

Report to: Annual Meeting of the Full Council - 19 May 2026

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Deborah Johnson, Customer Services & Organisational Development

Lead Officer: Nigel Hill, Business Manager - Elections & Democratic Services

Report Summary	
Report Title	Report of the Members' Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel
Purpose of Report	To consider the final report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following their review of Special Responsibility Allowances
Recommendations	That the Council: a) considers the final report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel; and b) approves the report recommendations as changes to the current Scheme of Members Allowances, subject to no clawing back of Special Responsibility Allowances payments from those Members who have seen changes in their allowances (as set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report) and the implementation date of 15 July 2025 for the new SRA's.
Reasons for Recommendation	To consider the final report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following the changes in committees as from 15 July 2025.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At the meeting held on 15 July 2025, Full Council approved the Terms of Reference and established two new committees, the Audit & Accounts Committee and the Governance, General Purposes & Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Committee. These two new Committees replaced the former General Purposes and Audit & Governance Committees.
- 1.2 In addition, at the meeting of the Full Council held on 20 May 2025, approval was given for the revised Terms of Reference for the standalone Licensing Committee which was to also take effect as from 15 July 2025.

- 1.3 At the meeting held on 15 July 2025, the Council agreed to convene the Independent Remuneration Panel to review Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA's) given these changes in committees. Further to the Council resolution, the Chair used at previous panels was contacted but was unavailable, therefore a further report to Council on 21 October 2025 sought approval to convene the panel with a membership which was to comprise of a new chair, Declan Hall, and the Council's two Independent Persons who have supported previous panels.
- 1.4 Regulations set out the range of allowances that can be paid to Councillors and the requirement to have an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council regarding Members' Allowances.
- 1.5 The scope of the review was to consider the Members SRA's given the changes in committees, but it was also tasked with a wider review of SRA's to address any anomalies.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

- 2.1 The panel came together on Tuesday 6 and Wednesday 7 January 2026 where they met with appropriate officers and Members to acquire evidence for the review. These supplemented responses received to a short questionnaire sent to all Members and appropriate benchmarking materials from the other District / Borough Councils in the County, along with North and South Kesteven as our neighbouring authorities.
- 2.2 The final report and recommendations of the panel, which is attached as an appendix to the report, was received by the Council on 4 March 2026.
- 2.3 The report recommendations in respect of SRA's are summarised in the Executive Summary with a full explanation of the proposed rates for the new committees and any proposed changes are in the main body of the report.
- 2.4 Members will note that the Panel followed the 'pro rata' approach whereby postholders were assessed as a proportion of the Leaders SRA and the Panel also addressed a number of anomalies in the previous scheme.
- 2.5 Aside from the changes to the SRA's the report recommendations included the reinstatement of the rule whereby Members can only receive one SRA. It also recommended a payment of £15 per month to be paid automatically to all Members on the Planning Committee, excluding the Chair and Vice-Chair, to replace the previous £8 subsistence allowance for attending site visits.
- 2.6 The report also made recommendations to clarify the arrangements for travel and subsistence allowances and recommended the indexation for the annual percentage increase in allowances in line with salary increase for local government staff for a four-year period which was the maximum permitted under the 2003 Regulations.
- 2.7 In the final report the recommendation is to implement the proposed new SRA's as from the date of adoption of the new Scheme by the Council, or as from 15 July 2025 when the new committees came into being. However, for those Members who have seen a reduction in the rate of their SRA it is proposed that no claw back of payments is made.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	Yes	Equality & Diversity	N/A
Human Resources	N/A	Human Rights	N/A
Legal	Yes	Data Protection	N/A
Digital & Cyber Security	N/A	Safeguarding	N/A
Sustainability	N/A	Crime & Disorder	N/A
LGR	N/A	Tenant Consultation	N/A

Financial Implications (FIN26-27/2977)

- 3.1 The 2026/27 base budget is currently £142,980. Based on the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, the total cost for the existing portfolio holders would be £135,430, which can be fully met from within the existing budget.

The cost of the proposed additional Portfolio Holder for 2026/27 (considered earlier on this agenda) would amount to an additional (assuming a 3.5% increase, aligned with that of the staff pay award) £9,650 taking the total cost of special responsibility allowances to £145,080 leaving a shortfall of £2,100. The report earlier on this agenda relating to the Leader's Appointments sought to approve the additional £2,100, funded by the Corporate Contingency budget.

Where recommendation b) of the Leader's Appointments report (earlier on this agenda) is not approved, there would be a saving of £7,550.

Legal Implications (LEG2627/1145)

- 3.2 The process for determining and setting Members' Allowances for local authorities is set out in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. These Regulations set out the range of allowances that can be paid to Councillors (with particular reference to special responsibilities) and the requirement to have an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council regarding Members' Allowances.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The current Councillors' Allowance Scheme is published - <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/your-council/your-council/councillors-and-committees/councillor-allowances/>