

APPENDIX FOUR

Members' Allowances Survey

An Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) is reviewing Wiltshire Council's allowances including the basic allowance and special responsibility allowance (SRA). The IRP is seeking the input of councillors to inform its review and recommendations. Please answer the questions below in relation to your experience over the last four years (2017/21).

The questionnaire will take approx. 5 minutes to complete

The current members allowances scheme can be found on the council's website.

Section 1 – Basic Allowance

- 1. The basic allowance for councillors is intended to recognise the time commitment of the role including (but not limited to) travel to meetings, meeting preparation, attendance, meeting with officers and residents and case work. The allowance should also cover incidental costs such as use of councillors' homes. Government guidance also states the role of an elected councillors must in part be viewed as an unpaid voluntary service.**

On the basis of the above, do you think the basic allowance for the role of a unitary councillor is.....?

-Significantly too low

-Too low

-About right

-Too high

-Significantly too high

- 2. If you think the basic allowance is either too 'high' or too 'low' please state at what level the basic allowance should be paid?**
- 3. The basic allowance covers costs such as printing, telephone calls and home broadband – are there any additional cost that you incur in your role that are not covered by the basic allowance? If so, what are they and approximately how much do they cost per year?**
- 4. Do you think the current basic allowance may present a barrier to those who may wish to stand for election?**

-Yes

-No

- 5. What is the average number of hours per week needed to perform the basic role of a Wiltshire Councillor?**

(Please note that this does not apply to duties you undertake as a member of the town or parish council or for which you receive a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA))

-Less than 5 hours per week

-5 to 10 hours per week

-10 to 15 hours per week

-15 – 20 hours per week

-20-25 hours per week

-25-30 hours per week

-30-35 hours per week

-More than 35 hours per week

- 6. Historically, the Panel have compared allowance schemes from comparable local authorities as a factor in determining allowances, do you have any suggestions for an alternative to update the allowances?**

- 7. Has the role of a unitary councillor changed significantly since the last review in 2017?**

-Yes

-No

- 8. Do you foresee the role of a unitary councillor changing, for instance if virtual meetings are continued?**

- 9. In addition to the number of hours worked by councillors, are there any other factors you think should be considered by the panel when determining the basic allowance?**

Section 2- Special Responsibilities Allowance (SRA)

- 10. Do you currently receive an SRA?**

-Yes

-No

11. Do you think the SRAs under the existing scheme are set at a fair level? If you believe the scheme has inconsistencies, please be specific.

12. Are there any other roles which you think should be in receipt of an SRA? If so, please give reasons.

13. What is your view on limiting the number of SRAs per person?

-SRAs should be limited to 1 per person (Group Leader allowance not included)

-SRAs should be limited to 1 full SRA per person and a percentage of a second SRA

-SRAs should continue to be limited to 2 per person (Group Leader allowance not included)

-Other – please specify

14. Do you think a councillor covering the special responsibilities of another due to a period of long term absence (eg. sickness, parental leave) for a significant period, should receive an SRA?

For example, a Vice chairman, is paid an allowance as Chairman if the Chairman is away from duties for more than one month.

-Yes

-No

Section 3 – Group Leaders' Allowance

15. Do you think Group Leaders should receive an allowance?

-Yes

-No

16. Should the allowance be based (at least in part) on the number of members in the group?

-Yes

-No

Section 4 – Overview & Scrutiny Fund

17. There is currently a £15,000 per annum Overview and Scrutiny Fund. This is to remunerate councillors performing specific scrutiny functions

such as chairing task groups and rapid scrutiny exercises. Do you think this fund continues to serve a purpose?

-Yes

-No

Section 5 – General

18. Do you have any other comments/observations to make on the members allowance scheme generally including travel, subsistence and carers allowances?

19. Would you like to be interviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) during the review?

Note that the panel will consider submissions and will seek to meet with a mix of different councillors.

-Yes

-No

Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) Survey

An Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) is reviewing Wiltshire Council's allowances including the basic allowance and special responsibility allowance (SRA). The IRP is seeking the input of those currently receiving an SRA to inform its review and recommendations.

Please answer the questions below in relation to your experience of being an SRA holder over the last four years (2017/21).

The survey will take approx. 6 minutes to complete

The current members allowances scheme can be found on the council's website.

1. What SRAs are you in receipt of? (With the exception of the Group Leader Allowance, no councillor may receive more than two SRAs)

- Leader of the Council
- Deputy Leader of the Council
- Cabinet Member
- Chairman of the Council
- Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee
- Chairman of the Health & Well-being Board
- Portfolio Holder
- Chairman of the Police & Crime Panel
- Chairman of Scrutiny Select Committee
- Chairman of Area Board
- Vice-Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee
- Vice-Chairman of the Council
- Chairman of Strategic Planning Committee
- Chairman of Area Planning Committee
- Chairman of Audit Committee
- Chairman of Licensing Committee

- Chairman of Staffing Policy Committee
- Chairman of Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee
- Chairman of Standards Committee
- Chairman, Operational Flood Working Group
- Group Leader Allowance
- Independent co-opted member of the Police and Crime Panel
- Non-voting co-opted member of the Standards Committee
- Independent Person of the Standards Committee
- Co-opted voting member of the Children's Select Committee

2. In your opinion does this role or roles need to be remunerated? Please give reasons.

3. Based on your current experience, what is the average number of hours per week needed to perform this role which are over and above the basic allowance?

If possible, please break this time down into specific duties (meetings, briefings, meeting fall-out, correspondence etc).

4. Do you think the SRA/SRAs you are awarded under the existing scheme is/are set at a fair level, if not, how do you think it should be changed? Please give reasons

5. Has the role evolved since the last review in 2017? If so, how?

6. What regional, national or outside bodies are you involved with as part of your area of special responsibility? Please bullet point below.

7. How often do you deal with the press/media as part of your role?

-Daily

-Weekly

-Monthly

-Less than monthly

8. Do you foresee the role changing over the next 4 years? Please give reasons.

- 9. What parts of your role are particularly time consuming?**
- 10. What parts of your role are particularly challenging?**
- 11. Do you have any comments in general on the SRAs and how these are calculated?**