

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY



REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/13/6
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	18 FEBRUARY 2013
SUBJECT OF REPORT	CONFIRMATION OF SCHEME OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2013-14
LEAD OFFICER	Clerk to the Authority
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>that, as required by the relevant Regulations, the Authority:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>(i) considers whether any changes should be made to the existing scheme; and</i> <i>(ii) authorises the Clerk to publicise the rates so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>Regulations require the Authority to have in place its own Scheme for the payment of a basic allowance to each of its Members. The Authority may also provide for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances and reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenditure. The Regulations also require the details of any such Schemes to be confirmed and published by the Authority for each financial year in question.</p> <p>The Authority approved its current Scheme of Allowances in February 2012 following consideration of an in-depth report prepared by an independent consultant. The Scheme provides for automatic uprating where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of Basic and Special Responsibility allowances by reference to pay awards agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NOTE: there was no cost of living increase awarded in 2012 so allowance rates have remained unchanged); • of rates payable for reimbursement of travel expenditure by reference to figures produced by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • of rates payable for reimbursement of subsistence expenditure by reference to rates currently payable to Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service employees. <p>In light of the above and to comply with the relevant Regulations, the Authority is invited to consider whether any changes should be made to the level of allowances and expenditure reimbursement to be payable in 2013-14.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	The draft revenue budget 2013-14 makes provision for the payment of allowances as set out in this report, including the uprating of those allowances as indicated.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	Not applicable.
APPENDICES	Nil.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	The Local Authority (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 Report DSFRA/12/05 ("Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Approved Scheme of Members' Allowances), together with report of Independent Consultant, as submitted to budget meeting of the Authority on 17 February 2012.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Local Authority (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 require the Authority to make a Scheme of Members Allowances that:

- MUST provide for payment of a basic allowance to every Member of the Authority (to recognise the time commitment of all Members and cover incidental costs such as postage, telephone calls etc in connection with Authority duties); and
- MAY provide:
 - for payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance for those Members undertaking additional roles (e.g. Authority and Committee Chairs); AND
 - payment of travel and subsistence expenses in relation to Authority duties.

1.2 The Regulations also require the Authority to confirm its Scheme of Allowances for each financial year in question and for this information to be published in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.

2. AUTHORITY APPROVED SCHEME

2.1 At its budget meeting on 17 February 2012 the Authority considered a review of its Allowances Scheme as conducted by an independent consultant and resolved to adopt the following, based on the recommendations of the independent consultant (Minute DSFRA/72 refers):

Rates Payable for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances

Type of Allowance	Amount per annum £
Basic	2,500
Special Responsibility	
• Chairman of Authority (5 x basic)	12,500
• Vice Chairman of Authority (2.5 x basic)	6,250
• Committee Chairs (1.5 x basic)	3,750
• Members of the Commercial Services Committee (1.5 x basic) ¹	3,750

Annual uprating mechanism: by reference to any pay award made by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (**note:** there was no cost of living increase awarded in 2012 so allowance rates have remained unchanged).

Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

	Rate per mile	
	First 10,000 miles	Above 10,000 miles
Cars	45p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p

- 5p per passenger per mile (up to 4 passengers);
- 20p per mile bicycle allowance

Annual uprating mechanism: rates published by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

¹ funded directly from commercial income and subject to no Member – other than the Authority Chairman – being in receipt of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Subsistence Expenses

Breakfast	£6.90
Lunch	£9.54
Tea	£3.76
Dinner	£11.82

Annual uprating mechanism: rates payable to Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service employees (***note***: there was no increase in these rates for 2012 so allowance rates have remained unchanged).

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The draft Revenue Budget 2013-14 contains provision for the payment of the allowances and expenditure reimbursements at the rates as indicated in this report, including the uprating of those allowance and reimbursement rates as indicated.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Authority Scheme was last subject to a major review in 2012. The Authority is invited to consider this report and, in accordance with the relevant Regulations, to:
- (a). confirm whether any changes should be made to the existing scheme; and
 - (b). authorise the Clerk to publish the rates so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.

MIKE PEARSON
Clerk to the Authority