

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/16/26
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	19 DECEMBER 2016
SUBJECT OF REPORT	CONFIRMATION OF SCHEME OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2017-18
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Corporate Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<p><i>that, as required by the relevant Regulations, the Authority:</i></p> <p><i>(a) considers the content of this report with a view to confirming the Scheme of Allowances (as set out in paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3) to operate for the 2017-18 financial year; and</i></p> <p><i>(b) authorises the Clerk to the Authority to publicise details of the Scheme so confirmed in one or more local newspapers circulating in the area served by the Authority.</i></p>
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>This report details allowances currently payable and invites the Authority to confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2017-18 financial year.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	Provision has been made within the draft Revenue Budget 2017-18 for the payment of allowances at the rates as indicated in this report.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS (ERBA)	The content this report is considered compatible with equality and human rights legislation.
APPENDICES	Nil.
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	The Local Authority (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 Report DSFRA/15/29 ("Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority Approved Scheme of Members' Allowances 2016-17), together with report of Independent Consultant, as submitted to the Authority meeting on 14 December 2015).

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 meeting on 15 December 2015 the Authority considered a review of its Allowances Scheme as conducted by an independent consultant and determined – in accordance with the review recommendations - rates payable for basic and special responsibility allowances in the 2016-17 financial year together with an automatic annual uprating mechanism to apply (Minute DSFRA/41 refers). The Regulations constrain application of any automatic uprating mechanism to a maximum period of four years after which a further, major review should be undertaken.
- 2.2 The annual uprating so approved was by reference to any pay award made by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (“the Green Book”) but the Authority approved that this should only apply from 1 April 2017 onwards. Consequently, the rates currently payable for Basic and Special Allowances are shown in the table below. These rates have applied from 1 April 2016 apart from the Special Responsibility Allowance attracting to Non-Executive Directors on the Board of Red One Ltd. (the Authority’s arms-length trading company), which applied from the date of appointment of the Non-Executive Directors (19 February 2016 – Minute DSFRA/53 refers).

Rates Payable for Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances

Type of Allowance	Amount per annum £
Basic	2,600
Special Responsibility	
• Chairman of Authority (5 x basic)	13,000
• Vice Chairman of Authority (2.5 x basic)	6,500
• Committee Chairs (1.5 x basic)	3,900
• Non-Executive Directors appointed by the Authority to the Board of Red One Ltd.	6,000

- 2.3 The Allowances Scheme also provides for the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses as shown below:

Rates Payable for Reimbursement of Travel Expenses

	<i>Rate per mile</i>	
	<i>First 10,000 miles</i>	<i>Above 10,000 miles</i>
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.

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.

- 2.4 There was no increase in the travel or subsistence rates during the last financial year so they remain unchanged.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1. The Authority Scheme was last subject to a major review in 2015 and the existing automatic uprating mechanism can only remain in place for a maximum period of four years after which a further, major review should be undertaken. The next major review is scheduled to inform the 2020-21 budget setting process.

- 3.2. The Authority is invited to consider this report and, in accordance with the relevant Regulations, to:

- (a). confirm the Scheme to operate for the 2017-18 financial year; 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
Director of Corporate Services