

**Public  
Key Decision - No**

## **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Members' Allowances  
**Meeting/Date:** Council – 29th March 2023  
**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Leader – Councillor S J Conboy  
**Report by:** Elections and Democratic Services Manager  
**Ward(s) affected:** All

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### **Executive Summary:**

The current Members' Allowances Scheme was approved by the Council on 17th October 2018 and came into effect on that date. There was a further interim review in June 2021 that gave consideration to a review of members allowances for District Council Members appointed to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. This resulted in further changes to the scheme approved in October 2018 that took effect from 2nd June 2021. This forms part of the Council's Constitution.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require an authority to have regard to recommendations made to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) before making or amending a scheme of members' allowances.

In addition, the Regulations require that 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.

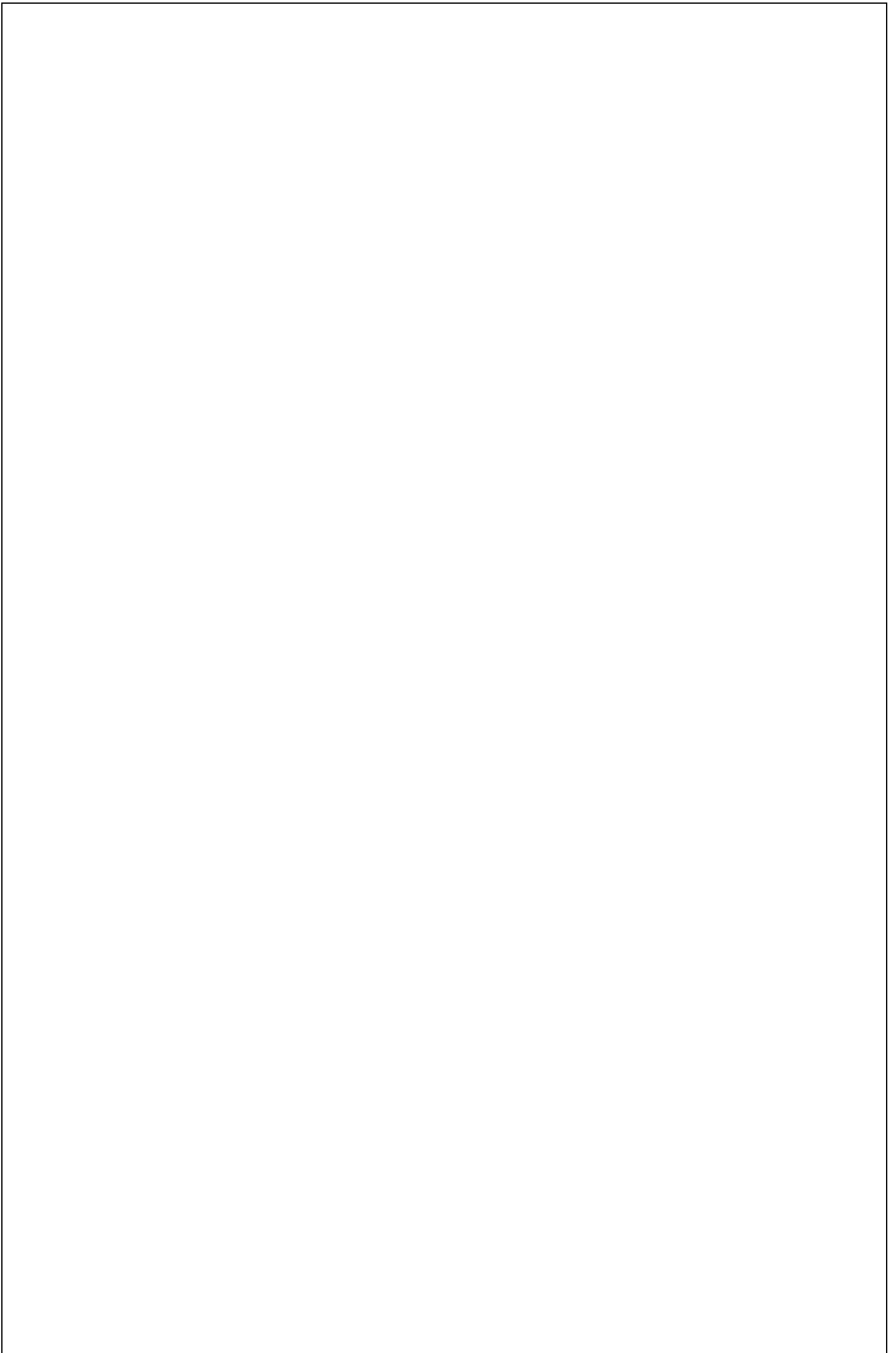
The Huntingdonshire Panel was convened in November 2022 in response to the statutory requirement for a review of the index used for the past four years. Accordingly, the Remuneration Panel was presented with general terms of reference, namely to undertake a full review of the Council Members' Allowances scheme that takes into account any recent changes in governance and to make any necessary amendments.

### **Recommendations:**

**The Council is invited to consider the Panel's recommendations and to implement with effect from 1st April 2023**

- (a) the level of basic allowance for all District Councillors as outlined in the attached Annex;**
- (b) the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances as outlined in the attached Annex;**
- (c) the continuation of the one Special Responsibility Allowance rule, with the exception to this rule allowing all councillor representatives on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Audit and Governance Committee, including Substitute Members and all Members of the Development and Management Committee, with the exception of the Chair, Vice-Chair and Cabinet Member nomination;**
- (d) the continuation of payment of the Independent Person and Deputy Independent Person allowance of £1,051 and £525 respectively per annum;**
- (e) the continuation of the terms and conditions and the rates payable for travel based on the mileage rates published by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs for reimbursement of mileage incurred in undertaking approved duties;**
- (f) the continuation of arrangements in that subsistence is not payable, with the exception of 'special circumstances' such as overnight stays;**
- (g) the Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance be based at cost upon the production of receipts and in the case of specialist care a requirement of medical evidence that this type of care be required, the allowance should have no monthly maximum claim when undertaking Approved duties;**
- (h) the active promotion of the Child and Dependent Carer's Allowance to prospective and new councillors both before and following an election to assist in supporting greater diversity of councillor representation;**
- (i) to support a policy of parental leave for councillors. Should a policy on Parental Leave for Councillors be approved the active promotion to prospective and current Councillors alongside the Carers Allowance. This should form part of a wider 'Be A Councillor' (Local Government Association led initiative) programme led by the Council and supported by political groups, to enhance and increase the diversity of councillor representation; and**
- (j) the indices to be used for indexation purposes to enable the Members' Allowances Scheme to be adjusted for a period of up to four years as outlined in the attached Annex.**

**The Council is also invited to revoke the existing Members' Allowances Scheme with effect from 1st April 2023 and to authorise the Managing Director to prepare a new scheme of Members' Allowances to reflect the outcome of the Council's deliberations and to take any consequential action arising therefrom.**



## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel with regard to a review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has undertaken a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme. The current Scheme has been in existence since 17th October 2018, with a further interim update in June 2021.
- 2.2 As a prelude to their review, the Panel was advised of Council's financial pressures with current budget restrictions and general economic climate, as well as a change in the political landscape of the Council since the elections in May 2022, with control by a Joint Administration comprised of four political groups and change to the different leadership model.

## **3. CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The Panel met on 22nd and 23rd November 2022 to review the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Panel's report is attached at Annex 1. The report is based on the Panel's discussions and summarises the principal issues. A summary of the changes appears in Appendix 1 of the IRP Report. The Council is requested to consider the recommendations set out in the report and agree a Members' Allowances Scheme to take effect from 1st April 2023.
- 3.2 The Panel has also made recommendations in relation to town and parish councillors under the 2003 Regulations. Although none of the parishes in Huntingdonshire have requested a review of allowances and as far as is known, no parishes are paying the parish basic allowance to their Chairmen, the Panel has taken the opportunity to provide town and parish councils with the necessary authority should they wish to implement an allowance scheme in the future. This had not been reviewed since 2010.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 A questionnaire was sent to all Councillors prior to the Panel convening, inviting comments on the existing Scheme, and invitations were extended to all those currently in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances to address the Panel on the day.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In setting its Members' Allowances levels, the Council is obliged to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel established for this purpose.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 If the proposed changes are made to the Members' Allowances Scheme, allowing for an increase in the basic allowance and recommending revisions to Special Responsibility Allowances, although an increase to expenditure, there would be no overall increase to the budget.

## **7. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 7.1 Part 6 of the Council's Constitution provides for the Council to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme.

## **8. LIST OF ANNEXES INCLUDED**

Annex 1 – The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel appointed to review the allowances paid to Huntingdonshire District Council: December 2022

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

## **CONTACT OFFICER**

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