

Humberside Fire Authority
17 February 2014

Report by the
Acting Monitoring Officer/Secretary
and the Director of Finance &
Assets/S.151 Officer

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2014/15

SUMMARY

1. The Fire Authority on an annual basis considers and approves a scheme of the allowances paid to Members. The approval of the scheme is a matter for the full Authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Authority is asked to:
 - (a) consider this report and determine its scheme of allowances for 2014/15;
 - (b) consider setting up a group, perhaps the Chair and Group Secretaries together with representation from the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, to consider further the matters set out in paragraph 9 and make recommendations through the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee to the full Fire Authority.

SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES

3. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 made provision for Combined Fire Authorities to establish Member Allowances Schemes from May 2003. Humberside Fire Authority approved a scheme in October 2003 (Minute 987 refers) that allowances would be increased annually from 1 April in line with the local government officers' pay award.

CURRENT ALLOWANCES 2013/14

4. The Fire Authority has frozen basic and special responsibility allowances since 2008/09 but agreed that for 2011/12 the global amount for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances be frozen at the current level on the understanding that some allowances might be adjusted following the Third Review of Corporate Governance. In the event no adjustments were agreed following that review.
5. The HFA at its meeting on 12 February 2013 (Minute 4022) agreed: (a) that except where the existing schemes provides for the allowances in respect to Travel and Subsistence to be increased on an annual basis, being linked to the National Joint Council award, the allowances be frozen at their current level for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes, and (b) that a group comprising the Chairperson and Group Secretaries together with representation from the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee will consider further the system of Member allowances during 2013, along with consideration given to performance and clarification around the role of Group Secretaries and make recommendations through the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee to the full Fire Authority.
6. Part (b) of Minute 4022 has not been progressed and therefore Members may wish to consider this further during 2014 (see paragraph 9 below).

7. Appendix 1 sets out the current Scheme of Member Allowances, as from 1 April 2013. The Allowances are published in the press and online and are part of the Constitution.

ALLOWANCES 2014/15

8. The Authority will be asked to consider and approve a scheme for Members' allowances in respect to 2014/15. The Authority are required to have regard to the recommendations made by any independent remuneration panels in relation to any authority that has an independent remuneration panel that nominates members to the Authority. The relevant reports of the Members' Allowances Panels for the four Unitary Authorities in Humberside are attached at Appendix 4 to this report.
9. The current scheme has been in place for some time and perhaps does not fully reflect the new governance arrangements now in place. Members may wish to carry out a fuller review of allowances during 2014 in readiness for 2015/16.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES

10. It is difficult to draw a comparison with the allowances paid at other Combined Fire & Rescue Authorities, primarily owing to the different composition and governance arrangements in place.
11. It is however notable that some Authorities pay an allowance to a political group leader/group secretaries. Those comparisons also provide an indication that the basic allowance and Vice Chairs' allowance is greater than many.
12. Attached at Appendix 2 is by way of information a sample of allowances paid by some other Combined Fire Authorities in 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15. This is by way of information only and clearly the Authorities concerned will be setting fresh allowances for 2014/15.
13. Attached at Appendix 3 is a comparison of the allowances paid by each of the authorities who nominate members to the Authority.

DISPENSATIONS

14. Previously, before the Localism Act 2011, there were specific dispensations set out in Regulation permitting Members to vote in matters of allowances and setting a precept.
15. In regard to allowances, all Members are likely to have a disclosable pecuniary interest. However, guidance published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2012 confirmed that no dispensations were necessary with regard to setting a precept.

PUBLICATION

16. Under the Regulations, on 1 April (or as soon as practicable thereafter) the allowances paid to Members for 2013/14 will be published. In addition, the new Scheme (2014/15) will be published. This also meets the requirements of the Code of Transparency introduced towards the end of 2011.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

17. No direct implications.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

18. The Scheme of Members' Allowances has been budgeted for in 2014/15.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. None arising directly, other than highlighted above.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS/HR IMPLICATIONS

20. No direct actions required.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

21. None arising directly. The report is however intended to bring greater awareness and transparency as part of the enhancement of our governance arrangements.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

22. None arising.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

23. The 2014/15 scheme must be published by Public Notice. The actual allowances paid during 2013/14 will also be published.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

24. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

25. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

26. The Authority is asked to:
- (a) consider this report and determine its scheme of allowances for 2014/15;
 - (b) consider setting up a group, perhaps the Chair and Group Secretaries together with representation from the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee, to consider further the matters set out in paragraph 9 and make recommendations through the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee to the full Fire Authority.

**M BUCKLEY
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7 February 2014

PART 6

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 made provision for Combined Fire Authorities to establish Member Allowances Schemes from May 2003. The HFA approved a scheme in October 2003 that allowances would be increased annually from 1 April in line with the local government officers' pay award. It was also resolved that a full review should be conducted after 4 years.

A review was undertaken during 2006/07 and reported to the March 2007 meeting of the HFA. The Regulations require that the HFA shall have regard to the recommendation of the Independent Remuneration Panels.

The HFA at its meeting on 12 February 2013 agreed that the allowances be frozen at their current level for 2013/14 as set out below

	£
1. Basic Allowance (per annum)	
All Members	4,457
2. Special Responsibility Allowances:	
a. The Chair of the Authority	11,137
b. The Vice Chair of the Authority	8,356
c. The Chairs of Committees	561
3. Co-optees Allowance (per annum)	548
4. Childcare & Dependant Carer Allowances (per hour)	
a. Childcare	5.80
b. Dependant	10.40
5. Travel Allowances	
a. Car Allowances – In accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services casual user rate:	
Up to 999cc	0.469*
Over 999cc	0.522*
(up to first 8,500 miles per annum, thereafter £0.144*)	
b. Bicycle (per mile)	0.05
c. Public Transport	Actual Cost
6. Subsistence Allowances	
Actual cost not exceeding	
a. Breakfast – more than 4 hours before 11.00am	6.46
b. Lunch – more than 4 hours including 12noon to 2.00pm	8.92
c. Tea – more than 4 hours including 3.00pm to 6.00pm	3.50
d. Dinner – more than 4 hours ending after 7.00pm	11.03
e. Overnight (covering 24 hours)	
London #	136.40
Outside London	120.42
f. Out of Pocket Expenses (per night)	4.92
(# Includes Local Government Association and Annual Fire Conferences overnight attendances outside London.)	

*Note: * Not increased by NJC since 1 April 2010*

Some Comparisons (other Combined Fire & Rescue Authorities) (Latest published information 2012/13-2014/15)

	Authority A 2013/14 £	Authority B 2012/13 £	Authority C 2014/15 £	Authority D 2012/13 £	Authority E 2013/14 £	Authority F 2013/14 £	Authority G 2013/14 £	Authority H 2012/2016 £
Chair	8,941	10,725	10,000	5,900	12,625	16,194	6,616	12,049.92
Vice Chair	3,005	4,578	5,000	2,950	6,313	8,556	-	9,037.44
Basic Allowance	2,969	2,574	2,658	3550	2,525	3,055.20	1,453	2,409.98
Independent Member	No info	-	273	250	No info	-	243	53.91 per meeting
Political Group Leader/ Group Secretary	1,721	2,145	No info	-	-	-	1,985	No info
Chair of Committee (Elected Members)	1,721	-	3,000	2,950	3,788	1.069/ 612	-	4,819.97

Comparison of the current Members' Allowance Schemes of Humberside Fire Authority and the Constituent Unitary Authorities

	HFA £			
1. Basic Allowance (per annum) All Members	4,457			
2. Special Responsibility Allowances:				
a. The Chair of the Authority	11,137			
b. The Vice Chair of the Authority	8,356			
c. The Chairs of Committees	561			
3. Co-optees Allowance (per annum)	548			

	ERYC £	HULL £	N LINCS £	N E LINCS £
1. Basic Allowance (per annum) All Members	10,711	12,337,15	6,874	7,500
2. Special Responsibility Allowances:				
The Mayor	11,781			
The Deputy Mayor	5,902			
Cabinet Members	13,897	14,553	10,162	14,625
Chair of Audit Committee	3,474	494	5,312	4,500
Chair of Scrutiny Panels	9,265	5,821	8,637	5,625
3. Co-optees Allowance	£45 per half day	£25 per half day	£42 per meeting attended	£260 per annum

