 19 May 2015, date of annual meeting of the council

Slough Borough Council

Independent Remuneration Panel

A Review of Members' Allowances

The Eighth Report
February 2015

The Regulatory Context and Terms of Reference

1. This report is a synopsis of the proceedings and recommendations made by the statutory Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) appointed by Slough Borough Council to advise the Council on its current Members' Allowances scheme.
2. The Panel was convened under *The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021)* (the '2003 Regulations'). These regulations require all local authorities to establish and maintain an allowances Panel that must be convened to provide advice on Members' allowances before a Council changes or amends its allowances scheme. All councils are required to 'pay regard' to their Panels' recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances scheme.
3. In this particular instance, the Panel has been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations [paragraph 10. (5)] which states:

Where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the independent remuneration panel established in respect of that authority on the application of an index to its scheme.²
4. This provision, known as the '4-year rule', is utilised to oblige all Councils to reconvene their independent remuneration panels at least every four years so that, in a context where councils retain final responsibility for determining their own allowances, they are subject to periodic scrutiny and accountability. Under the 4-year rule the Council is required to reconvene and seeks the Panel's advice by 31 March 2015. It is under the requirement of the 4-year rule that the Panel has undertaken this (eighth) review of Members' Allowances for Slough Borough Council.

² This requirement is also repeated in the 2003 Regulations paragraph 21 (1) e.

Terms of Reference

5. The Panel was presented with a general terms of reference, namely to undertake a full review of the Council Members' Allowances scheme that takes into account any recent changes in governance and to make any necessary amendments necessary in relation to the following:
- a) As to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected Members
 - b) About the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance
 - c) The duties for which travelling allowances can be paid and as to the amounts of this allowance
 - d) The duties for which subsistence allowances can be paid and as to the amounts of this allowance
 - e) As to the suitability and amount of a co-optees' allowance
 - f) As to whether the Authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
 - g) As to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and if so, for how long such a measure should run

The Panel may make further recommendations with respect to Member allowances as it sees fit

In arriving at its recommendations the Panel is expected to take into account:

- The views, both written and oral, of Members
- The scope and level of allowances paid in similar councils
- The current budgetary situation of the Council

The Panel

6. Slough Borough Council reconvened its Independent Remuneration Panel, constituting of the following appointees:
- Fred Ashmore
 - Retired senior police officer (Thames Valley), former independent (co-opted) Chair of Slough Borough Council Standards Committee and

former Slough Borough Council Independent Person appointed under Localism Act 2011

- Pat Davis:
 - A solicitor and local businesswomen
 - Declan Hall PhD (Chair)
 - A former academic at the Institute of Local Government, the University of Birmingham and now independent consultant specialising in members' allowances and who was appointed by the Council as Chair of the Panel
7. The Panel was supported by Catherine Meek, Head of Democratic Services, who acted as the 'Panellists' Friend' and whose role was to support the Panel, and take the organisational lead in facilitating the whole process. The Panel would like to record its gratitude to the Members and Officers of Slough Borough Council for making themselves available to meet with the Panel and ensuring the work of the Panel was carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

Process and Methodology

8. The Panel met at the Civic Centre St Martins' Place Slough on 27 January 2015. The Panel meetings were held in private session to enable the Panel to talk with Members and Officers and to conduct its deliberations in confidence. In arriving at its recommendations, the Panel took into account *inter alia* the following range of evidence:
- Relevant information on Slough Borough Council including previous Panel reports, a schedule of meetings (2014/15) for the Council, committees and sub committees, their terms of reference and who chairs them, Member role profiles, summary of survey on average hours worked as a Councillor as reported by the Councillor Consensus 2013, etc.
 - The views of Members, both oral and written
 - Officer briefings on the developments in Council structures and to answer factual questions from the Panel
 - The range and level of allowances payable in the comparator group of authorities utilised for benchmarking purposes, namely
 - * The Unitary Councils that replied to the annual allowances survey by the South East Employers (SEE) for 2014/15
 - * The 5 other Berkshire Unitary Councils
 - Other relevant supporting material such the 2003 Members Allowances Regulations, 2006 Statutory Guidance on Members Allowances, and a

presentation made by Panel Chairman on issues and options to consider when reviewing allowances.

9. For full details of interviewees and full range of information reviewed see:
- [Appendix 1](#) for Members and Officers who met with the Panel
 - [Appendix 2](#) for a list of the full range of evidence considered by the Panel
 - [Appendix 3](#) for more details on the other allowances schemes and comparative data referred to by the Panel for benchmarking purposes

Key Messages and Observations

The Slough Borough Council Members' Allowances Model

10. Although it was by no means universal the general view expressed to the Panel was there not a strong need to revisit the current allowances payable across the board. Since the last full review the impact of local government legislation on governance structures and Member roles while not imperceptible have not been so significant for the Panel to fundamentally revisit the building blocks of the current scheme. The view was that the scheme remains broadly fit for purpose.
11. Benchmarking on the whole backs up this perception, although it is more applicable on a county-wide basis than a regional basis. The mean Basic Allowances payable are as follows:
- Other Berkshire Unitary Councils (14/15) £7,560
 - SEE Allowances Survey (14/15) £8,539
 - Slough BC (31/12/14) £7,171
 - Slough BC (1/1/15) £7,329
12. The different Basic Allowance listed for Slough is due to the fact that from the beginning of 2015 until 31 March 2016, the Council has applied the 2.2% index. However for benchmarking purposes the Panel has used the figures payable in Slough up to the end of 2014 as the allowances schemes in the 2 benchmarking groups have not been updated for any indexation that those councils may decide to apply. Nonetheless, with some exceptions (see below) allowances paid in Slough are either on a par or marginally below peers, they can be no means be described as overgenerous. The allowances payable are even less generous when it is considered that the number of SRAs payable in Slough is comparatively fewer than in the benchmarking groups.

Recognising the current economic context

13. Ideally, the prime role of the Panel is to assess what it judges the roles and posts under review are worth based on the evaluation of the evidence. Yet, the Panel cannot but be aware of the current era of public sector austerity and where Slough Borough Council is seeking further savings. This was a

message that was underlined in the representation received even by those who felt there may be a case to increase some or most allowances. Although the Panel has not been driven by the need to find savings, it was a message the Panel took on board and as such the recommendations will result in annual savings in the order of at least £2,800, based on the allowances payable from 1/1/15.

The role of Panel - addressing anomalies arising

14. Consequently the main role of the Panel for this review has been to address anomalies arising out of implementation of relevant legislation and changes in governance structures rather than carry out a fundamental review.

The Basic Allowance

15. If the Basic Allowance was recalibrated i.e., updated to take into account the 2014 rate of remuneration, £106.17 per day, it would be £7,326, compared to the 2015 Basic Allowance of £7,329. This has reinforced what benchmarking suggests, namely there is not a strong case to recommend any change to the current level payable.
16. **The Panel recommends no change to the current (2015/16) Basic Allowance (£7,329) payable in Slough Borough Council.**

The Leader

17. Benchmarking (2014) shows that the SRA (£18,645 - 2014) paid to the Leader of Slough Borough Council is in line with the average (£18,229) paid in other Berkshire councils although somewhat below that paid (£20,544) across unitary councils in the south east. Yet this alone presented no strong case to revisit the Leader's SRA. The role has changed, in particular becoming more outward focused in response to legislation that requires all Leaders to engage more with partners and stakeholders but again it is not an argument to revisit the Leader's SRA.
18. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£19,055) for the Leader of Slough Borough Council.**

The Deputy Leader

19. Benchmarking shows that the Deputy Leaders' SRA (£13,051) is one of the few that is higher than the average in both the Berkshire (£11,456) and south east (£11,919) benchmarking groups. However, the Deputy Leader in Slough Borough Council continues to have a distinctive role to undertake, particularly in having to stand in for the Leader with the latter taking on a more external focus. The Panel saw no reason to alter the Deputy Leader's SRA.

20. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£13,338) for the Deputy Leader of Slough Borough Council.**

Other Cabinet Members (Commissioners)

21. Representation was received that in light of government intervention for Children's Services that there should be a differential or even performance related SRA for the Commissioner for Education and Children's Services. The Panel at this stage has rejected this; apart from the difficulties of assigning responsibility between relevant Officers and Commissioners and between the Commissioners it is early days for the intervention process. There was an alternate view that it meant more work for the relevant Commissioner as they had to work with others to implement relevant decisions while the Commissioner for Education and Children's Services still bore a degree of responsibility for outcomes. The Panel will return to this issue during its next review to explore in greater depth when the full impacts of intervention are known.
22. Otherwise the Panel received no evidence to suggest that the 2015 SRA (10,480) for the other Cabinet Members (Commissioners) needed revising. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire and south east comparator groups are £9,655 and £9,912 respectively.
23. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£10,480) for the other Cabinet Members (Commissioners).**

Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

24. No evidence was received suggesting the SRA (2014 - £6,527) for the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee needed revising. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire comparator group to equivalent posts is £5,788.
25. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£6,671) for the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**

Vice Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

26. The SRA for the Vice Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is higher than that presently paid to Chairs of the Employment & Appeals and Standards Advisory Committees. This struck the Panel as an anomaly. Moreover, when compared to the Vice Chairs of the regulatory committees the Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny has limited specific responsibilities in that the latter does not face potential exposure and responsibility to defend decisions in court. Interestingly benchmarking shows that of all the Berkshire

councils Slough is the only one to remunerate such a post. The Panel has decided to reduce the ratio utilised in arriving at this SRA from 1/3 to 20% of the Overview & Scrutiny Chair's SRA.

27. **The Panel recommends that the SRA for the Vice Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should be £1,334 (2015/16).**

Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels

28. The Panel reviewed the SRAs for the Chairs of reorganized Scrutiny Panels in its Supplementary Review (March 2012). At the time the Panel flagged up that it would revisit its recommendations in light of experience. No evidence was received to suggest that the SRA (£2,797 - 2014) for the Chairs of the Scrutiny Panels needed revising or that the Panel had erroneously evaluated these posts. Although benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire comparator group to equivalent posts is £3,784 it includes councils that either do not have Overview & Scrutiny Committee or have fewer scrutiny panels than Slough.
29. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£2,858) payable to the Chairs of the 3 Scrutiny Panels.**

The Chair of the Planning Committee

30. Benchmarking (2014) shows that the SRA (£4,661) for the Chair of the Planning Committee is in line with the mean (£4,637) paid in other Berkshire councils although somewhat below that paid (£6,002) in south east unitary councils. There was some evidence that this post had become more important recently. The Planning Committee remains high profile and continues to meet more frequently than other committees but since March 2012 a National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has been in place which makes planning more fluid and has put more responsibility on the Chair.
31. The SRA for the Chair of Planning is currently set at 25% of the Leaders' SRA. The Panel decided this ratio should be maintained for the moment as it is too early yet to assess the impact of the NPPF on the Chair's role - the implications have yet to work through the system.
32. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£4,767) for the Chair of the Planning Committee.**

The Vice Chair of the Planning Committee

33. The Panel considered whether there was a case, as with the Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, to reduce the ratio utilised in arriving at the Vice Chair's SRA from 1/3 to 20%. However, the Panel decided against this as the

potential exposure and obligations of the post holder can be onerous, it is inherent to being a Vice Chair of a regulatory or 'quasi judicial' committee.

34. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,587) for the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee**

The Chair of the Licensing Committee

35. The SRA (£3,729 - 2014) for the Chair of the Licensing Committee in Slough Borough Council was set at 20% of the Leaders' SRA. This was done on the basis that the transfer of licensing functions to local authorities under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 would entail a much greater workload and responsibility on the part of the Licensing Committee Chair. The evidence shows that the workload of this committee has settled down into an established pattern, mostly dealing with licensing policy. Much of the liquor licensing and school appeals matters are dealt with by the Licensing Sub Committees where the Chair can also play a role and even then the number of meetings of the Licensing Sub Committees has settled down.
36. Moreover, there is a consistent pattern of 3 out of 7 scheduled meetings being cancelled over each of the past 3 years as the Licensing Committee has not had enough business. The Panel decided that the current SRA was difficult to defend in light of the consistent cancellation of meetings of the full Licensing Committee. Benchmarking was of limited value in this case as the Panel had no way to know how Licensing Committees operate in other councils in terms of both their remit and the role their Chairs play in sub committees. Consequently, the Panel 'played safe' and decided to marginally reduce the ratio in arriving at the Chair's SRA from 20% to 15% of the Leader's SRA.
37. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 SRA paid to the Chair of the Licensing Committee should be £2,858.**

The Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee

38. For the same reasons the Panel retained the ratio (1/3 of Chair's SRA) utilised in arriving at the SRA for the Vice Chair of Planning the Panel decided it should be retained for the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee.
39. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 SRA paid to the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee should be £952.**

The Chairs and Members of the Licensing Sub Committee

40. The Panel received representation to consider remuneration for the Chairs (and to a lesser extent Members) of the Licensing Sub Committee on the basis that much of the "operational" work of Licensing is carried out at this

level. The Panel was not convinced partly because Licensing Sub Committee Chairs are appointed on the day (and to some degree they are appointed on a rotating basis drawn from Licensing Committee Members), partly because the number of licensing appeals hearings over the past few years and the number of meetings a Chair of Licensing Sub Committee has had to preside over has not reached a critical enough mass to warrant a SRA. It is noted that in the other Berkshire councils only Windsor & Maidenhead remunerate their Chairs of Licensing Panels at £1,879 as well as pay the members of the same panels £25.26 per meeting, but this is in a context where the Vice Chair of Licensing in Windsor & Maidenhead does not receive a SRA. As regards to the Members of the Licensing Sub Committee the Panel takes the view that it is part of the regulatory role that all Members are expected to undertake.

41. **The Panel does not recommend SRAs to be paid to the Chairs or Members of the Licensing Sub Committee.**

Chair of the Employment & Appeals Committee

42. No evidence was received to suggest that the SRA (£1,864 - 2014) for the Chair of the Employment & Appeals Committee needed revising. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire comparator group to equivalent posts is £1,866.
43. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,905) for the Chair of the Employment & Appeals Committee.**

Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee

44. No evidence was received to suggest that, as things stand, the SRA (£1,864 - 2014) for the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee needed revising. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire comparator group to equivalent posts is £2,652 and across the south east the mean SRA is £3,906. However, in other councils the Audit Committee is often assigned other functions, such as performance review in Windsor & Maidenhead, and governance in Bracknell Forest and Reading. If the remit of the Audit & Risk Committee was to alter the Panel will reconsider the SRA for this post.
45. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,905) for the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.**

Chair of Standards Advisory Committee

46. The SRA (£1,864 - 2014) for the Chair of the Standards Advisory Committee was set by after a Supplementary Review (August 2013) in response to changes arising out the Localism Act 2011 concerning standards - it was no longer a statutory committee nor had decision making powers. At the time of

the Supplementary Review the Panel noted that it would revisit this role in light of experience (paragraph 18).

47. What experience does show is that the workload and responsibility of this committee and chair has proved to be much reduced since 2012; not only has it lost decision making powers and sanctions available to it but half of its scheduled meetings are regularly cancelled. Consequently, the Panel has reduced the ratio utilized in arriving at the current SRA from 10% of Leader's SRA to 5% which equals £953 (2015/16).
48. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 SRA paid to the Chair of the Standards Advisory Committee should be £953.**

The Leader of the Opposition

49. No evidence was received to suggest that the SRA (£5,593 - 2014) for the Leader of the Opposition needed revising. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA paid in the Berkshire comparator group to equivalent posts is £6,209 while across the south east it is £5,665.
50. **The Panel recommends no change to the 2015/16 SRA (£5,716) for the Leader of the Opposition.**

Setting a qualification criteria for Leader of a Minority Group[s]

51. Currently, the Leader of the second largest Minority Group qualifies for an SRA if their group has the statutory minimum of 2 Members. In line with other councils the Panel has decided that 2 members is not sufficient critical mass nor concomitant 'significant responsibility' to merit a SRA and that for the SRA for a Leader of a Minority Group to receive an SRA that there should be a qualifying criteria of having a group that contains at least 4 Members.
52. In an era which is seeing shifts in traditional political allegiances there is a possibility that in the future there may be more than one Minority Group Leader that qualifies for the Minority Group SRA.
53. **The Panel clarifies that as long as a Minority Group reaches the qualifying criteria then that group's Leader should be paid an Minority Group Leaders' SRA.**
54. **The Panel also recommends that for the SRA for Leader[s] of the Minority Group[s] to be payable the group should have at least 4 members.**

Leader of the Minority Opposition Group[s]

55. The SRA (£3,729 - 2014) of the Leader of the second largest Minority Group is markedly above the average (£1,404) paid to similar posts in the other Berkshire councils. However, the Panel has always taken the view that the Opposition of all hues should be adequately resourced and the ratio utilised to arrive at the SRA for this post, 20% of the Leader's SRA, should be maintained - subject the Group meeting the qualifying criteria.
56. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 SRA for Leader[s] of the Minority Group[s] is £3,811 – subject to qualification criteria.**

Co-optees' Allowances

57. Currently the Members' Allowance scheme makes provision for the payment of a Co-optees' Allowances (£505 in 2014) to co-opted (independent) Members appointed to the Audit & Risk and Standards Advisory Committees. No evidence was received to revisit this allowance
58. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 Co-optees' Allowance is not altered and should remain at £516 per annum.**

The Independent Person

59. Although the Panel was not specifically asked to look at the remuneration of the statutory Independent Person, appointed under the Localism Act 2011, the Panel did provide advice on the remuneration (£1,200) for this post in the Supplementary Review August 2012. At the time the Panel had no experience of what the role entailed so the Panel has taken this opportunity to revisit its previous advice and no evidence was received to alter the view the Panel took in August 2012.
60. **The Panel recommends that the 2015/16 remuneration for the Independent Person remains at £1,239.**

Travel and Subsistence Allowances

61. No evidence was received to indicate the Travel and Subsistence Allowances required amending. **The Panel recommends that the current rates payable for the Travel and Subsistence Allowances and the terms and conditions by which they may be claimed are maintained.**

Travel and Subsistence Allowances - Approved Duties

62. Queries were raised with the Panel regarding when a Member can claim travel and subsistence for attending an outside body to which they are appointed, with the inference being that they were not sure and therefore losing out on potential travel and subsistence claims. This issue has become somewhat more pressing with recent legislative changes that impacts on the regional and national roles Members are required to undertake.
63. **The Panel recommends that the Members' Allowances scheme is clarified to point out that where a Member is appointed to an outside body that has its own allowances schemes (e.g. the Local Government Association and Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority) or provision to pay travel and subsistence (e.g. the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel) that they should claim travel and subsistence allowances directly from those bodies.**

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

64. No evidence was received to indicate the Dependants' Carers' Allowance required amending. **The Panel recommends that the current rates payable for the Dependants' Carers' Allowance and the terms and conditions by which it may be claimed are maintained.**

Section 11 of allowances scheme - Suspension/Partial Suspension

65. Since the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Localism Act 2011 there are no longer any powers to suspend or partially suspend a Member from Council making Section 11 of the Allowances scheme, relating to suspension of allowances, redundant.
66. **The Panel recommends that Section 11 of the published Members' Allowances scheme is removed.**

Indexation

67. The representation received by the Panel was generally supportive of the principle of indexation. Most Members' Allowances schemes have indexation provisions. The Panel supports the continuation of indices for allowances payable under the Members' Allowances scheme and recommends:
- **Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, Co-optees' Allowances, the annual cap on the DCA and the remuneration of the Independent Person:**
 - Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government

staff (at spinal column 49) to be adopted from 1 April 2015 and to run for 4 years.

- **Travel Allowances (Outwith Borough Only):**
 - **Mileage:** indexed to the HMRC rates
 - **Other Travel:** actual costs subject to most cost effective provisions
- **Subsistence and Overnight Allowances (Outwith Borough Only):**
 - Indexed to the maximum rates payable under the South East Employers Subsistence scheme

68. It is pointed out that if the Council adopts all or any of the indices recommended it is under no obligation to implement a particular index each year. If adopted, the Council has a choice and retains the right not to implement an index or if it decides to implement an index then it can implement an alternative index. However, if the principle of indexation is not adopted by the Council then it cannot index its allowances and if any, even minor, uplifts for inflation are sought by the Council it must come back to the Panel for its advice. Having the principle of indexation in place removes the requirement to seek advice from the Panel for a maximum period of 4 years, unless the Council seeks a review sooner.

Implementation

69. **The Panel further recommends that its recommendations contained in this report are implemented as follows:**
- **Indices:** from 1 April 2015.
 - **Other recommendations:** from 19 May 2015, date of annual meeting of the council

Appendix 1: Representations and Briefings Received by the Panel

Members:

Cllr R. Anderson	Leader of Council & Labour Group
Cllr D. Coad	Leader of Conservative Opposition Group
Cllr A. Mellor	UKIP Member

Written Submissions:

Cllr P. Booker	Chair of Employment & Appeals Committee (Labour)
Cllr A. Wright	Conservative Member

Officers who provided a briefing to the Panel:

Ruth Bagley	Chief Executive
Catherine Meek	Head of Democratic Services

Appendix 2: Information Received & Reviewed by the Panel

1. Panel Terms of Reference
2. Slough Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme including rates payable 2014 and 2015/16, including schedules and information on Members support/facilities
3. Copy of statutory annual publication (2013/14) of Councillors' Allowances and expenses received
4. Council's Calendar of Meetings for 2014/2015
5. Further relevant information on Slough Borough Council including governance structures, committees and their terms of reference that also highlights were applicable significant changes in governance & Members' roles & responsibilities
6. Member Role Profiles
7. Break down of number of meetings for each Licensing Panel (2012/13 & 2013/14 & so far this year) including who chaired and served on them
8. Record of Members' attendance at meetings and training sessions 2008/2009
9. Previous Slough BC IRP Allowances Reports namely
 - 7th Report July 2010
 - Supplementary Report August 2010
10. SE Employers Allowances Survey 2014/15 - spreadsheet summarizing and comparing allowances paid across SE unitary councils
11. D Hall spreadsheets BM1 - 4 summarising and comparing allowances paid in other Berkshire unitary councils 2014/15
12. Councillors Census 2013 - summary of average hours worked by authority and non/post holder
13. National Joint Council for Local Government Services 2014-16 Payscales & Allowances including up rating figures, 14 November 2014
14. Statutory Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances May 2006
15. The 2003 Regulations Statutory Instrument § 2003 No. 1021 – The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

16. Hard copies of other Berkshire councils' Members Allowances schemes 2014/15
17. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) on local and national (gross) earnings (mean and median) provisional November 2014 including for all full time employees jobs for residents, Table 8.7a
18. D Hall, a presentation on allowances reviews: understanding the Slough Members' Allowances scheme, issues and options

Appendix 3: Benchmarking - Allowances paid across the Comparator Authorities

BM1 Slough BM Group - Other Berks Councils + SE Employers Allowances Survey: BA + Exec + Scrutiny SRAs (2014/15)											
Comparator Council	BA	Leader	Leader Total Package	Deputy Leader	Exec Members	Deputy Exec or Champion	Chair Main O&S	Main O&S V/Chair	Chairs or Leads Scrutiny	V/Chairs Scrutiny	Chairs Scrutiny or Other Panels/WGs
Bracknell Forest	8,687	28,954	37,641	17,372	15,926	2,201	7,239		5,791		
Reading	8,220	7,004	15,224	5,722	3,816				2,147	1,074	
RBW&M	7,255	18,790	26,045	11,274	10,335	1,879			4,698		1,879
West Berks	6,149	16,396	22,545		8,198		5,124				
Wokingham	7,487	20,000	27,487		10,000	2,000	5,000		2,500		
Mean	7,560	18,229	25,788	11,456	9,655	2,027	5,788		3,784		
Median	7,487	18,790	26,045	11,274	10,000	2,000	5,124		3,599		
<i>Slough (2014)</i>	<i>7,171</i>	<i>18,645</i>	<i>25,816</i>	<i>13,051</i>	<i>10,255</i>		<i>6,527</i>	<i>2,176</i>	<i>2,797</i>		
Highest	8,687	28,954	37,641	17,372	15,926	2,201	7,239		5,791		
Lowest	6,149	7,004	15,224	5,722	3,816	1,879	5,000		2,147		
Mean Ratios	2.41	100%		62.8%	53.0%	11.1%	31.8%		20.8%		
SEE Survey Mean	£8,539	£20,544	29,083	£11,919	£9,912	NA	NA	NA	£6,181	Only 3 payable	

BM2 Slough BM Group: Other Berkshire Councils + SE Employers Allowances Survey: Planning & Licensing/Regulatory SRAs (2014/15)								
Comparator Council	Chair Planning	V/Chair Planning	Planning Members	Chair Licensing &/or Regulatory	V/Chair Licensing	Chairs Licensing Panels or Subs	Licensing Members	Comments
Bracknell Forest	7,239	723		5,626	553			
Reading	2,147	1,074		2,147	1,074			
RBW&M	4,698			4,698		1,879	£25.26 p/meeting	<i>3 Chairs Area DCC SRAs payable for total of £14,094</i>
West Berks	4,099			2,562				<i>2 Chairs Area DCC SRAs payable for total of £8,198</i>
Wokingham	5,000		1,250	2,500				
Mean	4,637	899		3,507	814			
Median	4,698	899		2,562	814			
Slough(2014)	4,661	1,553		3,729	1,243			
Highest	7,239	1,074		5,626	1,074			
Lowest	2,147	723		2,147	553			
Mean Ratios	25.4%			19.2%				
SEE Survey Mean	6,002	1,918		4,787	2,228			

BM3 Slough: Other Berkshire Councils + SE Employers Survey: Other Regulatory & Miscellaneous SRAs (2014/15)									
Comparat or Council	Chair Standards	V/Chair Standards	Chair Audit	V/Chair Audit	Chair Personnel or Employment	V/Chair Personnel or Employment	Chairs Local Forums	Other Committees	Other SRAs or Comments
Bracknell Forest	638		2,201		2,201				<i>Standards Chair is Co-optee Education Appeals Mbrs: £30/£59 p/meeting up to/over 4 hrs</i>
Reading	2,147	1,074	2,147	1,074	2,147	1,074		2,147	<i>Standards Chair is Co-optee</i>
RBWM			3,758				1,879	1,879	<i>Deputy Chair of Cabinet £11,274</i>
West Berks	1,000								<i>Standards Chair is Co-optee</i>
Wokingham	1,250		2,500		1,250				<i>Below Exec level Members can get >1 SRA</i>
Mean	1,259		2,652		1,866				
Median	1,125		2,351		2,147				
<i>Slough</i>	<i>1,864</i>		<i>1,864</i>		<i>1,864</i>				
Highest	2,147		3,758		2,201				
Lowest	638		2,147		1,250				
Mean Ratio	6.9%		14.5%		10.2%				
SEE Survey Mean	NA		3,906		NA				

BM4 Slough BM Group: Other Berks Councils & SE Employers Survey: Group SRAs & Co-optees (2014/15)						
Comparator Council	Main Opposition Group Leader	D/Leader Main Opposition Group	Opposition Spokespersons	Minor Opposition Group Leader	Co-optees Standards	Co-optees Other
Bracknell Forest	9,651	965			291	291
Reading	3,816			2,147		
RBWM	1,879			940	359	32/64 p/meeting up/over 4 hrs
West Berks	8,198		4,099	1,125	1,000	
Wokingham	7,500				NA	NA
Mean	6,209			1,404	550	
Median	7,500			1,125	359	
<i>Slough (2014)</i>	<i>5,593</i>			<i>3,729</i>	<i>505</i>	<i>505</i>
Highest	9,651			2,147	1,000	
Lowest	1,879			940	291	
Mean Ratio	34.1%			7.7%		
SEE Survey Mean	5655	Only 3 returns	only 3 returns	NA	NA	NA