

Report of the West Berkshire Independent Remuneration Panel 11th and 12th February 2015

Draft



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1. Chair's Foreword

There is rarely an opportune moment to review Members' Allowances and this moment is particularly inopportune. However, the legislation provides for a periodic independent review of allowances and the Council is once again required to seek advice on its Members' Allowances scheme as the last review was in 2011. The Panel has taken the opportunity to fundamentally review the whole scheme.

The Panel acknowledges that its recommendations, based on the Council's current configuration will, if adopted, result in an increase of £58,702 (2015/16) on the current spend on the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances. Although there will be an annual offset as a result of the recommendation to abolish the £200 IT Consumables Allowance that Members are able to claim (a saving of £5,200 on the budget as not all Members claim their allowance) and the recommendation to abolish the additional £200 uplift to the Basic Allowance for broadband provision, both of which, in terms of budget provision, provides for maximum savings of £15,600 per year (see Appendix A for further details).

The main conclusion of the Panel was that the Basic Allowance, in particular, is obsolete at its current level in that it undermines one of its main purposes: namely, to enable most people to be a Councillor and carry out the full range of duties expected of them without incurring undue personal financial cost. While Members' remuneration can never fully compensate the workloads and responsibilities undertaken by Members at commercial or market rates, indeed the statutory framework requires that the voluntary principle is recognised in the Basic Allowance, the recommendations should go some way to redress that imbalance.

Moreover, the Panel has explicitly laid out its deliberations, dilemmas and how it has arrived at its main recommendations. In this way the Panel feels that it shows its recommendations are evidence-based, transparent and can stand up to public scrutiny.

Declan Hall (PhD) Chair
27 April 2015

2. Executive Summary – Recommendations

2.1 The full proposed scheme alterations are detailed within the report and comparative data for the Berkshire Unitary Councils and the South East Employer's survey is shown in Appendix C, but the main features of the Panel's recommendations are that:

1. *The Basic Allowance* be increased from £6,288 to £7,324 per annum and is inclusive of:
 - Costs associated with home telephone landline and calls
 - All costs associated with Broadband
 - Mobile phone contracts and calls (personal)
 - IT consumables (such as paper and cartridges for personal printer)
 - The cost of replacing damaged or lost West Berkshire Council ICT equipment in accordance with the Members ICT Policy. This includes:
 - Tablet device

- Bluetooth Mouse
- Bluetooth Keyboard
- Docking Station
- Stylus
- Keyboard, Video Mouse (KVM) switch (where relevant)
- Projector connection
- Carry case
- Batteries and cables
- The costs associated with returning West Berkshire Council ICT equipment and other sundries to the Council, when ceasing to be a Councillor
- Headed paper (following initial supply after Election)
- Business cards
- Online or paper subscriptions or memberships
- Registration with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and similar
- Incidental Expenses not otherwise specified in the scheme (see Travelling and Subsistence Allowances)

2. *The Special Responsibility Allowances* be as follows:

Role	Proposed amount
Leader of the Council (x1)	£18,310 (2.5 x the Basic Allowance)
Deputy Leader of the Council (x1)	£9,155 (50% of Leader's Allowance)
Executive Members (x8)	£9,155 (50% of the Leader's Allowance)
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (x1)	£5,493 (30% of the Leader's Allowance)
Chairman of the Council (x1)	£5,493 (30% of the Leader's Allowance)
Vice-Chairman of the Council (x1)	£1,099 (20% of Chairman's Allowance)
Chairman of Planning Committee (x2)	£4,578 (25% of the Leader's Allowance)
Chairman of Licensing Committee (x1)	£2,747 (15% of the Leader's Allowance)
Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee (x1)	£2,747 (15% of the Leader's Allowance)
Leader of the main Opposition Group (x1)	£7,324 (40% of the Leader's Allowance)
Opposition Spokespersons (x4)	£2,197 (30% of the Leader of the Opposition's Allowance)
Leader(s) of Minority Group(s) if have 5 Group Members	£1,831 (10% of the Leaders Allowance)

A table showing the above information, the level of current allowance and the potential budgetary impact is attached at Appendix A.

No Councillor shall be entitled to more than one special responsibility allowance paid by the Council.

3. *Travel Allowances*

Travel allowance rates should continue to be in line with Inland Revenue approved rates and they should only rise in accordance with any increase in the Inland Revenue rates.

- The current HMRC rates be paid as follows:

- 45 pence per mile for cars;
 - 24 pence per mile for motor-cycles;
 - 20 pence per mile for bicycle
- Members continue to be entitled to claim 5 pence per mile for every passenger they carry in their car.
 - For clarification purposes, the scheme should specify that when claiming a Travel Allowance for attending an approved duty within the district then that claim will be made with the starting point being a Members' usual place of residence or work within the District, or if the usual place of residence or work is outside the District boundary then the total return journey for which that claim can be made is capped at 36 miles.
 - The use of public transport is encouraged, in line with the West Berkshire Council Staff Travel Plan. The rate of travel by public transport shall not exceed the ordinary fare or any available cheap fare. The occasional use of taxis where public transport is not available or for reasons of ill health is permitted.
 - Reimbursements for travelling expenses are only provided with evidence of expenditure. Where receipts or evidence of expenditure (in the case of car parking payments made by phone) are not provided, the expenditure will be treated as an 'incidental expense' under the Basic Allowance.

4. *The Subsistence Allowance*

The current Subsistence Allowances (as set out in section 9) remain unchanged.

5. *Co-optees' Allowance*

The Panel does not recommend that the Allowances' Scheme include provision for the payment of a Co-optees' Allowance.

6. *Dependants' Carers' Allowance*

The current allowance of £6.13 per hour up to a maximum of 40 hours per month per Councillor is increased to the current UK Living Wage (currently £7.85 per hour) up to a maximum of 40 hours per month per Councillor.

7. *The Local Government Pension Scheme*

The Panel recommended that reference to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) be removed from the Members' Allowances Scheme for the reasons set out in section 14.

8. *The Administration of the Scheme*

The administration of the scheme remains unchanged with the exception of the following change of wording with regard to the submission of claims:

“Members **shall** submit all claims relating to travelling, subsistence and Child Care and Dependants’ Carers Allowance in writing and in arrears within two months of the date of the meeting in respect of which the entitlement to the allowance arises and must be received for processing by the Members’ Services Officer by the 5th of each month.”

Failure to do so will result in any claim being void unless the Head of Strategic Support has approved payment of a claim from a Member submitted after that period due to illness.

9. *Indexation*

That the level of indexation for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances be automatically linked to that used for West Berkshire Council Officers unless Members choose to forgo index linked increases in a particular year.

The Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance’s maximum hourly rate is indexed to the living wage.

The Subsistence Allowances are indexed to relevant Officer rates.

The mileage allowances are indexed to HMRC rates.

That in accordance with the 2003 Members’ Allowances Regulations (21.1e) the level of indexation will be revisited in February 2019 if not before.

3. Regulatory context

- 3.1 This report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) for West Berkshire Council to advise the Council on its Members’ Allowances Scheme.
- 3.2 The Panel was convened under *The Local Authorities’ (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021)* (“the 2003 Regulations”). These regulations, which arise out of the relevant provisions contained in the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to establish and maintain an advisory Independent [Members] Remuneration Panel to review and provide advice on Members’ allowances on a periodic basis.
- 3.3 All Councils are required to convene their Panel and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their Members’ Allowances Scheme. They must ‘pay regard’ to their Panel’s recommendations before setting a new or amended Members’ Allowances Scheme.
- 3.4 On this particular occasion, the Panel has been reconvened in accordance with the 2003 Members’ Allowances Regulations (21.1e) that requires a panel to meet at least once every four years to agree the level of indexation applied to the Members’ Allowances Scheme.

4. Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel

- 4.1 The West Berkshire Council Independent Remuneration Panel last met in February 2011 (to review the full scheme) and in July 2011 (to recommend minor amendments to the scheme following changes to the decision making structure). The panel members who took part in 2011 were no longer available to take part in the 2015 process and therefore the Council undertook to recruit new panel members. In order to provide a thorough review of the scheme, the Council approached Dr Declan Hall, an expert in the field of Members' Allowances to chair the Panel, along with two local panellists.
- 4.2 The membership and Terms of Reference (see section 5.1) of the February 2015 meeting of the West Berkshire IRP was considered by Corporate Board at the 6th January 2015 meeting. The Head of Strategic Support in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) appointed the members to the Independent Remuneration Panel on the 4 February 2015 under authority delegated to him
- 4.3 The Council is required to ensure that the composition and regulation of its Independent Remuneration Panel accords with the 2003 Regulations. The Regulations require the following:
- (a) The Panel should consist of at least three members.
 - (b) The members of the Panel cannot be members of any local authority in respect of which that Panel makes recommendations. Anyone who would be disqualified from being an elected member of a local authority is also disqualified from being a member of the Panel.
 - (c) The members of the Panel cannot also be members of a Committee or Sub-Committee of an authority in respect of which the Panel makes recommendations. This includes co-opted members and members of the Standards Committee.
- 4.4 Based on the above requirements, the Council's current Independent Remuneration Panel accords with the 2003 Regulations.
- 4.5 The current membership of the Panel is as follows:

Lindsey Appleton

A Corporate Ethics Manager at AWE Aldermaston, a major business in West Berkshire and a magistrate in Newbury and Reading. Lindsey is also a member of the judging panel for the annual West Berkshire Council Community Champion of the Year Awards.

David Danielli

A freelance Corporate Communications Consultant. David was formerly a Community Relations Manager at Vodafone, a major business in West Berkshire. David is a member of the West Berkshire Chamber of Commerce and is a former Chairman of Empowering West Berkshire.

Declan Hall PhD (Chair)

An independent consultant specialising in members' allowances who has led on allowances reviews across the whole of the UK. Declan is a political scientist by training and was a lecturer at the Institute of Local Government at the University of Birmingham.

- 4.6 Following the discussion at Corporate Board the winner of the Junior Citizen Award 2014 was invited to observe the Panel's proceedings. However, she was unable to attend due to school commitments.
- 4.7 The Panel was supported by:
- Moira Fraser, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager who acted as advisor to the Panel.
 - Jo Watt and Jude Thomas, Members Services Officers who kept a record of proceedings.

5. Terms of Reference

- 5.1 The Terms of Reference of the Panel for this review were agreed as follows:

To review the whole West Berkshire Scheme of Members Allowances as follows:

- Basic Allowance
- Special Responsibility Allowances
- Allowances for Independent Members¹
- Dependants' Carers' Allowance
- ICT Allowance (to include consumables, printing and mobile phones)
- Travelling Allowance
- Subsistence Allowance
- Pensions (legislative changes excluding Members from the Local Government Pension Scheme)
- The administration of the scheme

6. Method of Working

- 6.1 The Panel met at the Council Offices Newbury on Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th February 2015, to consider the written evidence and to receive evidence from Members of West Berkshire Council in accordance with the Terms of Reference. The Panel received expert advice from Dr Declan Hall and also received briefings from the following West Berkshire Council Officers:
- Andy Day, Head of Strategic Support
 - Kevin Griffin, Head of ICT and Corporate Support
 - Moira Fraser, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager.
- 6.2 The Panel received representations in person from the following Members:
- Jeff Beck, Chairman of the Council;

¹ This refers to the Co-optees' Allowance under the 2003 Regulations

- Jeff Brooks, Leader of the Opposition (Liberal Democrat);
- Hilary Cole, Executive Member;
- Gordon Lundie, Leader of the Council.

6.3 All Members were sent an aide memoire that formed the basis of an invitation to make written submissions to the Panel if they so wished. Written representations were received from the following Members:

- Peter Argyle (Conservative), Chairman of the Licensing Committee and Standards Committee;
- Pamela Bale (Conservative), Executive Member for Highways, Transport (Operations) and Newbury Vision;
- Virginia von Celsing (Conservative), Vice-Chairman of Western Area Planning Committee;
- Hilary Cole (Conservative), Executive Member for Planning, Transport (Policy), Culture, Customer Services, Countryside, Waste, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing;
- Roger Hunneman (Liberal Democrat), Deputy Leader Opposition Group and Opposition Spokesperson for Community Care, The Visions and Equality;
- Tony Linden (Conservative), Member of various committees including Licensing and Governance and Audit;
- Royce Longton (Liberal Democrat), Opposition Spokesperson for Environment, Waste, Countryside, Environmental Health and Trading Standards;
- Gwen Mason (Liberal Democrat), Opposition Spokesperson for Health and Wellbeing, Partnerships, Community Safety and Health and Safety;
- Garth Simpson (Conservative), Executive Member for Emergency Planning
- Quentin Webb (Conservative), Chairman of Eastern Area Planning Committee, Personnel Committee and Governance and Audit Committee

6.4 For the full list of other evidence considered by the Panel see Appendix B (NB circulated under separate cover).

6.5 For the full summary of allowances paid in other unitary councils included in the benchmarking group see Appendix C.

7. Key Messages

7.1 Comparison of Remuneration with Peers

7.2 The evidence shows that the remuneration of West Berkshire Council Members is well below that paid to peers in regards to the Basic Allowance (BA) and the senior Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs).

This in itself is not a watertight case to increase these allowances, but when looking at the variables utilised in the formula to arrive at the Basic Allowance in particular, it is low in both relative and real terms. The representation received generally recognised this. Aside from the issue of parity, there is one of equity; the Basic Allowance undervalues the work of Members. While the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances were never intended to reflect the 'market value' of the workload and responsibilities undertaken by Members they are intended to go a long way to recognising that there is a substantial time commitment required in

being a Councillor and complex issues need to be addressed that are not recognised in the current payments to Members.

- 7.2.1 In particular the Panel noted the policy intent that underpins the work of remuneration panels when considering the principles for establishing a Members' Allowances Scheme:

'The financial support for Councillors must also reinforce the culture of the modern council and address, as far as possible, any disincentives to serving in local politics. People do not enter public service to make their fortune. But neither should they pay a price for serving the public' – Modern Local Government – In touch with the People: Cm 4014 July 1998 3.54

7.3 **Recognising the Current Economic Context**

- 7.3.1 At the same time a countervailing message that came across strongly in the representation received was that the Panel should be cognisant of the current economic restraints in general and the need for the Council to find further savings in the next couple of years. The Panel has taken this message on board and sought to strike a balance between alleviating some of more glaring anomalies in the current Members' Allowances Scheme and ensuring that the recommendations are transparent, based on a logical construct and defensible. While this has led the Panel to recommend increases in many allowances it has also recommended decreases or no Special Responsibility Allowances, when necessary.

8. **Basic Allowance**

- 8.1 In giving consideration to the level of Basic Allowance (BA), the Panel were mindful of the 2003 Statutory Guidance:

'Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which councillors ought to be remunerated'. (2003 Guidance Para.67)

- 8.2 This guidance highlights three considerations when arriving at the recommended BA namely:

- The 'hours' or time required to be an effective ordinary Member
- The amount of this time that should be remunerated
- The rate of remuneration

- 8.3 In effect the BA is primarily a time-based allowance, that must be paid equally to all Members and that takes into account the full range of duties and activities that Members are expected to undertake including:

- Attending various meetings of the Council and its committees
- Ward work and constituent meetings
- Attendance at meetings of external organisations (Outside Bodies)
- Liaison with Town and Parish Councils
- Reading, preparation and relevant training where necessary

- 8.4 The Panel noted that the majority of Local Authorities used a time based formula for setting a Basic Allowance. With this in mind, a panel should have regard to three variables, namely:
- The hours 'devoted to these tasks' (2003 guidance)
 - The number of these hours for which 'Councillors ought to be remunerated' and the element which should be conceptualised as the voluntary contribution by Members (often referred to as the Public Service Discount or PSD)
 - The rate of remuneration
- 8.5 The Panel noted that the hours dedicated to Council work in West Berkshire varied between Members. However, the written and verbal submissions suggested that Members typically spent between 14 to 16 hours a week on Council work although the LGA Census of Councillors 2013 shows that, on average, an elected Member of a unitary council who does not hold any positions of responsibility put in over 21 hours per week.
- 8.6 A number of Members highlighted the difficulty that the political groups have in recruiting new Councillors, particularly with reference to the time commitment required and the relatively low level of remuneration. The Panel noted that in order to attract candidates from more diverse backgrounds, as well as young employed professionals, it is necessary to attempt to mitigate some of the factors that may dissuade some people from standing for election.
- 8.7 That said, the Panel was also mindful of not setting allowances at a level that attracts candidates for financial reasons as an element of public service is explicitly built into Members' remuneration. The Panel has recommended a Basic Allowance which reflects a "reasonable recompense" that would allow most people to stand and be a Councillor without suffering undue financial hardship. In other words, allowances should be an 'enabler' and seek to reduce financial barriers to being a Councillor rather than provide full compensation for work undertaken and responsibilities held. Against this backdrop, a number of Members were keen to say that they did not believe politics should be professionalised and could and should not be seen as a full time job. Indeed, the statutory guidance reminds Panels that in arriving at the recommended Basic Allowance they should recognise that not all the time put in by Members should be remunerated. There is an element of public service. Historically at West Berkshire Council the time expectation has been discounted by 50% for remuneration purposes. The more typical 'public service discount' is 30%-35%.
- 8.8 Thirdly, the rate of remuneration which historically was based on a Local Government Association advisory rate to Panels that is no longer available has been based on the median daily salary of all full time employees in the District (£125.20 – 2014). A locally based rate of remuneration is commonly adopted by Panels. It relates the BA to median earnings of Members constituents and cannot be deemed excessive.

Variable	Amount	Evidence provided
Time/Hours	117 days per year	Based on Members submissions stating 14-16 hours per week and the LGA Councillor Census 2013 figure of 21.6 hours per week.
Public Service Discount	50% (58.5 days)	Historical figure of 50% equates to 58.5 days
Day Rate	£125.20 per day	Based on the ONS ASHE table 7.7a: median full time annual salary of all jobs in West Berkshire 2014 which was calculated as £32,553 divided by 260 working days per year.

8.9 Thus by following the approach laid out in the 2003 Statutory Guidance the Panel has arrived at a tentative Basic Allowance based on the following calculation:

- $117 \text{ days} \times 50\% \times £125.20 = £7,324$

8.10 The representations received from Members expressed the view that the Basic Allowance should be, if not on full parity with the allowances paid in other similar authorities across Berkshire and the South East, at least, more consistent with similar authorities. Indeed, benchmarking shows that in comparison with similar councils the Basic Allowance paid to West Berkshire Council Members is low (see Appendix C). The current Basic Allowance of £6,285 is the lowest paid across the Berkshire Unitary Authorities (where the mean is £7,796) and, indeed the lowest from among the unitary authorities who responded to the South East Employers Members Allowances Survey 2014-2015 (where the mean is £8,539). A Basic Allowance of £7,324 would still leave WBC at the lower end of the comparative spectrum.

8.11 The current Basic Allowance of £6,285 includes an allowance of £200 to cover Broadband. This was an historical inclusion which reflected the relatively high costs of Broadband when it was first introduced. Members are also currently additionally entitled to claim up to £200 in IT consumables such as paper and printer cartridges along with stationery items such as headed paper and business cards.

8.12 The Panel noted that the submission from the Head of ICT and Corporate Support stated that the Council would no longer be providing Members with printers. On this basis the Panel recommends that the £200 allowance for IT consumables should no longer be available to Members, and any such costs should be borne by the increased Basic Allowance. In addition, given the prevalence and lower costs associated with Broadband, the Panel also recommends that costs associated with Broadband provision should be met from the Members' Basic Allowance.

The Panel considered that for the avoidance of doubt, the Basic Allowance should cover all items listed in paragraph 2.1 (section 1).

8.13 The Panel recommends that the Basic Allowance should be £7,324 inclusive of IT and Broadband expenses.

9. Special Responsibility Allowances

9.1 The Panel was mindful of Paragraph 72 of the 2003 Statutory Guidance which states, in relation to the total number of Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) and the number of SRAs payable to any one Member,:

“However, these are important considerations for local authorities. If the majority of Members of a Council receive a Special Responsibility Allowance the electorate may rightly question whether this was justified. Local Authorities will wish to consider very carefully the additional roles of Members and the significance of these roles, both in terms of responsibility and real time commitment, before deciding which will warrant the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance”.

9.2 The Panel considered each of the Special Responsibility Allowances currently paid by the Council and also those roles that currently do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance. The Panel was also guided in their deliberations by the evidence provided by the Members and Officers.

Leader of the Council (x1)

9.3 The Panel gave detailed consideration to the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Leader of the Council. It was noted that the role of Leader of the Council varied greatly between authorities with some authorities having a full time Leader with an allowance similar to a ‘salary’. Traditionally, the role of Leader of West Berkshire Council has not been perceived as requiring a full time commitment and this was reflected in the current allowance of £16,757 per annum.

9.4 Nonetheless, the post is clearly an onerous one that requires a significant time commitment that precludes normal full time employment. Moreover, the Panel heard that the role of Leader of the Council was an extremely complex one which involved having a varied skill set (similar to that of a Company Director) to carry out duties such as:

- Offering strategic advice and guidance to the authority which employed 1600 people and had a budget of £300 million;
- Ensuring that the political objectives of the ruling group are implemented;
- Managing good working relationships between Members and Officers;
- Attending high level meetings with the Chief Executive on regular basis to discuss the direction of the Council;
- Working closely with external partner organisations and Government bodies.

9.5 Benchmarking shows that the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance is below the average paid across the other Berkshire unitary councils (£18,761) and the South East Employers' Allowances Survey of Unitary Councils (£20,544) (see Appendix C).

9.6 In arriving at the recommended Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader, the Panel adopted the 'factor approach' as suggested by the 2003 Statutory Guidance and the approach followed by most IRPs. In this approach the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance is arrived at by multiplying the Basic Allowance by an appropriate factor which in this case was 2.5. This figure maintains the current factor in West Berkshire and is in line with differential between the average Basic Allowance and Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance in the benchmarking

councils. Moreover, it would still leave the Leader as one of the lowest remunerated Leaders of a unitary council in the south east.²

- 9.7 Having considered the evidence presented to them and taken into account the level of responsibility and the time commitment involved in fulfilling the role of Leader of the Council, **the Panel recommends that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Council should be 2.5 x the recommended Basic Allowance which equates to £18,310 per annum.**

Deputy Leader of the Council (x1)

- 9.8 The Leader of the Council is supported by a Deputy Leader who also has historically had their own portfolio of service areas. Typically Deputy Leaders are remunerated at a higher level than other Executive Members. However this is not the case in West Berkshire Council. The Deputy Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance is the same as the eight other Executive Members (£8,379).
- 9.9 The Panel felt there was no evidence presented to suggest that the Deputy Leader of the Council should be paid a higher allowance than the other Executive Members and therefore **recommended that they should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 50% of the Leader's allowance which equates to £9,155 per annum.**

Executive Members (x8)

- 9.10 By law the Executive can comprise a maximum of ten (10) Members including the Leader and Deputy Leader. Currently all the Executive Members receive the same Special Responsibility Allowance of £8,379. Whilst there was some representation to pay varying amounts depending on the size and scope of each portfolio, the current arrangement worked well and afforded the Leader of the Council greater flexibility in appointing his or her Executive.
- 9.11 The Panel heard that each of the Executive Members 'manages' a portfolio of service areas and are responsible for delivering the Council Strategy in those areas. This involves working at a high level with Officers, attending a large number of meetings and ensuring they are fully briefed on all aspects of their portfolio.
- 9.12 Historically, the other Executive Members' Special Responsibility Allowance has been set at 50% of the Leaders Allowance to reflect the statutory duties and level of responsibility, time commitment and specialist service area knowledge required to fulfil the role. No evidence was received to suggest the current 50% ratio (of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance) used by West Berkshire was out of line. Benchmarking showed this was broadly comparable across the other Berkshire unitary councils (just under 54% equating to a mean average SRA of £10,111) and just over 48% for the South East Employers' Allowances Survey of Unitary Councils (equating to a mean SRA of £9,912).
- 9.13 **The Panel therefore recommends that other Members of the Executive (up to eight) continue to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance set at 50% of the**

² The obvious exception to this is the SRA paid to the Leader of Reading which is £7,004 and less than the Reading Basic Allowance. While Reading has been included for benchmarking purposes it is such an anomaly regarding the remuneration of its Leader that for the Panel to use this as a meaningful reference point is a fruitless exercise.

Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance (£18,310) which equates to £9,155 per annum.

Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Commission (x1)

- 9.14 West Berkshire Council has only one Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which is a statutory committee charged with holding the Executive to account. It is also charged with reviewing wider policies, decisions and performance of the Council. Most other councils will have a number of scrutiny leads or panels to fulfil overview and scrutiny responsibilities. The West Berkshire Council Commission typically meets eight or nine times per annum and the Chairman is also involved in numerous ad hoc scrutiny reviews each year. The Chair receives a Special Responsibility Allowance of £5,237, which historically was set at 30% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance (although it is now 31% due to post indexation rounding up over the years). Benchmarking shows that a similar model of overview and scrutiny is adopted in only three other Berkshire unitary councils with the mean Special Responsibility Allowance being £6,303.
- 9.15 No evidence was received to suggest that the current ratio of 30% requires revising. **The Panel recommends that the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission receive a Special Responsibility Allowance set at 30% of the Leader's recommended Special Responsibility Allowance (£18,310) which equates to £5,493 per annum.**

Chairman of Council (x1)

- 9.16 West Berkshire Council has a Chairman of the Council rather than a Mayor, although the roles are similar. The Chairman of the Council fulfils a largely civic role that is extremely demanding in terms of the time commitment involved in attending a large number of events (normally around 200 a year). In addition, the Chairman of the Council chairs all the Council meetings (which is often a very demanding role when constitutional issues arise), acts as the ambassador for the Council and is required to cover the following day to day costs from their Special Responsibility Allowance:
- Clothing required to attend numerous high profile events, sometimes involving Royalty;
 - Tickets for events such as charity concerts, plays and performances;
 - Charity donations and raffle tickets;
 - Gifts and thank you cards.
- 9.17 Under the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 it is possible to pay the Chairman of the Council a Civic Allowance (rather than a Special Responsibility Allowance) paid directly to the Chairman at the beginning of the civic year to assist with the costs of holding the office of Council Chair. Whilst using powers to pay a civic allowance has positive tax implications, it makes the auditing of expenditure extremely difficult. For this reason, **the Panel recommends that the remuneration and operational expenses for the Chairman of the Council should stay as a Special Responsibility Allowance within the Members Allowances Scheme.**
- 9.18 Currently the Council Chairman receives a Special Responsibility Allowance of £4,729; the basis for this figure is historical rather than based on an explicit methodology. Given the value of the role as the Civic Head of the Council and the fact that it is the most labour intensive role in terms of attendance at events, the

Panel takes the view that the post is at least on a par with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission. **The Panel therefore recommends that the Chairman should receive 30% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance which equates to £5,493 per annum.**

Vice-Chairman of the Council (x1)

- 9.19 Similarly the Council has chosen to remunerate the Vice-Chairman of the Council through a Special Responsibility Allowance (currently £606) rather than the Civic Allowance.
- 9.20 The Vice-Chairman provides much needed support to the Chairman of the Council given the large number of events that the Chairman is expected to attend. The Vice-Chairman is also required to chair Council meetings in the absence of the Chairman of the Council. For this reason the Panel felt that the current Special Responsibility Allowance of £606 did not sufficiently reflect the role of Vice-Chairman of the Council and day to day expenses that could be incurred.
- 9.21 **The Panel recommends that the Vice-Chairman of the Council receives a Special Responsibility Allowance set at 20% of the Council Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance (as the most relevant marker for the Vice Chairman) which equates to £1,099 per annum.**
- 9.22 The Allowances Scheme should also specify the day-to-day expenses that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are expected to meet from their Special Responsibility Allowances set out in paragraph 9.16.

Chairman of Planning Committee (x2)

- 9.23 West Berkshire Council operates two (Area) Planning Committees reflecting the wide spread geographical nature of the District. Each Planning Committee meets every three weeks in the evening and meetings are often lengthy. The Chairman of a Planning Committee is a high profile and demanding role and often subject to high pressure. The role is also relatively time consuming in terms of attending the Planning meetings themselves, site visits and preparing for the meetings.
- 9.24 Benchmarking shows that the current Special Responsibility Allowance (£4,190) paid to the Chairmen of the two Planning Committees (which was set at 25% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance) is below the mean (£4,770) across the other Berkshire Unitary Councils and below the mean (£6,002) for planning chairs in the South East Employers' Allowances' Survey. However, this is balanced by virtue of paying two Chairmen a Special Responsibility Allowance which is not typical in Berkshire. Only Windsor and Maidenhead have adopted a similar model with three area planning chairs.
- 9.25 However, due to the workload, high public profile and sensitive nature of planning in West Berkshire **the Panel recommends that the Special Responsibility Allowance for Chairmen of the Planning Committees be maintained at 25% of the Leader's Allowance which equates to £4,578 per annum.**

Chairman of the Licensing Committee (x1)

- 9.26 The Special Responsibility Allowance (£2,619) for the chairman of the West Berkshire Council's Licensing Committee was originally set at 15% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance. While licensing, like planning, is a statutory and quasi-judicial committee the nature of the work is not on the same level as planning as evidenced by the Licensing Committee meeting four times a year, with functions under the Licensing Act 2003 delegated to ad hoc sub committees. The Panel received no evidence to indicate that the current ratio of 15% requires revising.
- 9.27 **The Panel recommends that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Licensing Committee continues to be set at the current ratio of 15% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance, which equates to £2,747 per annum.**

The Chairs of the Licensing Sub Committees

- 9.28 The Licensing Sub Committees consider licensing applications where representations are received on an ad-hoc basis. Typically there are between seven and ten Licensing Sub-Committees each year with the three members (+ substitute) drawn from the parent committee on a rotating basis, subject to availability, with the Chairman appointed on the day. Representation was received making a case to remunerate the Chairs of the Licensing Sub Committees.
- 9.29 However, benchmarking shows that these posts are not normally remunerated. In Berkshire only Windsor & Maidenhead pays the Chairs of the licensing panels (£1,879), as well as the other members at £25.26 per meeting. Moreover, given the relatively small number of these meetings and the fact that a Chairman is appointed for each Sub-Committee which means no Licensing Member is typically required to chair more than two Sub Committee meetings per year. The Panel felt that, as a result, the workload and responsibility did not meet the significant responsibility threshold.
- 9.30 **The Panel has not recommended that the Chairs of the Licensing Sub Committees be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance.**

Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee (x1)

- 9.31 The Chairman of the Council's Governance and Audit Committee does not currently receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. It is increasingly common to have a dedicated audit (often coupled with governance function) to fulfil a number of statutory functions that previously lay in a number of places, mostly Overview and Scrutiny, the Executive and Officers, namely:
- Signing off the Council's Statement of Accounts
 - Monitoring the internal and external audit functions
 - Acting as custodian of the Council's Constitution
- 9.32 Benchmarking shows that all the Chairmen of equivalent committees across Berkshire receive a Special Responsibility Allowance, with the mean being £2,494. Across the South East Unitary Councils the mean is £3,906. The lack of a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee devalued the role particularly as it is now regarded as good practice to have a

dedicated audit committee as advocated by the Audit Commission to give proper focus to financial monitoring and audit processes.

- 9.33 Given the statutory nature of the Committee functions, the responsibility associated with its workload and the fact that the Committee is scheduled to meet at least five times a year **the Panel recommends that a Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to the Chairman of the Governance and Audit Committee set on a par with the recommended Special Responsibility Allowance for the Licensing Committee Chairman, which is 15% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance and equates to £2,747 per annum.**

Chairman of the Personnel Committee (x1)

- 9.34 The Personnel Committee is responsible for making changes to Human Resources policies and procedures, appointing staff at Head of Service level and above by means of an Appointments Panel, and for determining requests for the early release of pensions, although the financial implications of each request has to be approved by the Executive. It consists of five Members and meets on an ad hoc basis (historically two or three times a year) and the workload associated with the Chairmanship is relatively low.
- 9.35 Currently the Chairman of the Personnel Committee does not receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. Benchmarking shows that the Chair of equivalent committees in Berkshire are remunerated except in Windsor and Maidenhead but this is in a context where they normally have scheduled meetings and in some cases a wider remit.
- 9.36 **The Panel received no evidence to suggest that a Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid for this role at this point in time and therefore does not make any recommendations with respect to this role.**

Chairman of the Standards Committee (x1)

- 9.37 Although there is no longer a statutory requirement to maintain a Standards Committee the Council still has a statutory responsibility to maintain a Code of Conduct and to promote high standards of conduct including, when required, to consider any complaints where there is an allegation that a district, town or parish councillor may have breached their organisation's Code of Conduct. The Standards Committee is made up of six district councillors as well as two co-opted non-voting parish councillors.
- 9.38 Currently the Chairman of the Standards Committee does not receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. Benchmarking shows that a standards committee has been maintained in 4 out of the 5 other Berkshire councils, the Chairmen of which are all in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance, with a mean of £1,475 although in some councils the governance functions lie with a standards committee.
- 9.39 The role of Chairing the Standards Committee is not as significant as it once was as most complaints are now dealt with by the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person. No strong representation was received to indicate the current situation needed revising. Consequently, **the Panel does not make any recommendations with respect to this role.**

Leader of the Main Opposition Group (x1)

- 9.40 The 2003 Regulations require that where the Council is controlled by one or more political groups (defined as having a minimum of two Members) then at least one Special Responsibility Allowance must be paid to an Opposition Member. Typically this statutory requirement is fulfilled by paying the Leader of the Opposition a Special Responsibility Allowance which in the case of West Berkshire Council is currently the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group.
- 9.41 The role of the Opposition is to hold the Administration to account and challenge the Executive. These functions are carried out by the Leader of the Opposition and the Shadow Executive.
- 9.42 The Panel heard that the Leader of the Opposition has to have a broad understanding of all the Council services in order to provide an effective challenge. The Opposition can also produce an alternative budget. The current Opposition consists of 13 Members which meant the group had to be very proactive and resilient to carry out their role.
- 9.43 Currently the Leader of the Opposition receives a Special Responsibility Allowance of £8,379 that was set on a par with the Executive Members i.e., 50% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance. Whilst the Panel appreciates the significant responsibility and time commitment associated with being Leader of the Opposition the fact remains that the ultimate responsibility rests with the Leader of the Council and Executive Members. By definition, the Leader of the Opposition cannot have the same level of responsibility as other Executive Members. Moreover, benchmarking shows that the mean Special Responsibility Allowance paid to Opposition Leaders in the other Berkshire councils is £5,712 and in the South East unitary councils the mean is £5,655.
- 9.44 The Panel has decided to recalibrate the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Opposition by setting it at 40% of the Leaders' recommended Special Responsibility Allowance. **The Panel recommends that the Leader of the Opposition should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance set at 40% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance which equates to £7,324.**

Opposition Spokespersons (x4)

- 9.45 Unusually four of the six Opposition Spokespersons receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of £4,190 which is on a par with the Chairmen of Planning. No other Berkshire councils pay Special Responsibility Allowances to Opposition Spokespersons. The Panel recognises the importance of the role of the Opposition Spokespersons in working with the Leader of the Opposition to hold the Executive to account. In a similar way to the Executive Members, the Opposition Spokespersons each have a shadow portfolio made up of a number of service areas that they are responsible for. Opposition Spokespersons are required to:
- Be fully aware of the issues within their shadow portfolio area;
 - Scrutinise the decisions of the Executive;
 - Attend regular officer briefings;
 - Read briefing papers and prepare for meetings;
 - Lead and sit on various task groups.

- 9.46 There is scope in the Members Allowances Scheme to pay up to seven Opposition Spokespersons but only four Opposition Spokespersons receive a Special Responsibility Allowance. This was an historical arrangement based on concerns about proportionality and agreed by Council in September 2011.
- 9.47 Whilst the Panel recognised the importance of the role of Opposition Spokespersons in providing an effective scrutiny role and the time commitment involved, it was noted that they did not have the same level of responsibility as Executive Members. In addition, the Panel noted that there was only a legal responsibility to pay one member of the Opposition and West Berkshire was the only authority in Berkshire to pay Opposition Spokespersons.
- 9.48 For these reasons, **the Panel recommends that the Opposition Spokespersons should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance set at 30% of the Leader of the Opposition's Special Responsibility Allowance which equates to £2,197 per annum and that this Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid to a maximum of four members of the opposition.**

Leader(s) of Minority Group(s) (if have 5 group members)

- 9.49 Currently the Members Allowances Scheme does not include scope to pay allowances to any Leaders of Minority Groups. To future proof the scheme the Panel has made recommendations in this regard.
- 9.50 **The Panel recommends that a Special Responsibility Allowance be set at 10% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance which equates to £1,831 and is only payable to Leaders of any Minority Groups provided they have a minimum of five Members.**

Confirming the one Special Responsibility Allowance only rule

- 9.51 **The Panel also recommends that the rule that no Councillor shall be entitled to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance be retained.**

10. Travel Allowances

- 10.1 No evidence was received to indicate that the current terms and conditions, including approved duties, and rates at which these allowances are claimable needed revisiting.
- 10.2 **The Panel recommends that the current travel allowances, including the approved duties and terms and conditions for which they are claimable, be maintained at current rates subject to any indexation that may be applicable.** The scheme also needs updating to reflect the current HMRC mileage rates for bicycle use of 20p per mile and for carrying additional passengers of 5p per passenger per mile.

For clarification purposes, **the Panel further recommends that when claiming a Travel Allowance for attending an approved duty within the district then that claim will be made with the starting point being a Members' usual place of residence or work within the District, or if the usual place of residence or work is outside the District boundary then the total return journey for which that claim can be made is capped at 36 miles.**

In the interests of transparency and the requirements of internal audit for Officers to carry out the necessary checks of Members travelling claims, the Panel felt that reimbursements for travelling expenses should only be provided with evidence of expenditure. Where receipts or evidence of expenditure (in the case of car parking payments made by phone) are not provided, the expenditure will be treated as an 'incidental expense' under the Basic Allowance.

11. Subsistence Allowances

11.1 No evidence was received to indicate that the current terms and conditions, including approved duties, and rates at which these allowances are claimable needed revisiting.

11.2 **The Panel recommends that the current subsistence allowances, including the approved duties and terms and conditions for which they are claimable, be maintained as follows:**

Claims for Subsistence Allowance for meetings that take place at any of the Council Offices are liable to tax but those that take place 'off-site' are not, and any claims made should reflect this.

Claims for Subsistence Allowance must fall within the relevant time periods, as set out below, and therefore start and finish times of journeys must be included with each claim. The following rates are currently payable:

- Breakfast Allowance (more than four hours away from normal place of residence or, where the Authority permits, a lesser period, before 11.00am) - £5.00;
- Lunch Allowance (more than four hours away from normal place of residence or, where the Authority permits, a lesser period, between 12 noon and 2.00pm) - £7.00;
- Tea Allowance (more than four hours away from normal place of residence or, where the Authority permits, a lesser period, including the period 3.00pm to 6.00pm) - £3.00;
- Evening Meal Allowance (more than four hours away from normal place of residence or, where the Authority permits, a lesser period, ending after 7.00pm) - £12.00.

11.3 In the interests of transparency and the requirements of internal audit for Officers to carry out the necessary checks of Members subsistence claims, the Panel felt that reimbursements for subsistence expenses should only be provided with evidence of expenditure. Where receipts or evidence of expenditure are not provided, the expenditure will be treated as an 'incidental expense' under the Basic Allowance.

12. Co-optees' Allowances

12.1 Currently, the two co-optees (as defined by the 2003 Regulations paragraph 9.5) appointed by West Berkshire Council onto the Standards Committee are not paid a Co-optees' Allowance. No evidence was received to change this stance. Therefore **the Panel does not recommend that the Allowances' Scheme include provision for the payment of a Co-optees' Allowance.**

13. Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

- 13.1 The Panel discussed the importance of continuing to pay the Dependants' Carers' Allowance in order to not discourage people who undertake a caring role from standing for Election and becoming a Councillor.
- 13.2 **The Panel agreed that the current allowance of £6.13 per hour up to a maximum of 40 hours per month per Councillor should be increased to £7.85 per hour up to a maximum of 40 hours per month per Councillor to reflect the current UK Living Wage.**

14. The Local Government Pension Scheme

- 14.1 The Panel noted that by virtue of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (in force from 1st April 2014), access to the Local Government Pension Scheme for new Councillors in England was abolished. The regulations also terminated access to the Scheme for existing Councillors from the point at which their current fixed term of office ends.
- 14.2 Given this change in the legislation, **the Panel recommended that reference to the Local Government Pension Scheme be removed from the Members' Allowances Scheme from May 2015 (following the District Council Elections).**

15. The Administration of the Scheme (including indexation)

- 15.1 The Panel gave consideration to a recent Internal Audit report (December 2014) into Members Allowances and noted that the report had highlighted the following moderate weakness in the submission of Members claim forms:
- a) Claims should be submitted using the current claim form on a monthly basis, prior to the 5th of each month.
 - b) The claim form needs to be fully completed i.e. to include all relevant personal and expenses details to enable claims to be validated."
- 15.2 The Panel also noted that the untimely and late submission of claim forms often resulted in difficulties in forecasting the Members travel budget and made the thorough checking of claim forms a difficult and time consuming process.
- 15.3 For these reasons, the Panel recommended that the current wording contained in the Members Allowances Scheme be changed as follows:
- 15.4 'Members **shall** (rather than are encouraged to) submit all claims relating to travelling, subsistence and Dependants' Carers' Allowance in writing and in arrears within two months of the date of the meeting in respect of which the entitlement to the allowance arises and must be received for processing by the Members' Services Officer by the 5th of each month.
- 15.5 The Panel noted that the scheme already made provision for Members who are unable to submit claims within the timescales due to illness.
- 15.6 The Panel confirms the following indices are applied from 2015/16 and run for up to four years:

That the level of indexation for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances be automatically linked to that used for West Berkshire Council Officers unless Members choose to forgo index linked increases in a particular year.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance's maximum hourly rate is indexed to the living wage.

The Subsistence Allowances are indexed to relevant Officer rates.

The mileage allowances are indexed to HMRC rates.

16. IMPLEMENTATION

16.1 The implementation of any recommendations to take place from the Annual Council meeting on 19th May 2015. In accordance with the Members' Scheme of Allowances, the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances are paid over 11 months from June – April with no payment made in May. Any amendments made to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances would therefore be payable from June 2015. All other changes would be implemented from the 20th May 2015 onwards.

17. APPENDICES

Appendix A - The budgetary impacts of the Panels' recommendations

Appendix B - List of information considered by the Panel

Appendix C - Summary of benchmarking data

Appendix A: The budgetary impacts of the Panels' recommendations

Position	Amount January 2015	Proposed Allowance May 2016	Difference	Change as a %	Budgetary Impact
Basic Allowance	£6,285	£7,324	£1,039	16.5%	£54,028
Special Responsibility Allowances					
Chairman of Council (1)	£4,729	£5,493	£764	16%	£764
Vice-Chairman of Council (1)	£606	£1,099	£493	81%	£493
Leader of Council (1)	£16,757	£18,310	£1,553	9%	£1,553
Deputy Leader of the Council (1)	£8,379	£9,155	£776	9%	£776
Executive Members (up to 8)	£8,379	£9,155	£776	9%	£6,208
Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Commission (1)	£5,237	£5,493	£256	5%	£256
Chairman of Licensing Committee (1)	£2,619	£2,747	£128	5%	£128
Chairman of Governance and Audit Committee (1)	£0	£2,747	£2,747	New allowance	£2,747
Chairman of Planning Committee (2)	£4,190	£4,578	£388	9%	£776
Leader of the Main Opposition (1)	£8,379	£7,324	-£1,055	-12.5%	-£1,055
Opposition Spokespersons (up to 4)*	£4,190	£2,197	-£1,933*	-46%	-£7,972
Leader(s) of Minority Group(s) **	£0	£1,831	£1,831	New allowance	£0
Total***					£58,702

* On a voluntary basis the Council currently pays 4 Opposition Spokesman £4,190

** The Special Responsibility Allowance for Leader(s) of Minority Groups is only payable if a Minority Group attains 5 Members. At present no Minority Group has reached that threshold.

*** The total additional yearly spend does not include any indexation that may be applied nor the annual savings of £15,600 that is saved by the abolition of the IT allowance and the £200 uplift to the BA for broadband provision.

Appendix B: List of information considered by the Panel³

1. Itinerary/Agenda - Independent Remuneration Panel 11-12 February 2015
2. The Panel's Terms of Reference
3. General Information on WBC Including People and Place
4. WBC IRP Report May 2011 and July 2011
5. WBC Allowances Scheme 2014/15 (Includes Recent Indexation)
6. WBC Statutory Publication of Allowances and Expenses Received by Members 2013/14
7. WBC Governance Structure Diagram
8. WBC List of Committees and Associated Membership and Calendar of Meetings
9. WBC List of Executive Members and Associated Portfolios
10. WBC List of Opposition Spokesmen and Associated Portfolios
11. LGA Councillors Census 2013 (including summary of hours put in by Councillors by Council type and positions held)
12. National Joint Council for Local Government Services, 2014 -16 Pay Scales and Allowances, 14 November 2014
13. Powerpoint presentation by Chair, "A Review of Allowances for West Berkshire Council" (tabled on day)
14. Written representations received from Members
15. Summary of SE Employers Members' Allowances Survey - Unitary Councils in the south east 2014/15
16. BM1 - BM4: Summary of Benchmarking - SE Survey Unitary and Other Berkshire Unitary Councils

³ Full copies of items 1-13 have been published on line, item 14 has not been published for privacy reasons, and items 15-16 are summarized in appendix C.

**Appendix C:
Summary of benchmarking data referred to by Panel**

BM1 West Berks BM Group - Other Berks Councils + SE Employers Allowances Survey Unitary Councils 2014/15: BA + Exec + Scrutiny + Civic SRAs (14/15)													
Comparator Council	BA	Leader	Leader Total Package	Deputy Leader	Exec Members	Deputy Exec or Champion	Chair Main O&S	Main O&S V/Chair	Chairs or Leads Scrutiny	V/Chairs Scrutiny	Chairs Scrutiny or Other Panels	Chair Council	Council V/Chair
Bracknell Forest	8,687	28,954	37,641	17,372	15,926	2,201	7,239		5,791				
Reading	8,220	7,004	15,224	5,722	3,816				2,147	1,074			
RBW&M	7,255	18,790	26,045	11,274	10,335	1,879			4,698		1,879		
Slough 1/01/15	7,329	19,055	26,384	13,338	10,480		6,671	2,224	2,858				
Wokingham	7,487	20,000	27,487		10,000	2,000	5,000		2,500				
Mean	7,796	18,761	26,556	11,927	10,111	2,027	6,303		3,599				
Median	7,487	19,055	26,384	12,306	10,335	2,000	6,671		2,858				
<i>West Berks 1/01/15</i>	<i>6,285</i>	<i>16,757</i>	<i>23,042</i>		<i>8,379</i>		<i>5,237</i>					<i>4,729</i>	<i>606</i>
Highest	8,687	28,954	37,641	17,372	15,926	2,201	7,239		5,791				
Lowest	7,255	7,004	15,224	5,722	3,816	1,879	5,000		2,147				
Mean Ratios	2.41	100%		63.6%	53.9%	10.8%	33.6%		19.2%				
SEE Survey Mean	£8,539	£20,544	29,083	£11,919	£9,912	NA	NA	NA	£6,181	Only 3 payable			

**BM2 West Berks BM Group: Other Berks Unitary Councils + SE Employers Allowances Survey Unitary Councils:
Planning & Licensing/Regulatory SRAs (2014/15)**

Comparator Council	Chair Planning (DCC)	V/Chair Planning	Planning Members	Chair Licensing &/or Regulatory	V/Chair Licensing	Chairs Licensing Panels or Subs	Licensing Members	Comments
Bracknell Forest	7,239	723		5,626	553			
Reading	2,147	1,074		2,147	1,074			
RBW&M	4,698			4,698		1,879	£25.26 p/meeting	<i>3 Chairs Area DCC SRAs payable for total of £14,094</i>
Slough 1/01/15	4,764	1,587		3,811	1,270			
Wokingham	5,000		1,250	2,500				
Mean	4,770	1,128		3,756	966			
Median	4,764	1,074		3,811	1,074			
<i>West Berks 1/01/15</i>	<i>4,190</i>			<i>2,619</i>				<i>2 Chairs Area DCC SRAs payable for total of £8,380</i>
Highest	7,239	1,587		5,626	1,270			
Lowest	2,147	723		2,147	553			
Mean Ratios	25.5%			20.1%				
SEE Survey Mean	6,002	1,918		4,787	2,228			

**BM3 West Berks BM Group: Other Berkshire Unitary Councils + SE Employers Survey Unitary Councils:
Other Regulatory & Misc SRAs (2014/15)**

Comparator Council	Chair Standards	V/Chair Standards	Chair Audit	V/Chair Audit	Chair Personnel or Employment	V/Chair Personnel or Employment	Chairs Local Forums	Deputy Chair Cabinet	Other Committees	Comments
Bracknell Forest	638		2,201		2,201					<i>Standards Chair is Co-optee, Education Appeals Mbrs: £30/£59 p/meeting up to/over 4 hrs</i>
Reading	2,147	1,074	2,147	1,074	2,147	1,074			2,147	<i>Standards Chair is Co-optee</i>
RBW&M			3,758				1,879	11,274	1,879	
Slough 1/01/15	1,864		1,864		1,864					
Wokingham	1,250		2,500		1,250					<i>Below Exec level Members can get >1 SRA</i>
Mean	1,475		2,494		1,866					
Median	1,557		2,201		2,006					
<i>West Berks 1/01/15</i>										
Highest	2,147		3,758		2,201					
Lowest	638		1,864		1,250					
Mean Ratio	7.9%		13.4%		10.0%					
SEE Survey Mean	NA		3,906		NA				4,770	

**BM4 West Berks BM Group: Other Berks Unitary Councils & SE Employers Survey Unitary Councils:
Group SRAs + Co-optees (2014/15)**

Comparator Council	Main Opposition Group Leader	D/Leader Main Opposition Group	Opposition Spokespersons	Minor Opposition Group Leader	Co-optees Standards	Co-optees Other
Bracknell Forest	9,651	965			291	291
Reading	3,816			2,147		
RBW&M	1,879			940	359	32/64 p/meeting up/over 4 hrs
Slough 1/01/15	5,716			3,811	516	516
Wokingham	7,500				NA	NA
Mean	5,712			2,299	389	
Median	5,716			2,147	359	
<i>West Berks 1/01/15</i>	<i>8,379</i>		<i>4,190</i>			
Highest	9,651			3,811	516	
Lowest	1,879			940	291	
Mean Ratio	30.6%			12.3%		
SEE Survey Mean	5655	Only 3 returns	only 3 returns	NA	NA	NA