

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

Report of:	Corporate Director of Legal & Corporate Services, Charlotte Benjamin on behalf of the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration
Submitted to:	Council
Date:	20 May 2026
Title:	Members' Scheme of Allowances
Report for:	Decision
Status:	Public
Council Plan priority:	Delivering Best Value

Proposed decision(s)

That Council consider the recommendations proposed by the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration outlined in its report at Appendix 1 and accept or reject those recommendations.

Executive summary

Following its 2026 review of Members' allowances, the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration recommend an increase to the Basic Allowance from £7,608 to £8,330 and an annual payment of £800 to Independent Persons co-opted onto the Audit Committee. The Panel also recommend freezing Special Responsibility Allowances, and all other allowances, at their current levels. Neither Basic nor Special Responsibility Allowances should reflect Staff Pay Awards at this time. However, it will review allowances links to staff pay awards as part of its 2027 review. The Council is asked to consider the Panel's recommendations and either accept or reject them. If, after having due regard of the Panel's recommendations, the Council reject the Panel's proposals it will need to create its own Scheme of Allowances or choose to maintain the existing Scheme of Allowances.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Members with the opportunity to consider the proposals of the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration and adopt the Scheme of Allowances.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council consider the recommendations proposed by the Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration outlined in its report at Appendix 1 and accept or reject those recommendations.

3. Background and relevant information

- 3.1 The establishment of an Independent Panel on Members Remuneration and its resultant recommendations is required under sections 20 and 21 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Panel consists of five members and currently meets on an annual basis to review Member Remuneration. The membership of the Panel consists of Mrs A McClaren (Chair), J Carss, S Green P Hopson and J Lawther.
- 3.2 As part of its deliberations the Panel have acted independently of all other considerations, carefully reviewed all the relevant quantitative and qualitative information presented to them and been sensitive to wider socio-economic factors affecting Middlesbrough and the Council and elected Members.
- 3.3 When considering the Scheme of Allowances, the Panel only considered the level of responsibility and commitment required for the role the allowance is afforded; it could not consider personal perceptions of a person appointed to a post, particularly for Special Responsibility Allowances.
- 3.4 The 2026 review was a quadrennial review. It compared Middlesbrough's remuneration levels with a cohort of 16 other Councils ("the cohort"). Those Councils were chosen due to their geographic proximity to Middlesbrough and/ or similar governance arrangements. The full methodology of the 2026 review is contained in the IRP report at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 3.5 The Panel recognises that the role of an elected Member is a form of public service, supported by allowances rather than a full salary, with duties that underpin local democracy and reflect a commitment to improving residents' lives.
- 3.6 The Panel is also mindful that, regardless of personal circumstances, elected Members devote a significant proportion of their time to carrying out this vital function.

4. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

- 4.1 The Council could reject the Panel's recommendations and propose its own Scheme of Allowances having had due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Members Remuneration. Should Council reject the Panel's recommendations and not propose its own Scheme of Allowances it can decide to continue operating the current Scheme of Allowances.

5. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including Social Value)	<p>Should Council agree the recommendations this would increase Basic Allowance spending from £357,576 to £391,510 an increase of £33,934. Importantly, the Independent Panel act independently from the Council and neither Council officers nor elected Members have any influence over its recommendations.</p> <p>The Members Allowance budget is held within Legal and Corporate Services. The increase will be met from the corporate contingency budget for this financial year and will be included as growth within the Medium-Term Financial Plan in future years.</p>
Procurement	Not applicable as this a report does not require the procurement of goods or services.
Legal	The Council are required under The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to publish a Members Scheme of Allowances on an annual basis and to have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Members Remuneration.
Risk	Failure to adhere to Local Code of Corporate Governance and deliver governance improvements outlined in the Annual Governance Statement. A potential consequence of not having a comparable Scheme of Allowances with other Tees Valley authorities is that it may discourage a wider demographic for standing for Council.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	The subject of this report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. It is considered that an equality impact assessment is not required.
Reducing poverty	The proposed recommendations in this report do not directly impact on Reducing Poverty.
Climate Change / Environmental	The proposed recommendations in this report do not directly impact on Climate Change/Environmental issues.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	The proposed recommendations in this report do not directly impact on Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers.
Data Protection	The proposed recommendations in this report do not directly impact on Data Protection issues.

Appendices

1	IRP Report
2	Proposed Scheme of Allowances 2026
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Legislation	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003	

Contact: Charlotte Benjamin

Email: charlotte_benjamin@middlesbrough.gov.uk