

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	DSFRA/22/23
MEETING	DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
DATE OF MEETING	12 DECEMBER 2022
SUBJECT OF REPORT	SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – INCREASE IN RATES FOR 2022-23 FINANCIAL YEAR
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Governance & Digital Services
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the contents of this report be considered and the increase to be applied to Members' Allowances for the current (2022-23) financial year determined.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>At its meeting on 10 November 2021, the Authority approved the Scheme of Members' Allowances to apply for the current (2022-23) financial year (Minute DSFRA/21/30 refers). In addition to setting the rate for the basic and special responsibility allowances, the Scheme also provided for these rates to be increased in line with any pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (the "Green Book").</p> <p>This report identifies the Green Book pay award for 2022-23 and sets out the factual implications of this in relation to any increase in Members' Allowances.</p>
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	As set out in Section 3 of this report.
EQUALITY RISKS AND BENEFITS ANALYSIS	N/A
APPENDICES	None
BACKGROUND PAPERS	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003

1. **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) provide, among other things, that the Authority must, for each financial year, approve a Scheme of Allowances specifying:
- (a) the rate of basic allowance payable to all Members;
 - (b) the rate of any special responsibility allowance (SRA) as may have been approved by the Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Regulations; and
- 1.2. The Regulations also provide that the rates of basic and special responsibility allowance may be adjusted annually by reference to an index as approved by the Authority.
- 1.3. The current scheme of Members' Allowances provides that both basic and special responsibility allowances should be updated annually in line with pay increases agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services (the "Green Book").
- 1.4. A 2% increase was assumed for the NJC Green Book pay award when setting the 2022-23 budget.

2. **CURRENT ALLOWANCE RATES**

- 2.1. The rates of allowance currently payable are shown in the following table:

Annual Allowance	£
Basic Allowance	2,835
<i>Special Responsibility Allowances</i>	
- Authority Chair (5 x basic)	14,175
- Authority Vice-Chair	7,036
- Committee Chair	4,172
- Authority-appointed non-executive director to the Board of Red One Ltd.	6,415
- Member of Local Pensions Board (0.15 x basic)	425
<i>Co-optees Allowances</i>	
- Independent Employer Representative appointed to Local Pensions Board	508.75
- Independent Person as per Localism Act 2011 (note: allowance payable for each standards issue dealt with)	101.75
- Independent co-opted member appointed to Audit & Governance Committee (0.5 x basic)	1,417.50

3. **NJC PAY AWARD 2022-23**

- 3.1. The agreed Green Book pay award for the current (2022-23) financial year is for a flat-rate of £1,925 on all national NJC spinal column pay points. For the Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service (the Service), this equates to:
- a 10% increase for employees on national NJC spinal column point 4 – the lowest spinal column point for Grades currently used by the Service;

- a 4.04% increase for employees on the top spinal column point (point 43) of the national NJC scale; and
- a 3.087% increase for employees on the top of the Service scale (spinal column point 55).

3.2. The agreed Green Book pay award is backdated to 1 April 2022.

3.3. In relation to approved 2022-23 Members' allowances budget:

- application of the flat-rate increase of £1,925 to the current basic Members' allowance would represent an increase of 67.9%;
- a 10% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £9,810;
- a 4.04% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £2,338; and
- a 3.087% increase would require a total increase in the approved budget of £1,143.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Regulations provide for the Authority to approve a Scheme of Members' Allowances to apply in each financial year. The Authority's current approved Scheme of Members' Allowances provides for an automatic annual uprating in line with the Green Book pay award.

4.2 The Green Book pay award for 2022-23 and implications of application of this to Members' Allowances are identified in Section 3 above.

4.3 The Authority is asked to consider the contents of this report and determine what increase it would wish to apply in relation to allowances payable in the current (2022-23) financial year.

MIKE PEARSON
Director of Governance & Digital Services