East Dean & Friston
Parish Council

Date: **04 January 2024**

Title: **Report Item 9 – Town and Parish Councillor Allowances 2024/25**

By: **S Adeniji (Clerk)**

Purpose: **To adopt recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

Recommendations: **a) That the Council adopts the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2024/25.**
b) To adopt the suggestion of the panel that the acceptance of allowances should be for the clerk to communicate directly with individual councillors so that the decision is an individual rather than a group one.

Introduction:

1. The final report from the Independent Remuneration Panel, which met on 12 December 2023 to consider the Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2024/25 is attached in ANNEX ONE. The Panel was established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area.

2. The Panel recommended a 4.6% increase to all Basic and Chairman's Allowances rounded to the nearest pound.

3. Wealden's District Council Cabinet will be meeting on 7 February 2024 to consider the recommendations made by the IRP for District Councillors, which also recommended a 4.6% increase in the allowances.

4. At the Panel's meeting, the feedback from several Parish/Town Councillors was considered. The Panel expressed concern that some councillors did not realise they were entitled to an allowance. In addition, some Councils agreed en masse not to accept an allowance and it was felt that this could deter individuals from continuing as a councillor. One proposal received suggested that the acceptance of allowances should be for the clerk to communicate directly with individual councillors so that the decision is an individual rather than a group one.

5. As required by Section 30 of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the parish council has complied with the publicity requirements and has made the report available for inspection by members of the public by publishing the report on its website at http://www.edfparishcouncil.org.uk/_UserFiles/Files/Councillors%20Allowance%202024-25%20Website.pdf .

ANNEX ONE

Report of the Wealden Parish Independent Remuneration Panel on Town and Parish Councillor Allowances for 2024/25

Introduction

1. This is the 23rd Annual Report of the Parish Independent Allowances and Remuneration Panel to make recommendations regarding the amount of payments that may be made to Councillors. The Panel is established by Wealden District Council under Regulation 27 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, for the Town and Parish Councils in its area (full list of Town and Parish Councils to which the report applies is attached at Appendix A).

Summary

2. The Panel recommends:

a) That allowances should be paid in accordance with three bands, Levels 1 to 3 as defined in Appendix A;

b) That there be an increase in allowances in line with that recommended for District Councillors, with Basic and Chairman's Allowances rounded to the nearest pound. These allowances for 2024/25 to be as set out below.

2024/25	***LEVEL 1***	***LEVEL 2***	***LEVEL 3***
Basic Allowance	*£188*	*£468*	*£1,492*
Chairman's Allowance	*£326*	*£734*	*£2,060*

c) That the policy to fix Travelling Allowances in line with HM Revenue & Customs 'Approved Mileage Allowance Payment' (AMAP) rates be re-affirmed;

d) Subsistence Allowance to be the same as those indicated for District Councillors. These allowances for 2024/25 are set out in the table below.

Breakfast	£7.50	When away from home on approved Council business before 8 a.m.
Lunch	£9.80	When away from home on approved Council business between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
Evening Meal	£17.30	When away from home on approved Council business after 7 p.m.
Overnight absence	£98.30	When outside London
London and specified Conferences	£110	

All claims must be accompanied by a valid receipt and payment is subject to Councillors signing to say they have actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed.

e) That the recommendations set out above are all proposed for implementation at the commencement of the financial year 2024/25. However, Town and Parish Councils can choose the extent to which they wish to implement these allowances; and

f) The Panel notes with regret that it is still not possible under the current legislation to recommend a Carers' Allowance for Parish/ Town Councillors, but would wish for all Parish and Town Councils to consider adopting a basic

allowance to enable Parish/Town Councillors to use this to cover care costs where need to attend meetings.

Membership of Panel and Meetings

3. The Panel consists of three members – Mr Edward Stone (Chairman), Mr Stephen Hallam and Mr Clive Mills.
4. The Panel met on 12 December 2023 via the medium of MS Teams. The Panel subsequently dealt with the preparation of this report through discussion and advice from officers via email to finalise this report.

Panel Remit

5. The Panel produces a report in relation to the members of the town and parish councils for which the Wealden District Council is the responsible authority and in respect of which it is established, making recommendations, in accordance with the provisions of regulation 29 of the 2003 Regulations, as to:
   a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
   b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such town and parish councils;
   c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman of any such town and parish council or to all of its members;
   d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other members of any such town and parish council, the allowance payable to the Mayor or Chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members, and, if so, the higher amount so payable; and
   e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

Parish Basic and Chairman's Allowances

6. As in previous years, the Panel has examined available data in order to assist in determination of a recommendation on parish/town council basic allowance and whether it should be payable to both the Mayor or Chairman and the other elected members of a town or parish council.
7. The Panel has considered last year's report to Town and Parish Councils recommending allowances for 2023/24.
8. The Clerk to the Panel had invited all Town and Parish Councillors, via the clerks, to provide any comments on the allowance scheme. No responses had been received.
9. The Panel emphasised that it is keen to see all Parish and Town Councils adopt a scheme of some sort, even if it is normal practice not to claim. This is to ensure that no potential candidate should be put off standing due to the costs of working as a local councillor, and to ensure that Parish and Town Councillors could choose to claim an allowance should they need to do so.
10. Following discussion, the Panel **recommends** that the increase in allowances is in line with that recommended for District Councillors at 4.6%, in line with inflation, rounded to the nearest pound (£). This is in line with the Panel's recommendations for Wealden District Council.
11. Regulation 29(2) of the 2003 Regulations requires that recommendations be expressed not only in cash terms but also as a percentage of the amount recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel as the Basic Allowance for Wealden District Councillors. The Panel is recommending that the allowance is increased for District Councillors to £5070 per annum for the financial year 2024/25. Based on that figure, the percentages have been incorporated into the attached Appendix A.

Chairman's Allowance

12. As indicated in previous reports, individual Town and Parish Councils are free to decide whether an allowance should be payable only to the Mayor or Chairman and/or to all of its members. The Chairman's Allowance, as recommended by this report, is intended to be paid as a substitute for the Basic Allowance rather than in addition to it, but this is at the discretion of each Town and Parish Council.
13. Town and Parish Councils are reminded that the Chairman's Allowance (again detailed in the attached Appendix A) is an allowance personal to the Parish/Town Councillor elected Mayor or Chairman. It is entirely separate to the allowance under the Local Government Act 1972, Sections 15(5), which is payable as the Parish/Town Council thinks fit to reasonably meet the expenses of the office of Mayor or Chairman.
14. The Panel **recommends** an increase to all Chairman's Allowances of 4.6%, on the same basis as increases to Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances, as detailed in Appendix A attached.

Travelling Allowance

15. The Panel wanted to clarify that under Regulation 26 of the 2003 Regulations, Town and Parish Councils may pay travelling and subsistence allowances, including an allowance in respect of travel by bicycle or by any other non-motorised form of transport, undertaken or incurred in connection with the performance of any duty within one or more of the categories set out in that Regulation. This also includes provision for encouraging car sharing.
16. Councillors can receive up to a tax-free approved amount when using their own vehicles in carrying out their duties. These payments are known as Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP), and as from 6 April 2011 the following rules apply:
    - Car or Van – 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter;
    - Motor Cycle – 24p per mile (all miles);
    - Cycle – 20p per mile (all miles); and
    - A 5 pence per mile per passenger supplement for up to four passengers.

17. The Panel observed that there was no mention of claims for other travel costs within the Allowance Scheme, such as public transport and taxis. It was suggested that this category be included and reimbursed in full, subject to the Council's approval.

Subsistence Allowance

18. The Panel recommends that the current level of subsistence rates to be the same as those indicated for District Councillors. These allowances for 2024/25 are set out in the table below:

Breakfast	£7.50	When away from home on approved Council business before 8 a.m.
Lunch	£9.80	When away from home on approved Council business between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
Evening Meal	£17.30	When away from home on approved Council business after 7 p.m.
Overnight absence	£98.30	When outside London
London and specified Conferences	£110	

19. It was confirmed that payment should still be subject to Parish/ Town Councillors certifying that they had actually and necessarily incurred the amount being claimed. The Panel commented that subsistence allowance was a ‘top up’ on the amount it would cost a councillor to eat at home.

Co-opted Members

20. As set out above, under the relevant legislation co-opted members of Town and Parish Councils are not eligible to be paid Parish/Town Council Basic Allowances nor Chairman’s Allowances, but may claim Travelling and Subsistence Allowances. It is not in the Panel’s remit to make any recommendations that this change.

Communication of Allowances

21. On receipt of this Report, Town and Parish Councils must advertise receipt of the report in line with Regulation 30 (2003 Regulations).
22. In setting the levels of allowances, Town and Parish Councils must show they have regard to the IRP’s recommendations, but it is entirely up to each Town and Parish Council what scheme of allowances is adopted. The Panel has expressed its preference that an allowance scheme is adopted by all Councils, even if not claimed by individual Councillors. When adopting a scheme, Parish and Town Councils must under the Regulations publish its scheme by public notice.

Edward Stone
Chairman

Dated: 12 December 2023

	LEVEL1	LEVEL2	LEVEL3	
Basic Allowance	£188	£468	£1,805	
Chairman's Allowance	£ 326	£734	£ 2,060	
PARISH	**No. of Cllrs**	**Maximum Basic Allowance**	**Maximum Chairman's Allowance**	**% of Recommended District Basic Allowance**
Level 1				
Alciston	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Little Horsted	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Selmeston	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Cuckmere Valley	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Berwick	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Wartling	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Long Man	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Hooe	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Arlington	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Laughton	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Isfield	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Chiddingly	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Hellingly	15	£188	£326	3.71%
Hadlow Down	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Fletching	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Warbleton	11	£188	£326	3.71%
Frant	11	£188	£326	3.71%
Alfriston	7	£188	£326	3.71%
East Hoathly/Halland	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Chalvington/Ripe	7	£188	£326	3.71%
Horam	11	£188	£326	3.71%
East Dean/Friston	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Framfield	11	£188	£326	3.71%
Hartfield	13	£188	£326	3.71%
Ninfield	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Danehill	9	£188	£326	3.71%
Buxted	15	£188	£326	3.71%
Withyham	13	£188	£326	3.71%
Herstmonceux	11	£188	£326	3.71%
Mayfield/ Five Ashes	15	£188	£326	3.71%
Maresfield	14	£188	£326	3.71%
Rotherfield	13	£188	£326	3.71%
Westham	13	£188	£326	3.71%
Pevensey	13	£188	£326	3.71%
Wadhurst	15	£188	£326	3.71%

Level 2				
Forest Row	*15*	*£468*	*£734*	*9.23%*
Willingdon/Jevington	*19*	*£468*	*£734*	*9.23%*
Polegate	*15*	*£468*	*£734*	*9.23%*
Heathfield/Waldron	*21*	*£468*	*£734*	*9.23%*
Level 3				
Hailsham	*24*	*£1,492*	*£2,060*	*29.42%*
Uckfield	*15*	*£1,492*	*£2,060*	*29.42%*
Crowborough	*16*	*£1,492*	*£2,060*	*29.42%*