

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council – 29 September 2015

Report of the Joint Independent Members Remuneration Panel

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Richard Parrish)

1. Background

- 1.1 The attached report has been submitted by the Joint Independent Members Remuneration Panel. The report will be presented to Full Council by the Chairman of the Panel, Mr Ian Partington who will be accompanied by the Panel's Advisor, Mr Julian Gale.
- 1.2 It sets out the conclusions and recommendations of a fundamental review of the Taunton Deane Scheme of Members' Allowances which has been carried out by the Panel.

2. Finance Comments

- 2.1 The Panel is aware that it is not obliged to have regard to the overall budgetary impact of its recommendations when making recommendations to the Council.
- 2.2 The Panel is also aware of the financial restraints facing local authorities currently and into the future and the public perception of elected Members awarding themselves increases in allowances. The Panel has therefore had regard to these issues when bringing forward recommendations for consideration.
- 2.3 Nevertheless, the recommendations relating to Members' Allowances – if accepted in full by the Council – will result in an additional cost to the Council of £10,163.

3. Legal Comments

- 3.1 Provisions in relation to Members' Allowances are set out in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) and subsequent amendments to the regulations (SI 2003/1022 and SI 2003/1692). Under the Regulations the Council has to appoint an Independent Panel to make recommendations on its Scheme of Members' Allowances, for consideration by the Council. The Council may accept, reject, or amend any of the Panel's recommendations. The Regulations provide for a single Panel to advise more than one Council.
- 3.2 The Council has joined the Joint Independent Members' Remuneration Panel alongside Somerset County Council, Mendip District Council and West Somerset Council.

- 3.3 All Members have a personal and a prejudicial interest in this item through receipt of allowances. The Council's Code of Conduct includes a dispensation allowing all Members to attend and vote on Members' Allowance issues in spite of their prejudicial interest as long as the interest is declared at the relevant meeting. This paragraph has the effect of taking these declarations as having been made by all Members.

Members do not therefore need to make a verbal declaration at the Council meeting.

4. Equalities Impact

- 4.1 Provision in the scheme for dependants' Carers Allowances will assist Members with such responsibilities in carrying out Council duties. A robust allowance regime can play an important role in attracting people from all sections of the community to stand as Councillor.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 There are no risks associated with this report and any recommendations as the Council is not required to agree them but simply to have regard to them when making decisions in respect of Members' Allowances.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 (a) The Council is **recommended**:-
- (i) To accept the report of the Joint Independent Members Remuneration Panel;
 - (ii) To approve the Taunton Deane Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2015/2016 attached as Appendix 2 to the Panel's report which includes the specific recommendations set out for:-
 - (a) A new Basic Allowance for Members of £4486 for 2015/2016 and the proposal for annual increases for a six year period;
 - (b) A new Special Responsibility Allowance structure;
 - (c) Revised Travel and Subsistence Allowance provisions; and
 - (d) Revised Carers' Allowance provisions; and
 - (iii) To agree to backdate the payment of the new allowances to the relevant date of appointment following the Borough Council Elections.
- (b) If the Taunton Deane Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2015/2016 is agreed in full, a supplementary estimate from the General Fund Reserves in 2015/2016 for £10,163 be approved,

with the costs for future years being built into the Medium Term Financial Plan.

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Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel

1. Introduction

1.1. This report:

- (a) Sets out the conclusions and recommendations from the fundamental review of the Taunton Deane Scheme of Members' Allowances carried out by the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel.
- (b) Recommends a new Scheme of Members' Allowances for Taunton Deane Borough Council which is attached as Appendix 2 to this report for consideration.

This report builds on the previous report submitted by the Panel in February 2015 which set out the basis for the fundamental review; some proposed principles to underpin the setting of the Basic Allowance (referred to as BA throughout this report) and the Special Responsibility Allowances (referred to as SRAs throughout this report) and a recommended list of approved duties to be included in a new Taunton Deane Scheme.

In preparing this report, the Panel was aware that since the elections in May, there are likely to be new councillors who are unfamiliar with the issues considered by the Panel.

The Council in February accepted the Panel's recommendations on these issues and these approvals formed the basis for the Panel's further work leading to the proposed Scheme attached to this report.

2 Executive Summary

2.1 Section 2 of the report gives an overview of the Panel's approach to the fundamental review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and summarises the Panel's recommendations. The rest of the report explains in some detail the background to the Panel's recommendations for a new Scheme including the Panel's reasoning and the evidence used.

2.2 Context:

- (a) The statutory task of the Panel is to make recommendations to a Council before it makes or amends a Scheme of Members' Allowances. The Council must have regard to the Panel's recommendations before agreeing or amending a Scheme.
- (b) This report is based on comprehensive data, information and evidence obtained from internal and external resources including the Office of National Statistics (ONS), the Bank of England (BoE), the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).
- (c) The Panel has used the latest available data but, unavoidably, this has not always been up-to-date.
- (d) Since 2008 the real value of the BA has declined with the rate of inflation. The decision in December 2013 to increase the BA to £4,344 where it has remained, although welcomed by the Panel, only slightly compensated for

the loss of real value. By 2012, before the increase in 2013, the real value of the BA had fallen to £3,792 and by 2015 the real value is still only £3,644, ie. less than its value in 2008. An inflation-adjusted nominal BA that returns today to the real value of 2008 would need to be around £5,194 rather than its current value of £4,344.

- (e) SRA payments have also been suppressed over recent years alongside the BA but are within the range paid by comparable councils. The Panel is not proposing significant amendments to levels of SRA payments at this stage noting that they will increase on an annual basis in line with the annual increases proposed to the BA. This will start to bring SRAs up to an appropriate level.
- (f) The main report:
 - (i) also embodies previous decisions taken by the Council in response to recommendations made by the Panel including an agreed list of approved duties;
 - (ii) contains relevant evidence, data, and the detailed recommendations.

2.3 Main recommendations:

- (a) The Panel was strongly of the view that in respect of the level of the BA and SRA, the overriding concern and focus at this time should be the declining real value of the BA compared with levels agreed by the Council in 2008/9 and the need therefore to recommend a move to recovering the previous real values. Establishing a firmer rationale for a definitive BA should follow once the real value of the BA has been recovered and could be a later task for the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel.
- (b) The Panel is **recommending:**
 - (i) that the BA for 2015/16 should be increased to **£4,486**; an increase of £142 over the current BA;
 - (ii) that further annual increases in the BA of £142 (inflation linked) should be agreed over a period of up to six years (the last 2 years of this period would be an 'in principle' decision at this stage) to achieve a Basic Allowance of £5,194 in Year 6. Such a level of BA (adjusted for inflation) should, approximately adjust the BA to its earlier real value. A review after four years of these arrangements is necessary because annual increases and indexing arrangements can only be agreed for a maximum of 4 years and this Council cannot bind the new Council to be elected in 2019 to this decision;
 - (iii) a new SRA structure linked to the BA and the Leader's SRA which seeks to keep payments in line with the Council's existing SRA scheme;
 - (iv) revised Travel, Subsistence and Carers' Allowance provisions

bringing the arrangements into line with the other district council schemes where it makes sense to do so and including comprehensive supporting rules.

3. Members' Allowances and Remuneration Panels – the legal position

- 3.1** Following the district council elections in May there will be some new members of the Council who may not be familiar with the Panel and its work. By way of an introduction the legal provisions in relation to members' allowances are set out in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021) and subsequent amendments to the regulations (SI 2003/1022 and SI 2003/1692) ["the Regulations"]. Under the Regulations each Council must appoint an Independent Panel to make recommendations on its Scheme of Members' Allowances. The Council must have due regard to the recommendations of the Panel before it makes any decisions in relation to its Members' Allowances Scheme but it may accept, reject, or amend any of the Panel's recommendations. The Regulations provide for a single panel to advise more than one Council. [see 3.4]
- 3.2** The regulations define a number of basic requirements for allowances' schemes but also give considerable scope to allow a council to adopt local provisions according to their circumstances. The only mandatory element provided for in the Regulations is the payment of a Basic Allowance to all members of a Council. All of the other elements that are currently paid under the scheme, ie, Special Responsibility, Travel, Subsistence and Carers' Allowances are discretionary.
- 3.3** The basic principles on which Remuneration Panels work are not set out in statute but there are national operational standards. In summary they include:
- The 50% rule (no more than 50% of Members of any individual Council should receive an SRA)
 - Any Member should only receive one SRA at any one time;
 - BA payments should be based on a voluntary time contribution of 30% or 33% to maintain the differential between a salary and an allowance¹.
 - When considering the payment of SRAs, clarity is needed by both Council and the Panel when considering each specific position and whether it qualifies for an SRA. Eg. is the position one which requires judgement and responsibility; or is it a supporting role that nevertheless requires very substantial time and effort.
- 3.4** Joint Independent Remuneration Panel: The Council joined the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel alongside Somerset County Council, West Somerset Council and Mendip District Council in 2014 as a way to maximise the efficient use of resources and to bring greater consistency to the members' allowances schemes of the councils. The Panel's membership comprises 3 independent representatives appointed by the County Council and 1 each by the District Councils. All of the members of the Panel are residents of Somerset. The current Panel membership is outlined in brief below for the information of the Council:

¹The Panel recommends the contribution is set at 33%. This discount on hours 'worked' by councillors reinforces that the BA payment is not a salary paid for employment

Ian Partington	Economist. Appointed JP in 1982. Previous academic employment: Principal Lecturer in Economics at Oxford Brookes University.
Paul Fellingham	Barrister at law. Previously 43 years in the Magistrates Courts. The last 20 years as the Justices Clerk for Hertfordshire.
Jason Woods	Engineering, Business, and Training professional. Officer in the Royal Navy. Elected Parish Councillor
Graham Russell	Former Head of Democratic Services (Bath & North East Somerset Council). Chair of annual meeting of IRP Chairs and member of, and adviser to, a number of IRPs across the region and in Cumbria
Keith Bevan	Resigned from the Panel – August 2015
Robert Govier	Farmer and parish councillor for 20 years, former school governor, former parish representative on the West Somerset Standards Committee.

4 Background

4.1 Introduction and context

4.1.1 This report builds on the earlier reports to the Council which set out the Panel's intentions:

- to undertake the fundamental review of the Council's Scheme alongside the other district schemes;
- to establish some general principles across all three district schemes where this makes sense but with each Scheme continuing to be individual to each council to reflect the history of each Scheme and the particular circumstances of the Council;
- to bring forward full Scheme recommendations including actual amounts of allowances after the District Council elections and the adoption of new democratic arrangements by each Council;
- to undertake a survey of the members of each council in advance of the district elections for views on the current arrangements to be considered alongside extensive benchmarking information inside and outside Somerset;
- that its recommendations must be, inter alia, supported by the evidence, based on reasonable assumptions, be relevant to the needs of the Council and its members, and must be flexible enough to cope with future changes.

The Panel also brought forward for consideration a list of approved duties to be applied across all three district council schemes [see

Appendix 2, Annex C].

The Council has to date approved all of the recommendations and intentions of the Panel as set out above and this report builds on these approvals and brings forward a new Scheme of Members' Allowances for the Council for approval.

4.1.2 A fundamental review of the Taunton Deane Scheme was considered necessary for the following reasons:

- (a) the widening of the Panel's remit to encompass three district councils to enable effective benchmarking within Somerset as well as wider comparisons outside Somerset;
- (b) an intention, if the scope allowed, to remove financial barriers to potential candidates for election;
- (c) to establish a rationale for the BA and SRA payments.

4.1.3 The Panel is aware that it is not obliged to have regard to the overall budgetary impact of its recommendations when making recommendations to a Council. However, the Panel is conscious of the financial restraints facing local authorities currently and into the future, as well as the public perception of elected Members awarding themselves substantial increases in allowances. The Panel has had regard to these issues in bringing forward its recommendations for the Scheme.

5. Basic Allowance (BA)

5.1 Background

5.1.1 The payment of the BA is intended to recognise the time commitment of all councillors, including attending meetings, attending member learning and development events, dealing with constituency matters, representing the Council on external bodies. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes, and telephone costs.

5.1.2 Since 2008 the BA has remained unchanged except for a 1% increase agreed by the council in December 2013.

5.1.3 The result of the lack of regular updating of the BA is that since 2008 annual inflation has reduced its real value, until by 2014 the value of the Allowance had fallen by over £800 in nominal terms.

5.1.4 The Joint Panel recognised the difficulty that councillors have in voting increases in allowances for themselves – notwithstanding such supportive commentary as provided, for example, by *Councillors on the front line*². The Joint Panel would hope that its report provides Councillors with a sound rationale for an increase in the BA.

² Communities and Local Government Select Committee report (Sixth report of session 2012-2013)

5.2 Evidence

5.2.1 In preparing this Report, the Panel has used the best available data, but this has not always been up-to-date or consistent. In considering the rationale and size of the BA, the Panel has made use of several sources of numerical and other data. In particular:

Internal sources:

- Questionnaire survey of councillors (January 2015);
- Commentary from councillors;
- Officer and senior councillor sources;

External sources:

- Office of National Statistics (in particular, the Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings [ASHE]; Nomisweb); Bank of England;
- Local Government Association (Members' Allowances surveys)
- TaxPayers' Alliance (Members' Allowances data);
- South West Councils data;
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (especially the "Nearest Neighbour" tool).

5.3 Questionnaire survey January 2015³

- 5.3.1 (a) Questionnaires were made available to all councillors and out of 56, 16 councillors provided responses. The Panel recognised that with a relatively small response, the data generated by the questionnaires would need to be used judiciously.
- (b) Of the 16 responses, 7 supported a rise in the BA (12% of all Taunton Deane councillors) and 9 did not. There was also concern expressed as to the 'democratic effect' of not raising the BA, for example:

"I believe it has been allowed to slip backwards too much over recent years and may not be encouraging to potential new councillors."

"Cllrs give of their time and energy willingly and represent a valuable resource for their community. I believe this should be acknowledged by an increase in allowance to at least show some appreciation if not keep pace with inflation as has been happening with several years of no increases."

"I believe we should link the basic allowance to an increase % consistent with other staff since the last increase."

"It would need to rise by this amount a year {i.e. 20%} for this next Quadrennium in order to merely be at the same level when it froze some years ago; to a new allowance starting in 2019 of £7,033. If we wish to empower more diversification and ensure that being a Councillor is not restricted to those who can afford it or are past working age then we must address the risible remuneration."

³ Copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix, Item 2.0

“it may be politically correct to say no to an increase in the basic allowance year on year but ordinary councillors should still be awarded a small increase for the time, dedication, to what is, in some words, very unrecognised for what they do.”

5.4 Panel’s approach to the BA

5.4.1 The Panel’s approach focused on the following elements:

- (a) the real value of the BA;
- (b) the possible effect of a continuing decline in the real value of the BA;
- (c) the methodology in determining the BA;
- (d) the recommendations and conclusions of the Panel.

5.4.1.1 The real value of the BA

- (a) The Panel considered an array of data relating to the real value of the BA following the financial and fiscal events beginning in 2007/2008 (See Table 3);
- (b) Table 1 below shows that in 2008 the average hourly pay in the south west was £12.86 and if this had been adjusted for inflation to 2015, the appropriate hourly rate would be £15.32. The median hourly rate of pay in the Taunton Deane local authority area (est. 2015) is £11.39. *The BA of £4,301 in 2008 if inflation-proofed, would be about £5,194 in 2015 rather than its current value of £4,344*

Table 1
South-west region hourly pay and Taunton Deane Borough Council’s BA at 2008 value and adjusted for inflation to 2015

Year	Average hourly rate for south-west England (£s)	Taunton Deane Council BA (£s)
2008	12.86	4301
2009	13.14	4395
2010	13.58	4540
2011	14.9	4745
2012	14.58	4877
2013	14.95	5043
2014	15.17	5119
2015	15.32	5194 est. (target)
Actual (2015)		4344
Taunton Deane (LA) area hourly pay	£11.39 (median)	

- (c) Table 2 provides a broader comparison by considering the shift between 2006 and 2012 in the relative position of Taunton Deane Borough Council's BA compared with the BA paid by other district councils, using the latest available data.

So, for example, in 2006 (Col. i) 51.2% of councils in England had a lower BA than Taunton Deane whereas in 2011/12 the figure was only 47.0% (Col. iii). Similarly, in the south west in 2006 (Col. ii) 54.0% of councils had a lower BA than Taunton Deane but in 2011/12 this had fallen to 39.7% (Col. iv). Taunton Deane's BA had at that time moved relatively lower both nationally and locally⁴.

Table 2
Taunton Deane Borough Council's BA compared with other councils
(2006-2007 & 2011-2012)

	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
	% of District Councils 2006 in England with a <i>lower</i> BA	% of District Councils 2006 in South West England with a <i>lower</i> BA	% of District Councils 2011 (County Council) in England with a <i>lower</i> BA	% of District Councils 2011 in South West England with a <i>lower</i> BA
Taunton Deane	51.2	54.0	47.0	39.7

¹ Excluding London boroughs.

It is recognised that the definition of "South West" in official statistics includes parts of England that might be disputed.

- (d) Table 3 uses index numbers to allow an easier comparison of the real value of Taunton Deane's BA. Col. (ii) makes clear the 15% decline in the real value compared with hourly rates of pay in the south west which had declined in real terms by 'only' about 8% (nominal wage rates in the south-west have increased whereas the BA has been virtually constant).

⁴ The increase in the BA in 2013, by £43, probably has made a difference to the ranking today but likely to be small since some other councils have also adjusted their BA.

Table 3

Taunton Deane Borough Council's BA and comparator (real values)

	(i)	(ii)
Year	Hourly pay South West	Taunton Deane Council
2008	100.0	100.0
2009	100.3	97.8
2010	98.0	94.7
2011	93.9	90.6
2012	92.0	89.1
2013	92.9	86.9
2014	91.2	85.6
2015	91.5	84.7

5.4.1.2 Possible effect of a continuing decline in the BA

- (a) The Panel discussed the familiar argument that the BA was important because it helped to cushion the personal costs of becoming a councillor and thus whilst not actively encouraging, does not discourage citizens from taking part in elections and the democratic process.
- (b) The Panel took particular account of two sets of data: one was the large scale and reliable survey of local councillors by the Local Government Association in 2013 and the other was data relating to local elections since 2003; regarding the latter, of particular interest was the ratio of number of candidates to council seats, and the number of uncontested seats. [see Table 4]
- (c) The amount of information contained in Table 4 is limited and allows no firm conclusions. However, the large scale survey by the Local Government Association did provide fairly hard evidence for the Panel, representing perhaps financial opinions of councillors not always readily expressed publicly. It is clear from Table 5 that although 25% of councillors would be able to fulfil their responsibilities without financial benefits, over one-third of councillors would be seriously affected in fulfilling their role without financial benefits.

Table 4
Ratio of number of candidates to council seats at election

Year	Taunton Deane	% u/c
2003	2.59	[1.96]
2007	2.36	[0]
2011	2.45	[0]
2015	3.0	[0]
Average	2.6	

Figures in [] are the percentage of seats that were uncontested [u/c]

Table 5
LGA Survey - the extent to which councillors would be able to fulfil their role without the current package of benefits, England 2013

	No.	%
Fully/to a great extent	4329	24.4
To some extent	6778	38.2
To a small extent	3351	18.9
Not at all	2615	14.8
Don't know	650	3.7
Base (population)	17723	

5.4.1.3 Methodology in determining the BA

- (a) The Panel noted an earlier approach by some IRPs to the setting of the BA: using a local or national median (male) white-collar wage; a figure previously – but no longer published by the Local Government Association. In using such an approach, IRPs are equating the role of a councillor with observable productive activity, ie. output. However, the BA is partly a payment to cover incidental costs incurred by councillors, such as telephone, and councillors' use of their own homes, and it is also a recognition of the *time* commitment of councillors - it is not a payment for explicitly doing a job involving quite specific obligations that require particular skills and competences. Had the purpose of the BA been defined in this latter way, then the use of alternative employment comparators would have been quite straightforward and unquestionably valid in view of the skills and competences needed to be a good councillor. Nevertheless, the Panel did consider a range of comparators -see Table 6 below and Table 1 in Appendix 1 in order to provide a useful context.
- (b) The generally accepted wide obligations of being a councillor are such that a competent councillor would need a wide range of fairly high-level skills and competences.
- (c) The estimates in Table 6 provide a broad range of earnings and receipts compared with the BA and the Panel concluded that the Taunton Deane BA was too low.

Table 6
Sample occupations and hourly earnings,
and state benefits (provisional 2014)

<u>Occupations in South-West England</u>	Hourly rate (£) (excl. overtime)
Elementary admin. & service occupations, eg. sorting, delivering mail, simple clerical tasks	8.18
Sales & customer service occupations	8.75
Skilled agricultural & related trades, eg. producing crops and animals, tending private and public gardens	9.12
Secretarial & related occupations, eg. medical secretary, school secretary	9.94
Health & social care associate professionals, eg. dental technician, sports therapist	13.35
Health professionals	20.27
Teaching & educational professionals	21.54
Corporate managers and directors	21.55
Approximate (estimated) hourly rate of payment – average of 8 state benefits	5.95
Calculated hourly rate for <u>Taunton Deane</u> councillors using BA formula and data	6.68

- (d) The Panel, having concluded that the BA is low, considered as its next step what might be a reasonable and justifiable level of BA and how such a BA might be achieved.

5.4.1.4 Recommendations and conclusions of the Panel

- (a) Since 2008, the decline in the real value of the Taunton Deane Council BA, as a result of the freezing of the Allowance for a number of years, is substantial (15%) compared with a range of valid comparators, and without any increase in the Allowance, continuing inflation will clearly reduce its real value further. For example, at even modest rates of inflation such as 1.5% pa which is the consensus mid-range forecast up to 2019, the value of the BA will decline by a further £250 or by about 6%.
- (b) The Panel attached significance to the Local Government Association survey of councillors (2013) that showed the importance of financial benefits for a large proportion of councillors in the proper fulfilment of their political role. Low levels of BA could only have a damaging effect on local democracy and in particular the representative nature of councils. In the absence of a more comprehensive and detailed survey of Taunton Deane Councillors the LGA Survey 2013 represented good evidence (See [Appendix 1](#), Item 3.0, page 17).
- (c) The Panel took the view that if Taunton Deane Borough Council in 2008/9 had decided that there were good reasons that an appropriate rate of BA was £4,301 then, as a minimum, such a payment is defensible and justifiable today. Correspondingly, the decision by the Council to increase the BA to £4,344pa in 2013 can be judged in the same way. In other words, an appropriate BA should be one which is

adjusted for intervening inflation. The appropriate BA on these assumptions would be about £5,194pa. This would amount to an increase of over £800 on the present Allowance.

- (d) The Panel is conscious that such an immediate increase in the BA would not be feasible, given that the decline in real terms had been, altogether, over six years.
- (e) Nevertheless the Panel was convinced that after virtually six years of decline, an upward adjustment was essential and, pragmatically, this should be achieved through a fairly simple mechanism and over a period of up to six years. The Panel therefore recommends a BA for 2015/16 of £4,486 and an annual increase, as a lump-sum rather than a percentage adjustment, of £142 and that this annual lump-sum increase should be inflation-indexed over the period.
- (f) The Panel recommends that the Consumer Prices Index (H) is used for the annual inflation-adjustment of the lump-sum. CPIH includes housing costs which is an element referred to in the BA. In recent years, CPIH has been slightly lower than CPI.
- (g) The Panel accepted that formally the recommended indexing could only be for a four-year period under the regulations. It is also aware that the annual increases proposed can only be agreed for a four-year period as this Council cannot commit the new Council to be elected in 2019. The Panel hopes however that the Council would consider making a commitment, in principle, to the final two years of the annual increases and indexing proposals. If accepted in principle these would then be the subject of a further decision by the Council after the next district council elections in 2019.

6 Special Responsibility Allowances

- 6.1** SRAs are paid to Members who are appointed to posts which have significant additional responsibilities. The amount of the SRA is primarily based on the degree of responsibility that relates to the position and also includes consideration of the perceived call on Members time.
- 6.2** The critical issue for the Panel was to re-establish a sound basis for the calculation of SRAs. The Panel was informed that at one stage there had been a clear link between the SRA scheme and the BA but this had become less clear over time. The Panel has also benchmarked current SRAs against comparable councils to assess whether current levels of payment were appropriate.
- 6.3** The Council accepted in February that the SRA structure should be based on:
 - (a) multiples of the BA so creating an automatic indexing provision as increases in the BA will be reflected in increases in SRA payments;
 - (b) a limited number of SRA bands and that these should be consistent across the three councils where it makes sense to do so but to also allow provision for individual council requirements to reflect their culture and their democratic arrangements.

- 6.4** The SRA structure set out below and which is included in the Members' Allowances Scheme achieves these aims by placing the Leader of Council in Band 1 reflecting the fact that this post carries the most individual responsibility within the Council. The Leader's SRA is based on a multiple of the BA. Bands 2 to 6 are all relative to Band 1 and are based on multiples of the BA.
- 6.5** The proposed amounts of SRA in each band have been set by the Panel after careful consideration of benchmarking data, consultations, and comparisons with other councils. This exercise shows that the values of the SRAs have been restrained as a result of the BA being effectively frozen for a number of years. But the SRAs are, nevertheless, considered appropriate given the level of the BA. The Panel is not, therefore, recommending significant changes to SRA payments at this stage because the adoption of annual increases to the BA over six years (along with provision for inflation) will result in automatic annual increases to SRAs. This will ensure that the SRAs are brought back up to an appropriate level alongside the BA. The bands and type of role envisaged to be included in each band have been informed by a list of role profiles – attached as Appendix 3 - which attempts to outline at a high level the primary responsibilities of key posts.
- 6.6** The resulting Table 7 below:
- (a) sets out a simplified banding structure of 6 bands based on the table agreed by the Council in February 2015;
 - (b) bases SRA bands on multiples of BA but retains current level payments wherever possible. The level of SRA for Scrutiny Chairmen and the Chairmen of the lower level committees is low compared to other Councils. The Panel was aware of, and has respected, a previous Council's decision to pay Scrutiny Chairman at a lower level of SRA than the main decision-making committees and maintaining this differential down to the secondary decision-making committees ;
 - (c) reflects current levels of responsibility associated with posts;
 - (d) shows existing payments shown in ordinary type;
 - (e) shows proposed SRA payments shown in bold together with the multiples of BA for each band in brackets - as an example the Leader's SRA is set at a multiple of 2.8 X the BA;
 - (f) proposes the inclusion of an allowance for the Leader of larger Opposition Groups – this is consistent with the approach taken by other councils;
 - (g) proposes the inclusion of a Band 6 SRA for the Chairman of the Standards Committee. The Panel is aware that a previous Council considered this issue and decided not to pay an allowance. The Panel considers that the Standards Committee, although only advisory to the Council, has an important role to play on member conduct, with its serious implications for the Council and the public's perceptions - alongside the Independent Person - and therefore considers that the role of Chairman justifies the payment of a small SRA.

6.7

Table 7
TAUNTON DEANE SRA Structure based on new BA of £4486

Band	Post	Amount
1	Leader	12219 12560 (x2.8)
2	Cabinet Member Deputy Leader	7 x 4752 4935 (x1.1)
3	Chairman /Mayor - Council Chairman – Planning Committee	4752 (Planning) 4486 (x1) 9087 (Mayor) 8972 (x2)
4	Chairman – Scrutiny Committee	3000 (Scrutiny – 2 posts) 3140 (x0.7)
5	Vice-Chairman – main committee / Council Chairman – secondary committee	1660 (Deputy Mayor) 1357 (Corporate Governance) 1357 (Licensing) 1346 (x0.3)
6	Other posts	500 (Independent Person) 449 (x0.1) 0 (Chairman - Standards Committee) 449 (x0.1) 0 (Leader –Opposition Groups with 5+ members) 150 per member 250 (Chair – T&FG) 225

Notes:

1. Existing SRA payments are shown in ordinary type
2. Proposed SRA payments for 2015/16 are shown in bold type
3. Multiples of the BA are shown in brackets

7. Travel and Subsistence Allowances

7.1 These allowances are intended to provide recompense for expenditure incurred by members on travel and subsistence for duties undertaken under the Council's list of approved duties. The Panel is proposing the adoption of the same provisions, for all three district councils for these allowances, to bring them into line with officer rates and HMRC tax thresholds.

7.2 The Panel is proposing additions to the Travel Allowance provisions to enable councillors to claim travel expenses for modes of transport other than by private car, motorcycle and bicycle. The recommendation is that the use of taxis should be eligible in exceptional circumstances and hired motor vehicles. This will ensure that councillors are not left out of pocket and are able to fulfil

their duties. The rural nature of much of the Borough combined with the majority of council meetings being held in the evening when public transport provision is limited means more creative solutions may be required for transport purposes.

7.3 It is proposed that eligible modes of transport should include:

- (a) Public transport including rail
- (b) Car sharing through the payment of an additional 5p per mile when one or more passengers travel to an approved duty in the same car
- (c) The use of taxis in exceptional circumstances
- (d) The use of hired motor vehicles (including car share clubs) in but with the level of reimbursement not to exceed the normal mileage rate paid for travel of 45p per mile. In exceptional circumstances it is recommended that the Chief Finance Officer may authorise reimbursement up to the full cost of hiring.

7.4 Current provisions across the three district council schemes for payments are very similar and there is no obvious reason to have differences. The advantage of agreeing the proposals set out in the Scheme is that the provisions are consistent with the County Council's Scheme so helping members who are both county and district councillors understand and apply the requirements when submitting claims for expenditure. The current differences in the payments are a result of the history of these allowances. They used to be set nationally and applied to all councils. Since these were removed as national provisions it has been down to each council to update the payments and local decisions have led to the differences apparent across the 3 district schemes. The proposed payments which are set out in the Scheme – Appendix 2 - are based on the current Taunton Deane provisions.

Overnight stay provisions have also been included to cover, for example, attendance at conferences.

7.3 The Scheme at Appendix 2 includes the revised list of approved duties as Annex C as agreed by the Council earlier this year. The list provides the basis for claims for travel, subsistence and carers' allowances and gives clarity to members (and to the officers who approve/audit the claims) about council duties undertaken and which can be claimed for and which cannot.

8. Carers' Allowances

8.1 All three district Schemes make provision for the payment of reimbursement of expenditure incurred by Members (a) for professional child-care services or (b) on professional care for elderly, sick or dependant relatives who live at the same address as the member. Reviewing these provisions has been a challenge for the Panel because historically there is limited experience within the councils of members claiming these allowances. The provisions in the three current district schemes are similar although the detail of the payments available differs to a degree.

8.2 The Panel's view is that the rules to be applied to the payment of the carers' allowance should be comprehensive and the same across the three councils although the payment provisions will continue to have local variations based on the current provisions in each Council's Scheme. The rules and payment provisions are set out in the Scheme at Appendix 2. The Panel have retained the current payment provisions within the Taunton Deane Scheme but the hourly rate has been updated to bring it into line with the current National Minimum Wage rate.

9. Members' Allowances Scheme - detail and rules

9.1 The BA and SRA payments are paid on a monthly basis as a matter of right (unless a member chooses not to receive allowances or a specific allowance). Other allowances have to be claimed against actual expenditure incurred up to the limits allowed in the Scheme. The Scheme recommended by the Panel includes brief descriptions of what each allowance covers and comprehensive rules to guide members through the process of making claims to ensure that claims are only made in the right circumstances, that evidence of expenditure is provided and to ensure that claims are submitted in a timely manner. Good practice in this area is essential for audit purposes and to provide assurance to the public that claims are appropriate and reasonable. Each of the existing district Schemes include some rules but the level of detail varies and in general this was an area which the Panel felt could be improved upon. The County Council's Scheme was used by the Panel as the basis for the rules now proposed for inclusion in the three district Schemes.

10. Recommendations

The Panel is recommending the Council:

- (a) accepts the Report of the Panel;**
- (b) approves the Taunton Deane Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2015/16 attached as Appendix 2 which includes the specific recommendations set out in the Report for:
 - (i) a new BA for Members of £4486 for 2015/16 and the proposal for annual increases for a six year period;**
 - (ii) a new SRA structure;**
 - (iii) revised Travel and Subsistence Allowance provisions;**
 - (iv) revised Carers' Allowance provisions;****
- (c) backdates the payment of the new allowances to relevant dates of appointments following the district council elections.**

**Panel Chairman:
Ian Partington**

**Lead Officer:
Julian Gale, Monitoring
Officer, SCC**

APPENDIX 1

Item 1.0

Table 1.0

Hourly rates of pay (excl. overtime) – local government areas (provisional 2014)

<u>Average rates of hourly pay calculated within local government areas</u>	£
Taunton Deane	13.35 (10.56)
Somerset	13.09 (10.15)
England & Wales	15.39 (11.59)
<u>Estimated hourly rate received by councillors using Basic Allowances formula and data</u>	
Taunton Deane	6.68

Figures in () are median values

Item 1.1

Using 'South West Councils' data for 2013, Taunton Deane's Basic Allowance is less than the average of £4,424. Earlier comparisons are difficult because of lack of data but in 2008/9 the average Basic Allowance for all district councils in England was £4,194 – which placed Taunton Deane below the prevailing average.

Item 2.0

JOINT IRP SURVEY OF MEMBERS

The Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) has started its review of the Members Allowance Schemes for the three District/Borough Councils that it advises. Members' views will be very important in informing the review, so the Panel is asking all Members to complete this short questionnaire.

BASIC ALLOWANCE

The Basic Allowance for ~~~~~ Council is currently £#,###.

Question 1: Should the Basic Allowance be kept at its current level for 2015/16?

YES / NO

Question 2: If you answered 'NO' to Question 1, should the Basic Allowance:

Be increased. If so, to what level? £.....

Be reduced. If so, to what Level? £.....

Question 3: Are there any comments that you wish to make about the Basic Allowance?

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE ALLOWANCE SCHEME The Scheme covers a number of other aspects, including Special Responsibility Allowances, Travel and Subsistence, Approved Duties and Carers Allowance.

Question 4: Do you have any comments on the wider Scheme and/or are there any specific issues that you would like the Panel to consider in its review?

TIME SPENT OF DISTRICT COUNCIL DUTIES

Question 5: On average, over the course of a year, how many hours per week do you spend on District Council duties? (This includes meetings, travel, dealing with constituent problems, etc.) hours per week.

Thank you for completing the survey. All the responses will be combined and no responses will be attributable to any individual Member.

Item 3.0

Table 2.0 contains selected data from the LGA census published in 2013. The data are not sufficient to draw conclusions about the effect of a declining real value of the Basic Allowance - which has occurred nationally and not just in the south west - in regard to enthusiasm for local democracy. But it is striking that nationally just over 60% of councillors are aged over 60 and the proportion of councillors who are retired has increased to almost half elected councillors – both of which have increased since 2004. One effect of these two facts might be a lack of interest in the size of the Basic Allowance, and that view coming from a group that is relatively well off – almost 80% of councillors occupying the top socio-economic groups and in 2013 almost 60% of councillors had a degree or degree-equivalent qualification.

Table 2.0**Local Government Association: elements of Councillors' profiles**

	2004	2013
Average hours per week spent on Council business	n/a	20.8
% of Councillors under 35 yrs age	3.8	5.0
% of Councillors over 60 yrs age	48.4	60.8
% of Councillors who are white	97.3	96
% of Councillors: retired	38.7	46.6
% of Councillors :self-employed	16.4	16.0
Length of service < six years	48.0	41.4
Length of service > 20 years	8.8	11.6
Intend to stand for re-election	54.0	65.3
Do not intend to stand for re-election	12.7	15.0
	2004	2013
% of Councillors in highest socio-economic groups	74.0	79.2 [44.0 national average]
% of Councillors in manual or craft socio-economic group	12.2	8.1

APPENDIX 2

Taunton Deane Borough Council Scheme of Members' Allowances – 2015/16

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The Council's Scheme provides for payment of:

- a Basic Allowance (referred to as BA throughout this Scheme), a flat rate payable to each Borough Councillor;
- a Special Responsibility Allowance (referred to as SRA throughout this Scheme) for Members undertaking 'special duties', as defined by the Council;
- a Carers Allowance (CA) to reimburse expenditure incurred by Members (a) in providing professional child care arrangements and (b) on professional care for elderly, sick or dependent relatives to enable them to undertake approved duties;
- Travel Allowances and Subsistence Allowances for Members undertaking 'approved duties'.

2. **GENERAL POINTS**

- 2.1 The term "Member" in these notes means a Taunton Deane Borough Councillor. Some aspects of the Scheme also apply to 'co-optees' (a member of a committee or sub-committee who is not elected) and the Independent Person appointed by the Council to advise on member complaints, as detailed.
- 2.2 Members and co-optees have the option of not claiming all or part of an allowance. The Chief Finance Officer must be notified in writing if a Member wishes to pursue this option.
- 2.3 Where a Member's or co-optee's term of office or appointment to a post qualifying for an allowance begins or ends during the financial year, he/she is entitled to the appropriate proportion of the annual payment.
- 2.4 Where there is an amendment made to the Scheme of Allowances that amendment may be applied retrospectively by the Council to the beginning of the financial year or to another agreed date in the year.
- 2.5 Where a Member takes on duties entitling them to a different level of allowances, the new entitlement may be applied retrospectively to the date the changes were effective from.
- 2.6 To cater for changes in circumstances that occur during the year and to ensure that no individual cases of exceptional hardship are experienced, the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader, can temporarily agree allowances and / or expense claims for individual Members as required where it is unclear if these are covered by the Scheme.

2.7 All enquiries relating to members' allowances should be made to (insert name or the relevant officer).

3. **BASIC ALLOWANCE (BA)**

3.1 A **BA of £4486 per annum**, has been approved for 2015/16 and will be paid to all Members in monthly instalments. In order to return the BA to its earlier real value (2008), the allowance will be increased by £142pa (index linked) for up to six years.

3.2 **Definition of BA:** BA recompenses Members for time devoted to their work as a councillor, and is intended to cover:-

- constituency and community duties, including use of their home;
- dealing with correspondence;
- single Member duties;
- attendance at single party/political meetings;
- attendance at formal meetings of the Council (including travelling time to and from meetings);
- attendance at seminars, conferences and training sessions;
- attendance on 'outside bodies' as a Council representative; and
- other incidental costs, for which no other specific provision is made.

4. **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE (SRA)**

4.1 **SRAs are:**

- paid to Members who have significant additional responsibilities
- allocated primarily on the basis of the degree of responsibility that relates to the position and also includes consideration of the perceived call on Members time
- paid in addition to the BA which the Member continues to receive; and
- paid in monthly instalments for as long as the Member has the responsibility.

4.2 **SRA** payments provide recompense for the following activities associated with the position of responsibility:-

- meetings with Officers;
- attendance at Council premises to undertake official Council business;
- meetings with fellow Chairmen or decision-makers and including some single party meetings / activities;
- dealing with correspondence;
- visits directly connected to the performance of an SRA duty e.g.
 - official openings
 - familiarisation / fact findings visits;
- press meetings;
- any other official Council business carried out by the Member in the role.

4.3 The Council has adopted multiples of the BA as the basis for the calculation of the SRA bands contained within this Scheme. The top band of SRA – Band 1 - which applies to the post of Leader of Council reflects the importance and responsibility of this role. The Leader's Allowance is based on a multiple of 2.8 X the BA.

4.4 Other SRAs are allocated to bands below the Leader's Allowance reflecting diminishing levels of responsibility associated with specific roles.

4.5 The SRA bands, posts approved to receive a SRA and payments agreed for 2015/16 are set out in **Annex A**.

4.6 An individual Member may only receive one SRA at any one time. Where a member is entitled to more than one SRA in different bands because of the posts they hold then they shall be entitled to receive the higher SRA.

5. **CARERS ALLOWANCE (CA)**

5.1 Reimbursement of expenditure incurred by Members may be claimed (a) for professional child-care services or (b) on professional care for elderly, sick or dependant relatives who live at the same address as the member. These payments are intended to enable the member to undertake “approved duties”.

5.2 *General requirements*

- Reimbursement will only be paid where professional care is provided and the carer must not be a close relative.
- Reimbursement provided is taxable as it is classified as an “emolument of the ‘office’.”
- The child or relative being cared for must be normally resident with the member claiming reimbursement.
- Members’ are required to self-certify claims, confirming that they have incurred expenditure in accordance with the scheme and provide receipts.
- That neither the Member nor the person being cared for receives an allowance for care from any other source.
- The Chief Executive and the Chief Finance Officer have delegated authority to agree a higher limit for specialist care where required.

5.3 *Child-care*

- That payments are restricted to the care of children up to their 14th birthday who normally reside with the Member;
- That no reimbursement will be made for the care of children of compulsory school age during school hours except where the child is absent from school due to illness.

5.4 *Care of Dependant Relatives*

- That reimbursement is restricted to the care of an elderly, sick or disabled dependant relative normally living with the Member and requiring constant care.

5.5 *Reimbursement*

- Reimbursement will be made at the National Minimum Wage rate applicable at the time of the claim (£6.50 per hour at the time this Scheme was agreed).

6. **TRAVEL ALLOWANCE (TA)**

6.1 **TA:**

can only be claimed for an approved duty, or for any duty covered by a special responsibility payment and for 'normal allowable journeys' .

- is claimed monthly on the Members claim form and receipts, including fuel VAT receipts, should be submitted to support expenditure.
- is payable at the rates shown in **Annex B**.

6.2 **List of 'Approved Duties'**

The list of approved duties is set out in **Annex C**.

6.3 **Definition of 'normal allowable journey'**

The **normal allowable journey** (for which mileage can be reimbursed) is from a member's home to council offices and then back again. 'Council offices' will often be the main Council premises but could relate to any building where a member is undertaking an 'approved duty' under the Scheme, including, for example, attending a parish council meeting in their capacity as a district councillor.

The mileage that members can claim for is the **actual additional mileage** as a result of council business that the member incurs on any journey. The **maximum** mileage the member can claim for is the normal allowable journey mileage.

6.4 **TA - additional information**

- Members who are District and County Councillors may claim Travel Allowances, if applicable, from both Authorities, if attending approved duties for both on the same day. However, a Travel Allowance cannot be claimed from both Authorities for a joint meeting where the member is representing both councils. In this case, the Member should claim from one of the Authorities.
- VAT fuel receipts submitted should pre-date the first date claimed for on the relevant claim form.
- Claim forms must include details of all journeys to include the date of the journey, starting and finishing addresses and the purpose of the journey. Failure to include such details may result in a claim being rejected.

7. SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE (SA)

7.1 SA is

- Claimable for any approved duty exceeding 4 hours which spans the agreed meal time periods as set out in **Annex B**;
- Claimable for the actual cost of the meal or the overnight expenses up to the maximum allowed;
- Claimed monthly via the Members claim form; VAT receipts should be submitted to support expenditure wherever possible;
- Not claimable if a meal is provided free of charge;
- Only claimable for a members own meal. There is no provision in the scheme for reimbursing claims for hospitality for other people.

8. NON CLAIMABLE DUTIES

8.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the following duties are **not approved for the purpose of claiming Travel Allowances and Subsistence Allowances:-**

- Single Member duties including single party meetings except where the Scheme provides otherwise
- Constituency meetings and duties
- Duties relating to outside organisations that are not Board, committee, sub-committee or working group meetings. e.g. book launches, openings etc.
- Attendance at party political conferences
- Social functions including religious meetings / church services
- Where an outside body to which the member has been appointed itself pays members expenses.
- Where the member attends an outside body but in circumstances where they have not been appointed as an official representative of the Council, ie appointed either by the Council or the Leader of the Council.

9. CLAIMS

9.1 How to Claim

- BA and SRA are paid automatically on a monthly basis.
- Carers' Allowance, Subsistence Allowance and Travel Allowance expenditure must be claimed on the Members' Claim Form.
- Claims must be submitted monthly to the authorising officer in order to payroll deadlines.
- Late claims will result in late payment unless notification is given in advance. Claims older than 2 months will be referred for approval to pay to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Leader, and payment may be delayed or refused unless there is good cause for the lateness. Claims older than 3 months will not be reimbursed.
- Allowances must not be claimed where the member is entitled to receive payment from another body.

ANNEX A**SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES (SRA) 2015/16****SRA Structure based on Basic Allowance of £4486 per annum**

Band	Post	Amount
1	Leader	12560 (x2.8)
2	Cabinet Member Deputy Leader	7 x 4935 (x1.1)
3	Chairman /Mayor - Council Chairman – Planning Committee	(Mayor) 8972 (x2) (Planning) 4486 (x1)
4	Chairman – Scrutiny Committee	(2 posts) 3140 (x0.7)
5	Vice-Chair – main committee / Council Chairman – secondary committee	(Deputy Mayor) (Chairman - Corporate Governance) (Chairman - Licensing) 1346 (x0.3)
6	Other posts	(Independent Person) 449 (x0.1) (Chairman – Standards Committee 449 (x0.1) 150 per member (Leader –Opposition Groups with 5+ members) (Chair – T&FG) 225

Note: The figures in brackets show the multiple of the Basic Allowance that applies to that band.

ANNEX B**SUMMARY OF RATES OF ALLOWANCES FOR MEMBERS****1 TRAVELLING ALLOWANCE**

Type of Expense	Rate
Travel by car irrespective of cc	45p/mile (this figure is in line with the current Inland Revenue threshold and automatically stays in line with changes to the threshold).
Car Share	In addition to the above rate a further 5p/mile will be available when one or more members are passengers in the same car
Travel by motorcycle	24p/mile
Travel by bicycle	20p/mile
Travel by railway or other public transport and car parking, tolls and ferries	Reimbursed at actual cost – Standard Fare for rail. Receipts are required.
In exceptional circumstances where all of the above options have been explored and deemed unviable	
Travel by Taxi	The rate for travel by taxi is not to exceed: i. in cases of urgency where no public transport or other means of travel is reasonably available the amount of the actual fare paid (receipt required) ii. in any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.
Hired Motor Car (including car share clubs e.g. Co-wheels or Zipcar) other than a taxi	The remuneration paid is not to exceed the level of the mileage allowance normally paid to members (currently 45p per mile), although the Chief Finance Officer may agree a higher level of remuneration up to a maximum of the actual cost of the hire.

2 SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE

Subsistence – in line with the rate paid to Council officers.

Breakfast **£6.72**, (actual expenditure up to this limit can be reclaimed when away from the normal place of residence for more than 4 hours before 11am)

Lunch **£9.24**, (actual expenditure up to this limit can be reclaimed when away from the normal place of residence for more than 4 hours and including the lunchtime period between 12 noon and 2pm)

Tea **£3.64**, (actual expenditure up to this limit can be reclaimed when away from the normal place of residence for more than 4 hours, and including the period between 3pm and 6pm)

Evening meal **£11.44** (actual expenditure up to this limit can be reclaimed when away from the normal place of residence for more than 4 hours, ending after 7pm)

3	OVERNIGHT ABSENCE (BED AND BREAKFAST)	£
	Maximum (outside London)	106.40
	Maximum (London)	120

LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES

LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES for the purposes of Travel and Subsistence and Dependent Carers' claims

	<u>Attendance at:-</u>
1.	formal meetings of the Council, including Committees and Sub Committees and any other authorised meeting of these bodies or event organised by these bodies (including joint committees), where the councillor (a) has been appointed by the Council as a member, a substitute or representative or (b) is exercising a constitutional right to attend and /or to speak or (c) is attending in an observer capacity only;
2.	formal meetings of the [Executive/Cabinet], its sub committees and any other authorised meetings thereof where the councillor has (a) been appointed by the Leader/Council as a member or (b) is exercising a constitutional right to attend and/or to speak or (c) is attending in an observer capacity only;
3.	ad-hoc formally constituted working groups/panels (e.g. scrutiny task and finish groups) where the councillor is (a) a named member of the body or (b) is formally invited to participate;
4.	meetings of Somerset County Council committees/sub committees where the councillor has been appointed by the Council as a member or a representative;
5.	meetings of bodies to which the Council makes appointments except where the body itself pays allowances to the Council's representative (<i>the approval relates to meetings of the body itself, its standing committees/sub committees but not to other activities of the body</i>)
6.	meetings of any local authority association of which the Council is a member where the councillor is the appointed representative or nominated substitute;
7.	any conference where attendance is authorised by the Council [and involves an overnight stay];
8.	any Council premises, or other agreed location, for a meeting agreed with either a member in receipt of an SRA or an Officer for the purpose of discussing matters relating to Council business in which it is reasonable to expect the councillor to have an interest;
9.	briefing meetings at the invitation of an Officer of the Council provided that the members of at least two political groups have been invited;
10.	an approved agenda setting meeting or member development/awareness raising/seminar activity organised by the Council;
11.	meetings of Parish/Town Councils or equivalent community associations where the councillor attends as the local district councillor or as a representative of the District Council and not as a member of the Parish/Town

	Council/Community Association itself;
12.	any civic or ceremonial event at the specific invitation of, or in support of, the Chair/Mayor of the Council;
13.	site visits by members of the Planning/Development Control Committee;
14.	any site visit or inspection visits undertaken by members approved by or on behalf of the Council;
15.	tender opening meetings where invited by an Officer to attend;
	<u>Performance of:-</u>
16.	duties carried out by a member holding an office for which a special responsibility allowance applies;
17.	any particular duty for which express authority is given by or on behalf of the Council in case of emergency;
18.	such other duty for which prior approval has been given by the Chief Executive or other authorised Officer, in consultation with the Leader.

APPENDIX 3

DISTRICT COUNCIL - KEY MEMBER POSTS - ROLE PROFILES

Leader of the Council

This post carries the highest level of responsibility within the Council as it has full responsibility for decisions taken to run the Council's services within the Council's policy and budget framework. The post-holder

- Is the political lead for the Council
- Is responsible for all 'executive' decisions and the arrangements for making them
- Appoints and co-ordinates the work of Cabinet
- Allocates areas of responsibility to Cabinet Members and allocates 'executive' decision responsibilities to members and officers

Deputy Leader of Council

This post appointed by the Leader holds a portfolio of service responsibilities as a member of the Cabinet as well as additional responsibilities as deputy to the Leader

- Deputises as required in the absence of the Leader and exercises **all** responsibilities of the Leader in these circumstances
- Participates as a Member of Cabinet and assists the Leader in co-ordinating the work of the Cabinet
- Undertakes the service responsibilities of a Cabinet Member as detailed below.

Cabinet Member

Cabinet Members are appointed by the Leader and have a range of corporate (as a Member of the Cabinet) and individual service responsibilities including taking decisions as required by the Leader. Each Cabinet Member:

- Is the political lead and spokesperson for a range of Council services both inside and outside of the Council
- Shapes and develops the Council's strategic priorities and vision and the priorities and vision for the service areas for which they are responsible
- Takes decisions as a member of the Cabinet and as the single member for a range of Council services.
- Exercises responsibility for a range of Council services including their performance, efficiency and effectiveness

Chairman of Council / Mayor

The Chairman is the 'civic' head of the Council. The role requires political neutrality when acting in the capacity of Chairman, and the key purpose is to advance the interests of the Council and the district. The Chairman has no decision making responsibilities but is responsible for the conduct of Full Council meetings and ensuring that the Council's Constitution is upheld and promoted. The post-holder:

- Chairs Full Council meetings and other Council events as required
- Is the Council's ambassador at civic, ceremonial and other significant local events and hosts such events on behalf of the Council as required
- Promotes public involvement in the Council's activities
- Is the conscience of the Council.

Committee Chairman – main DECISION-MAKING Committees

Primary role is to chair meetings of one of the regulatory public decision-making committees of the Council. The post-holder does not take formal individual decisions but is responsible for the management of the committee's business and the conduct of its meetings.

In relation to the Committee, the post-holder:

- Is accountable to the Council for the efficient and effective conduct of its business including decisions taken in accordance with constitutional requirements
- Presents its recommendations and summaries of its business to Cabinet/Council as required by the Constitution.
- Is its media spokesperson in relation to Council business.

Committee Chairman - Scrutiny Committee

Primary role is to provide leadership for the Council's statutory scrutiny function and in particular the Committee's activities and meetings. The Committee does not take formal decisions under a scheme of delegation.

In relation to the Committee, the post-holder

- Is accountable to the Council for the efficient and effective conduct of its business in accord with constitutional requirements including reporting as necessary to the Cabinet and Council
- Promotes the role of scrutiny inside and outside of the Council and is the media spokesperson.

Committee Chairman – secondary DECISION-MAKING Committees

Primary role is to chair meetings of a public decision-making committee of the Council. The post-holder does not take formal individual decisions but is responsible for the management of the committee's business and the conduct of its meetings.

In relation to the Committee, the post-holder:

- Is accountable to the Council for the efficient and effective conduct of its business including decisions taken in accordance with constitutional requirements
- Presents its recommendations and summaries of its business to Cabinet/Council as required by the Constitution.
- Is its media spokesperson in relation to Council business

Vice-Chairman of Council

The Vice-Chairman's primary role is to assist the Chairman of Council / Mayor in carrying out his/her duties and be the 'civic' head of the Council in the absence of the Chairman. The post-holder:

- Chairs meetings of Full Council in the absence of the Chairman of Council / Mayor and exercises the full legal responsibilities of the Chairman for the duration
- At the Chairman's request, represents the Council and, when appropriate, the District, at civic and ceremonial events, and hosts such functions on behalf of the Council.

Committee Vice-Chairman

Primary role is to support the Chairman of the Committee.

In relation to the Committee, the post-holder:

- Assists the Chairman in managing its meetings and chairs meetings when the Chairman is unable to.
- In co-ordination with the Chairman, acts as a Council spokesperson in respect of its activities.