

Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee
7 March 2016

Report by the
Monitoring Officer/Secretary

**MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2016/17 –
REVIEW OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE FOR
VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY**

REPORT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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.

The attached report was submitted to the Fire Authority on 15 February 2015 when the Authority agreed:

- (a) that the allowances be frozen at their current level for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes, and
- (b) that the Governance, Audit and Scrutiny Committee be asked to review the level of the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the Vice Chairperson of the Fire Authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Committee is asked to consider this report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate regarding the level of the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to the Vice Chairperson of the Fire Authority.

SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES

2. 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 2015/16

3. 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. The allowances in respect to Travel and Subsistence are increased on an annual basis, being linked to the NJC award. The NJC has not increased the car allowances since 1 April 2010.
4. Appendix 1 sets out the Scheme of Member Allowances approved by the Authority to apply as from 1 April 2016. The Allowances are published online and are part of the Constitution.

ROLE OF VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE FIRE AUTHORITY

5. The Constitution of the Fire Authority defines the role of the Vice Chairperson in the following terms:

"2. **ROLE OF THE VICE CHAIRPERSON OF THE HUMBERSIDE FIRE AUTHORITY**

PURPOSE

The Vice Chairperson will deputise for the Chairperson in his or her absence. The Vice Chairperson will also act in a supportive role in assisting the Chairperson to fulfil his or her role.

APPOINTMENT PROCEDURE

The Vice Chairperson is appointed at the Annual General Meeting of the HFA as set down in Part 4 (Rules of Procedure).

KEY ROLES

The Vice Chairperson of the HFA will:

- (a) chair meetings of the HFA in the absence of the Chairperson;
- (b) undertake the role of the Chairperson in his or her absence and carry out all duties applicable to this position; and
- (c) facilitate at Members' Briefings on relevant issues."

COMPARISON WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES

6. It is difficult to draw a comparison with the allowances paid at other Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities, primarily owing to the different composition and governance arrangements in place.
7. It is however notable that a number of 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.
8. It is also noted that most Authorities only permit one special responsibility allowance to be paid.
9. Attached at Appendix 2 is by way of information a sample of Special Responsibility allowances paid by some other Fire Authorities in England. This is by way of information only and clearly the Authorities concerned may be setting fresh allowances for 2016/17.

PUBLICATION

10. Under the Regulations, on 1 April (or as soon as practicable thereafter) the allowances paid to Members for 2015/16 will be published. In addition, the new Scheme (2016/17) will be published. This also meets the requirements of the Code of Transparency introduced towards the end of 2011.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY

11. No direct implications.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

12. The Scheme of Members' Allowances has been budgeted for in 2016/17.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

13. None arising directly, other than highlighted above.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS/HR IMPLICATIONS

14. No direct actions required.

CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15. 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

16. None arising.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

17. The 2016/17 scheme must be published by Public Notice. The actual allowances paid during 2015/16 will also be published.

DETAILS OF CONSULTATION

18. None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

19. None.

RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

20. The Committee is asked to consider this report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate regarding the level of the Special Responsibility Allowance payable to the Vice Chairperson of the Fire Authority.

M BUCKLEY

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JS
23 February 2016

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 any of the Independent Remuneration Panels in relation to any authority by which any of its Members are nominated

The HFA at its meeting on 15 February 2016 agreed that the allowances be frozen at their current level for 2016/17 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. Motorcycle	0.240
c. Bicycle (per mile)	0.05
d. 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

Comparison of Special Responsibility Allowances Paid By Some Other Fire Authorities In England

	Basic Allowance (All Members)	Chair's Special Responsibility Allowance	Vice-Chair's Special Responsibility Allowance
Fire Authority	£	£	£
Shropshire and Wrekin 2015/16	2,716	10,220	5,110
Hampshire 2015/16	2,943	14,469	1,769
Staffordshire 2015/16	3,320.88	14,880	7,440.72
Dorset 2015/16	3,550	7,100	3,550
West Yorkshire 2015/16	3,521	19,425	9,713
Derbyshire 2013	2,952	14,772	11,082
Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes 2015/16	1,187	11,855	3,972
Devon and Somerset 2015/16	2,581	12,903	6,451
Humberside 2016/17	4,457	11,137	8,356
Royal Berkshire 2013/17	1,818 plus 1% indexation	9,090	4,545
Essex 2013	4,400	15,400	6,160
Avon 2016/17	1,466	6,676	2,003
Wiltshire and Swindon 2015	2,657	11,070	4,726
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 2015/16	2,434.08	12,170.42	9,127.81
Merseyside 2015	8,070	16,140	12,105
South Yorkshire 2014	3,362	12,989	6,494
County Durham and Darlington 2015/16	1,158	10,637	6,595
Leicestershire 2015/16	2,969	9,138	3,071
Devon and Somerset 2014/15	2,581	12,903	6,451
Bedfordshire and Luton 2015/16	3,153.07	16,714.08	8,830.08

**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	11,056	12,608	6,874	7,665	
2. Special Responsibility Allowances:					
The Mayor			11,781	8,500	
The Deputy Mayor			5,902		
Cabinet Members	14,344	14,553	10,162	11,250	
Chair of Audit Committee	3,586	494	5,312	4,500	
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee/Panels	9,563	5,821	8,637	5,625	
Vice Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2,390				
3. Co-optees Allowance	£45.00 per half day	£34.06 per half day	£42 per meeting attended	£260 per annum	