

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. This paper is the report of the Nottinghamshire County Council Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following our review of the County Council's existing Councillors' Allowances Scheme (**attached at Appendix 1**). This was last reviewed in June 2021.

## **BACKGROUND**

2. The first Nottinghamshire allowances scheme was established following a report by an IRP in 2000. Subsequent reports from the IRPs between 2003 and 2021 have built on their predecessors' work.
3. The Panel last met in June 2021 following the most recent County Council election and made recommendations about the existing Members' Allowances Scheme which were subsequently agreed by Full Council in July 2021 ([Document.ashx \(nottinghamshire.gov.uk\)](#)).
4. The Panel has been reconvened relatively soon after to review the Council's existing Members' Allowances Scheme in light of the recently agreed change in governance arrangements, with the Council moving from a committee system to executive arrangements (a Cabinet system).
5. In light of the relatively recent Panel findings in 2021, the Panel has focussed its considerations on the implications of the change in governance arrangements in terms of impact on Members' roles, responsibilities and allowances. The Panel did revisit some of the other issues it made recommendations upon in 2021 to ensure those recommendations remained relevant. There was one specific issue (electric car mileage rates) considered by the Panel in 2021 which, in light of the most recent Government guidance, was also further considered this time around.
6. Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 before a council makes a Members' allowances scheme it is required to have regard to a report from the IRP covering:
  - a) the amount of basic allowance
  - b) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which special responsibility, travelling and subsistence, and Co-optees' allowances should be available and the amount of such allowances
  - c) whether dependants' carers' allowance should be payable and the amount of such an allowance

- d) whether the level of allowances should be index-linked
  - e) which Members of an authority are to be entitled to pensions (N.B. following changes in Pension Regulations from May 2017 onwards, Councillors are no longer eligible to join the Local Government Pensions Scheme and therefore the Panel is no longer able to consider this issue, although we note that one Councillor did reference this issue in their survey response).
7. The Terms of Reference for the Nottinghamshire County Council IRP in 2022 are:
- a) To make recommendations to the County Council about:-
    - the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members
    - the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance (SRA) and the amount of such an allowance (with specific reference to the change in governance arrangements)
    - the duties for which travelling and subsistence allowances can be paid and the amount of these allowances
    - the amount of co-optees' allowance
    - whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
    - whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended
    - whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run.
  - b) To provide advisory views (not formal recommendations), when requested by the Council, on other potential remuneration matters which are outside of the formal remit of the IRP and the Councillors' Allowances Scheme but on which it would be beneficial for the Council to receive an independent view.
8. The membership of the IRP is:
- a) Sir Rodney Brooke, CBE DL (Chair) who has long experience of Local Government as a Chief Executive. He has chaired

independent remuneration panels for various authorities. He chaired and was a member of various public sector bodies.

- b) Stephen Bray who is a former Corporate Director of Gedling Borough Council. He has first-hand experience of the work of an IRP and a detailed understanding of its role and function.
- c) Charles Daybell who is a former Chief Executive at Braintree District Council. He previously chaired Nottinghamshire County Council's Standards Committee.
- d) Madi Sharma who is a proprietor of a Nottinghamshire business. She is also a member of several independent remuneration panels.

The Panel was assisted in its considerations by Marjorie Toward, Monitoring Officer and Keith Ford, Team Manager, Democratic Services. However, the recommendations in this report are those of the IRP alone.

- 9. The Panel invited Group Leaders and/or Group Business Managers to meet with the Panel to represent the views of their Members. The Council's non-aligned independent Councillor was also offered a meeting but declined on this occasion (he had met with the Panel in 2021).
- 10. The Panel met with the following Councillors as part of that process:
  - a) Councillor Jason Zadrozny and Councillor Samantha Deakin, Leader and Group Business Manager respectively of the Independent Alliance, the Minority Group;
  - b) Councillor Kate Foale and Councillor Mike Pringle - the Leader and Deputy Leader respectively of the Labour Group, the Main Minority Group;
  - c) Councillor Chris Barnfather – Group Business Manager, Conservative Group.
- 11. The Panel Members are grateful to those Councillors they met for being open, informative and for responding to the Panel's vigorous challenge.

## **CONTEXT**

- 12. As mentioned above, on this occasion, the Panel was keen to focus its considerations on any implications of the new governance arrangements on the increased range of Councillor roles, both existing roles and those directly resulting from the move to a Cabinet system.
- 13. The Panel recognises that the national context facing both Councils and County Councillors in their roles remains largely unchanged since it last met in 2021. The Panel shared concerns expressed by some

Councillors that some of the flexibilities afforded Councils during the lockdown, such as virtual committee meetings, had not been continued by Central Government in more recent times, despite the potential cost and time savings and environmental benefits that such approaches could offer.

14. The Panel considered a range of information, including comparisons with other County Councils that make up the Most Similar Group in the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) categorisation.
15. The Panel also considered the revised Constitution agreed on 31 March 2022 as part of the change in governance arrangements and asked Councillors for their views on how the new system would impact on them and their Group.
16. The Panel was mindful again of the findings of the Local Government Association Census (LGA) of Local Authority Councillors conducted in 2018 which highlighted an ongoing national increase in hours spent on council business. Unfortunately, the findings of the survey undertaken in 2022 have yet to be published by the LGA and were therefore not available for consideration.
17. From discussions with Councillors, the Panel remains unchanged in its view that the role of County Councillors in general has increased over time and remains a vital link between the public and local democracy. The Panel recognises that the use of social media is an important means for Councillors to keep in touch with their constituents and also to raise awareness about their roles and responsibilities, specifically and generally.
18. The Panel continues to believe that if democracy is to be served and for real equality of opportunity for involvement to exist, it is essential to provide a fair return to councillors to recognise the service they give. The Panel Members also continue to share the view expressed again by Councillors interviewed, that financial motivation is not, and should never be, a driver for people to enter local politics.
19. The Panel in making the distinction between an allowance and a salary, agrees that taking on the role of Councillor is essentially to perform a public service and Panel Members recognise that this involves a sacrifice on many levels, including in terms of career, time and family life. The Members' Allowances Scheme is designed to go some way to mitigate such sacrifice and make it possible for more people to make a contribution to public life than would otherwise be possible.
20. As in 2021, the Panel shares the Council's aim to keep the overall costs of the scheme broadly within the same cost envelope as currently. The Panel is also mindful that the gap in Councillor numbers between the Main Opposition Group and the Minority Opposition Group

has reduced further in the last year for various reasons. The Panel is keen to future-proof, as far as possible, its recommendations should further changes occur during the current administration.

## **ISSUES CONSIDERED**

### **A) LEVEL OF BASIC ALLOWANCE**

21. Whilst recognising the impact of the cost of living increases on the population as a whole, the Panel noted the recent uprate in the basic allowance in line with the headline staff pay awards. The current allowance is £15,277.76 and the Panel recommends that this remain unchanged, other than to capture any further index linked increases as and when appropriate.

#### **Recommendation 1**

- 1) That the Basic Members Allowance should remain at its current level and continue to be automatically index-linked to the headline pay award for local government staff.**

### **B) SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES**

22. The Allowances Scheme determines roles that are eligible for an SRA, and the rate of these allowances, but the Panel recognises that the Council itself determines its structure and allocates roles within this framework.
23. The Panel considered a broad 'three tier' approach to special responsibility allowances based on the relevant levels of decision-making responsibility. Cabinet Members were viewed as the top tier, Chairs of main Committees (including Overview Committee and Health Scrutiny) were viewed in a second tier, with scrutiny Select Committee Chairs in the third tier. Alongside these roles sit the relevant accompanying support roles, Cabinet Support Members (Deputy Cabinet Members) and Vice-Chairmen, with such roles currently receiving half of the level of allowance received by the relevant 'lead' Member.

#### **Leader and Deputy Leader Ruling Group (Conservative Group)**

24. With reference to the new arrangements and portfolios, the Panel feels that the existing allowances for Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council remain appropriate.

#### **Leader, Deputy Leader and Group Business Manager roles – Main Minority Group (Labour) and smaller Minority Group (Independent Group)**

25. The Panel recognised that the gap in Member numbers between the Council's two minority groups had reduced further since the Panel made its recommendations in 2021.

26. The Panel remained supportive of the principle it established in 2017 and 2021 that:

*Where there is always the possibility of a change of control, as in Nottinghamshire, the main Opposition Group has a particular responsibility in ensuring that it is in position to be the controlling group if circumstances change following an election. Members of the Main Opposition Group in their representations to the Panel confirmed that this is the approach it continues to take’.*

27. The Panel considered different possible means of addressing the current gap in allowances but was mindful that an argument to change the current approach had not been put forward by those Councillors interviewed.
28. Further to the information gained in 2021, the Panel considered the fact that the Leader, in establishing his Cabinet, has chosen to give a specific portfolio to the Ruling Group’s Business Manager. The Panel recommends that the existing level of allowances for all other senior leadership roles within the Ruling Group, Main Minority Group and smaller Minority Group should remain unchanged, with the new Cabinet Member – Business Management role considered as part of the generic Cabinet Member roles.
29. The Panel gave due consideration to the fact that the smaller Minority Group had changed its membership and name since the Panel last met. The Panel was aware that Members of the Group were from different political backgrounds but was satisfied that the Group still met the Local Government Act definition of a political group. It also had five or more Members thereby enabling it to qualify for SRAs as detailed in the Council’s Constitution. Having heard from Members how the Group worked in practice, the Panel was also satisfied that the role of Group Business Manager continued to warrant an SRA, even though the Group did not enforce a group whip approach when voting.
30. In light of the reduction in the gap between the minority groups, the Panel proposes a slight amendment to the formula established in 2021 to allocate Opposition Spokesperson positions.
31. In terms of future-proofing its recommendations, the Panel considered Appendix 3, paragraph 21 of the Council’s updated Constitution which states:
- In the event of there being no Main Opposition as there are two groups of equal size, the Independent Remuneration Panel may be called as appropriate to consider how any roles and special responsibility allowances will be equitably allocated.*
32. This point is applicable to the wider allocation of roles and special responsibility allowances, including any relating to committee Chairmen

and Vice-Chairmen roles. The Panel endorses this and underlines that the existing cost envelope should be retained wherever possible.

33. In relation to senior leadership roles specifically within each group, the Panel recommends that the basic starting principle, subject to the specific circumstances in question, is that the amount of allowances currently paid for senior leadership roles in the Main Minority group and any other Minority Group/s that have increased its Member number to an equal amount should be totalled and distributed equally between those groups.

#### Cabinet Members

34. The Panel considered the Terms of Reference of each of the Cabinet Members, as set out in the Council's updated Constitution. It also considered further information about the outline roles of these roles and other new positions established through the new arrangements
35. In 2012, when moving from a Cabinet to a Committee system, the Panel at that time recognised that the roles of Cabinet Members and Committee Chairman (Band A Committees at that point) were broadly equivalent and that their allowances should therefore continue at the same percentage rate of the Leader's allowance (66%).
36. In light of the Cabinet Members' individual powers, accountability and areas of responsibility, the Panel recommends that the new roles of Cabinet Members be remunerated on that same basis. This is in recognition of the lead Member roles which will continue to be performed, with additional responsibilities in relation to delegated decision making. The Panel noted that Cabinet Members will have authority to take Key Decisions as well as other delegated decisions below that threshold.

#### Cabinet Support Members (to be retitled Deputy Cabinet Members)

37. The Panel considered these proposed roles in depth and were informed that equivalent roles did exist within many Councils, under different guises and at differing levels of remuneration. The County Council itself had a system of Deputy Cabinet Members when previously operating executive arrangements. It was highlighted that at the Annual Meeting in May 2022, the Ruling Group plans to change the title of these roles to Deputy Cabinet Members, in line with the title used by other councils.
38. The Cabinet Support Member (Deputy Cabinet Member) will support their Cabinet Member in their day-to-day role. They may be asked by the Cabinet Member to specialise in a particular area(s) of the portfolio, be involved in briefings with departments, opposition members and stakeholders, present reports at Cabinet and chair working groups as required by the Cabinet Member and undertake continuous professional development.

39. Although they do not have decision-making powers in their own right, their work and research in their agreed specialisms will inform policy development and other proposals requiring approvals. This will include formal roles in assisting with consultation, both with local communities and other County Councillors, as appropriate. They are expected to input into and inform the discussions at the meetings between Cabinet Members and Corporate Directors outlined above. They will also assist in ensuring policies and proposals agreed are implemented efficiently and effectively to ensure the intended aims are achieved.
40. The Panel had initially queried whether an allowance that equated to half of the Cabinet Member's allowance was appropriate if Cabinet Support Members (Deputy Cabinet Members) were not able to deputise for the Cabinet Member role to its full extent, in terms of making delegated decisions or voting at Cabinet.
41. Having heard more about the planned scope of the roles, including responsibility for specific aspects of portfolios, the Panel recommends that an allowance of 33% of the Leader's allowance is appropriate as long as the Cabinet Support Members' areas of responsibility are made very clear and they are able to answer for those areas, including via the relevant scrutiny committee/s, where appropriate.

Chairmen and Vice-Chairman of Main Committees (including Overview Committee and Health Scrutiny Committee)

42. The Panel understands that a number of the Council's regulatory committees will continue in the new arrangements, namely those of a regulatory nature (Planning and Rights of Way Committee) or those required by statute or otherwise (Health and Wellbeing Board, Governance & Ethics Committee, Nottinghamshire Pension Fund Committee).
43. With reference to the three tiers of decision-making explained above, the Panel recommends that the allowances for the Chairmen of these Committees be reduced slightly from 66% to 60% to create a distinction between these roles and those of Cabinet Members, the latter of whom hold more individual accountability.
44. In light of the additional responsibilities which are borne by the Chairmen of the Overview Committee (with particular reference to managing the Call-In procedures) and Health Scrutiny Committee (with particular reference to legal responsibilities, including referrals to the Secretary of State), in comparison to the more internal facing scrutiny Select Committees, it is also proposed that the Chairmen of the Overview Committee and Health Scrutiny Committee each receive the same level of allowance of 60%.



45. It is proposed that the Vice-Chairmen to the Committees named above receive the equivalent of half of the allowance of the Chairmen, namely 30%

#### Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Scrutiny Select Committees

46. Each Select Committee has a remit of work aligned with the three main service departments – Place, Children and Young People’s and Adult Social Care and Public Health. It is the role of the Chairmen to lead their committees in their work and manage meetings effectively to ensure they can carry out their functions properly. These meetings are also intended to be held in public as appropriate.
47. The Chairmen will liaise with the other Select Committee Chairmen and with the Chairman of Overview Committee in relation to scrutiny work and any cross-cutting issues. The Chairman of the Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committee will also liaise with the Chairman of Health Scrutiny Committee in relation to any cross-cutting issues.
48. The committees do not have any decision-making powers in their own right and will instead review and scrutinise areas of the Council’s work within their portfolio and make recommendations to the Cabinet, Cabinet Member, Department, Committee as appropriate. The Chairmen may also lead scrutiny working groups as required.
49. The Vice-Chairmen will support the Chairmen of their select committees in their roles, including deputising as Chairman as required. They may also be required to chair working groups or review groups of the committee as and when agreed.
50. Whilst recognising the crucial role which scrutiny can play in the success of executive arrangements, in light of the relatively smaller areas of responsibility, powers and remit held by the Place, Children and Young People and Adult Social Care and Public Health Select Committees, the Panel recommends that these Chairmen receive an allowance of 45%. Again, it is proposed that the Vice-Chairmen should receive the equivalent of half of the Chairman’s allowance, albeit rounded up to 23%.

#### Minority Spokespersons Roles

51. The importance of the Main Minority opposition spokesperson roles was recognised by previous IRPs. These roles have expanded with the more collegiate approach of joint working between the political groups taken in recent years resulting in greater input from such opposition Members, an approach which it is planned will continue in the new arrangements.
52. In 2017, the Panel agreed that an SRA be made available for the role of Main Minority Group spokesmen on committees at a rate of 22% of

the Leader's SRA and that the allocation of these roles be the responsibility of the Main Minority Group.

53. In 2021, with reference to the discussions and recommendations made about reducing the gap between the SRAs for the leadership roles of the two Minority Groups, the Panel recommended that it would also be appropriate for the smaller Minority Group to receive positions to be paid at half of the level paid to the Main Minority Group for these roles (therefore half of 22%, i.e. 11% of the Leader's SRA).
54. In order to set a limit on the number of such positions, the Panel in 2021 recommended a formula whereby the Main Minority Group and smaller Minority Group would qualify for Opposition Spokesperson roles equating to 50% and 20% respectively of those Committees which qualify for a Chairman's SRA (rounded down to the nearest spokesperson role).
55. As part of the discussions around the new arrangements, the Ruling Group has agreed to offer two scrutiny Vice-Chairman positions (including Overview Committee) to the Main Minority Group and two such positions to the smaller Minority Group also. The Main Minority Group will also retain the Vice-Chairman role for Planning and Rights of Way Committee.
56. There are now nine Committees (including the four scrutiny committees) which attract a Chairman's SRA. If the number of committees for which a Vice-Chairman position has already been given to the relevant group are removed from the calculation for each Group, then under the current formula, the Main Opposition Group would qualify for three Opposition Spokesperson roles and the smaller Minority Opposition Group would qualify for one Opposition Spokesperson role (rounded down).
57. In recognition of the increased number of Members which the smaller Minority Group has accrued since the Panel last met in 2021 the Panel recommends that the formula's percentage figure for the smaller Minority Group be increased from 20% to 30%. This would result in a further Opposition Spokesperson role being allocated to the smaller Minority Group, giving the Group two scrutiny Vice-Chairman positions and two Opposition Spokesperson positions.
58. Should the numbers of Members of the existing smaller Minority Group reduce at some point during the current administration then the Panel feels that they should be consulted further at that point to potentially review this formula.

#### Budget

59. The total amount of SRAs claimable in 2021-22, following the inflationary uprating, was £710,041.05 (it should be noted that not all

SRAs were claimed due to the rule of no Councillor claiming more than one SRA).

60. With the recommended changes, the total amount to be claimed is £712,244.55. The total amount of SRAs claimable remains the same at 48 out of 66 Members.
61. The Panel recognised that the number of bands within the revised Allowances Scheme has increased, albeit to a level that is akin to numbers experienced in previous administrations operating executive arrangements. The Panel considered means of reducing that total number further but was mindful that doing so potentially undermined some of the points of principle previously established (for example, the distinctions between the Main Groups and Minority Group and the approach whereby deputy roles generally receive allowances equal to half of lead Member roles).

### **Recommendations 2-10**

- 2) That the current overall model of setting SRAs as a proportion of the rate for the Leader should continue.**
- 3) That the SRAs for the following roles should be maintained at the current relative level, with percentages clarified as detailed above:**
  - a. Leader of the Council (100%)**
  - b. Deputy Leader of the Council (70%)**
  - c. Leader of the Main Minority Group (66%)**
  - d. Chairman of the County Council (50%)**
  - e. Leader of smaller Minority Groups (33%)**
  - f. Vice-Chairman of the County Council (24%)**
  - g. Deputy Leader of the Main Minority Group (24%)**
  - h. Business Manager of the Main Minority Group (24%)**
  - i. Main Minority Group Spokespersons (22%)**
  - j. Deputy Leader of smaller Minority Groups (12%)**
  - k. Business Manager of smaller Minority Groups (12%)**
  - l. Smaller Minority Group Opposition Spokespersons (11%)**

- 4) That, subject to the specific circumstances in question, the amount of allowances currently paid for senior leadership roles in the Main Minority group and any smaller Minority Group/s that subsequently increase its number of Members to an equal amount, should be totalled and distributed equally between those groups with no increase in the overall cost envelope.
- 5) That the SRAs for the roles on Main Committees (including the new Overview Committee and other retained committees) be set as follows
  - a. Chairman – 60%
  - b. Vice-Chairman – 30%
- 6) That the following levels of SRA be set for the new roles established as part of the change to executive arrangements:
  - a. Cabinet Members – 66%
  - b. Select Committee Chairmen – 45%
  - c. Cabinet Support Members – 33%
  - d. Select Committee Vice-Chairmen – 23%
- 7) That the formula to allocate Opposition Spokesperson roles be amended so that smaller Minority Groups qualify for a number of roles equal to 30% of those Committees on which Chairmen qualify for an SRA (N.B. Should the number of Members within the smaller Minority Group reduce at any point in the current administration then the Panel should be consulted with a view to potentially reviewing this formula).
- 8) That all SRAs should continue to be index-linked to the local government headline pay settlement. The Panel underlines that any changes relating to index-linking do not equate to a change in the agreed scheme and therefore would not require approval by the Council on an annual basis.
- 9) That any new or revised special responsibility allowances arising from the new arrangements should be applied from the first date of those arrangements (i.e. 13 May 2022).
- 10) That the existing arrangement whereby no Councillor shall be eligible for more than one SRA from the County Council should continue.

## **C) TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES**

62. The Council's existing list of Approved Duties (Travelling and Subsistence Allowances) was agreed by the IRP in 2021, with reference to Regulation 8 of the 2003 Regulations.
63. No changes have been suggested to the existing list of Approved Duties since the Panel's last consideration.
64. The Panel therefore recommends that the existing list of duties specified as Approved Duties be continued without amendment.
65. The Panel had some sympathy with the suggestion from some Councillors that the existing mileage rate of 45p, which has been set for a number of years, has not kept pace with inflation, particularly in recent times. Panel Members are aware that these levels are set by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and that to exceed this rate at present would have unintended negative taxation impacts. As such the Panel endorses the view that the Council should do all it can to raise concerns with HMRC, via the Local Government Association, about the appropriateness of the existing mileage rates.
66. In 2021, the Panel agreed to a recommendation from officers that an electric vehicle mileage rate of 4p per mile be introduced within the scheme. Clarification has subsequently been provided via an update to the Government's website in October 2021. This confirmed that the mileage rate agreed by the Panel in 2021 for electric cars is actually only a recommended rate for company cars and does not apply to cars owned by employees, Members and Co-optees. As a result, it has been clarified that the existing mileage rate of 45p per mile for cars should be applied for petrol, diesel and electric vehicles. It is therefore proposed that the reference to an electric vehicle mileage rate of 4p per mile be deleted from the Scheme.
67. The Travel and Accommodation Policy has also been updated where appropriate to reflect changes arising from the new arrangements (for example those approval processes involving committees).

### **Recommendations 11-12**

**11) That the existing list of duties specified as Approved Duties (Travelling and Subsistence Allowances) be continued without amendment, and Schedule 2 and the Travel and Accommodation Policy be updated to delete reference to a specific electric car mileage rate and to capture minor formatting and administrative matters, including those arising from the new arrangements.**

**12) That concerns expressed by some Councillors that the existing mileage rates have not kept pace with inflation be endorsed by**

**the Panel and the Council be encouraged to raise this issue with the HMRC, via the Local Government Association.**

**D) OTHER CHANGES TO THE COUNCILLORS ALLOWANCE SCHEME**

Child Care and Dependants' Carers' Allowances

68. The Panel remains keen to ensure that there is equality of opportunity for anybody wishing to be a Councillor. It is therefore vital that the scheme allows parents to be able to ensure safe child care for their children whilst undertaking their Councillor duties. The cost of child care varies across the County and is dependent upon the age of the child. The current scheme allows for actual costs (subject to the provision of receipts) per hour per child to be met up to a maximum of £7.50.
69. The Panel expressed concerns that this rate was not akin to the minimum living wage, which could be applicable in those circumstances where a child care provider is caring for only one child. Online research by officers suggests that this figure remains appropriate to cover the average hourly cost of child care within Nottinghamshire in 2022 and no representations had been received to the contrary. The Panel therefore recommends that this remains unchanged, whilst retaining the previously agreed flexibility whereby the Chairman of Governance and Ethics Committee can agree for this fee to be exceeded as and when circumstances are appropriate.
70. In terms of other dependants, it is acknowledged that there will be circumstances where Councillors are caring for relatives and that this should not be an obstacle to them undertaking their Councillor duties. In line with the Council's then provision, the Panel in 2021 recommended increasing the maximum costs claimable for such care from £15.49 to £18.76 (subject to the provision of receipts). The Panel also recommended that the proposed increased figure be updated further by the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of Governance and Ethics Committee, should it be evidenced in the future that the new figure has been overtaken by inflation.
71. The Panel also agreed in 2021 that there may also be exceptional circumstances where the standard dependants' carers' allowances are insufficient to meet the specific needs of a dependant. In such circumstances, the Panel believes that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of Governance and Ethics Committee should continue to be authorised to agree higher hourly rates (again, subject to the provision of receipts).
72. Officers clarified that the existing maximum rate in 2022 is £19.80 and therefore the Panel recommends that this rate be adopted within the Scheme, with the ability to increase for inflationary or other exceptional circumstances.

### **Recommendations 13-14**

**13) That the hourly maximum rates for child care and dependants' care be set at £7.50 and £19.80 (subject to the provision of receipts).**

**14) That the Monitoring Officer be authorised, in consultation with the Chairman of Governance and Ethics Committee, to increase the hourly rate for dependants' care in line with inflation or to exceed the limit for either child care or dependants' care where exceptional circumstances apply.**

73. The proposed updated Councillors' Allowances Scheme, incorporating the various recommendations of the Panel, is attached at **Appendix 2** for ease of reference.

Sir Rodney Brooke  
CBE, DL

Stephen Bray

Charles Daybell

Madi Sharma