

Council Assembly

Wednesday 20 March 2024

7.00 pm

Council Offices, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Supplemental Agenda No.1

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Date: 18 March 2024

Item No. 2.2	Classification: Open	Date: 20 March 2024	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Public Question Time	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

1. QUESTION FROM CHARMAINE GRAVES TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR COUNCIL HOMES

Can the council confirm that it will reverse the policy change making it easier to sell off void council homes, and focus its attention on improving the funding formula, reducing mismanagement and waste, and making available the voided properties earmarked for sale to vulnerable residents?

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer
Version	Final
Dated	18 March 2024

Agenda Item 3.1

Item No. 3.1	Classification: Open	Date: 20 March 2024	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Community Evidence on the Themed Debate	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Introduction

1. The council assembly business panel agreed that the theme for council assembly in March 2024 should be “Southwark 2030: a proud history and a vibrant future: harnessing all of the strengths of our borough to deliver opportunity for all.”

Community evidence on the theme

2. The deadline for community evidence was 11.59pm, 14 March 2024.
3. The following requests have been received by the deadline for consideration by this meeting and they are listed in the order received below.
4. Which community evidence shall be considered and the length of each submission will be established by way of a programme motion at the start of council assembly. Community evidence shall be conducted under the existing rules for public participation.
5. If the community evidence is not dealt with by council assembly, the matter shall be referred without debate to the relevant cabinet member who shall, after consideration, respond with an open reply to the sender.

Submissions

1. Nicola Howard, Family Hub

The community evidence requests states:

“I will be joined by Elena Salazar, Family Services Manager at 1st Place, Adufe Ajeniya (Ola) a parent and volunteer at 1st Place, Nicole Hooper, Deputy Project Manager, Bede House Starfish Project.

We wish to highlight our work in the community with children and families. As the first Family Hub in the borough, growing from 18 years’ experience as a Sure Start Programme and Children and Family Centre, we would like to emphasise the importance of community partnerships in providing the best help, opportunities and outcomes for the children and families we support.

This currently ranges from specialist support for survivors of domestic abuse, to help for families with food insecurity and adult learning, in addition to Family Early Help, health and early childhood learning. Strong partnerships bring together the expertise of established organisations as well as those of the community and voluntary sector, and mean we are able to provide more and better services for families, maximising resources while avoiding service duplication in a time of limited funds. We are lucky to be in a borough with a dynamic and thriving VCS, who have demonstrated particularly in recent years its ability to respond to challenges quickly and effectively through partnership working.

Please can you let us know what time we should arrive at Tooley St. We are aware that we may not be called to speak even if we attend.”

2. Ade Odunlade, Miata Noah, Haajera Adil; South London Listens

The community evidence requests states:

“They will talk about a transformative new partnership between the NHS, Local Authorities and communities that has developed in Southwark, through South London Listens (SLL). South London and the Maudsley is a lead partner on the South London Listens programme, a collaboration of the three south London mental health trusts, nine local authorities and over 150 community organisations, built on the listening to over 10,000 people since 2020. Working with strategic partner Citizens UK, the programme is spearheading a new way of working – using the power of community organising to tackle the biggest barriers to good mental health and wellbeing across south London.

SLL is shifting everything on its head. It is seeing people in neighbourhoods not as simply service users or problems to deal with but seeing them as key to the solutions; it's not communities merely being consulted but having power; it's not seeing particular groups as hard to reach, but thinking about how our services/institutions are hard for communities to reach.

Building on priorities identified through listening to Southwark residents, a range of co-developed initiatives have been created. This includes the launch of the Be Well programme, working to build the capability and capacity of community organisations to build relationships, support the mental health and wellbeing of local people, and enable them to take action on structural inequalities and injustices that impact mental health. South London Listens has also worked directly with community leaders to co-develop and launch a ‘virtual waiting room’ for all young people and their parents on the CAMHS waiting list in Southwark, as well as a Community Embedded Worker programme, where NHS practitioners have been based in community organisations to build trust and provide services for refugee, migrant and diaspora communities.

At an Assembly in November, NHS and Local Authority leaders in Southwark and across south London recommitted to supporting the South London Listens programme and working in partnership to deliver on community priorities. This included a groundbreaking commitment to working over the next 12 months on the impact of housing on health and wellbeing.”

3. Nicole Gordon, Better Bankside

The community evidence requests states:

“Borough and business working together to energise climate action

In order to achieve any meaningful impact in response to the climate crisis, collective action is fundamental. Better Bankside, working in partnership with Team London Bridge, Blue Bermondsey, the Elephant and Castle Business Forum, and Southwark Council, has developed a model that is proving to be successful at achieving business decarbonisation amongst SMEs in the borough, specifically those that are Black, Asian or minority ethnic owned or led. This presents a significant opportunity to build on the momentum and knowledge gain to create a legacy that extends beyond the lifetime of the project and delivers on shared goals around the climate agenda.”

4. Nicola Noble, Surrey Square Primary School

The community evidence requests states:

“I wish to share our work to 'rethink school' and provide an education which enables children to thrive - both personally and academically. Work with families and the community is central to this. The Old Kent Road Family Zone (OKRFZ), facilitated by Surrey Square Primary, tackles deep, complex, social issues in the community differently. Unlike traditional top-down community initiatives, it empowers local people, centering their voices and expertise at the heart of decision-making through a model that puts the power into their hands. Set up in 2021, the OKRFZ model is based on believing the answers to issues are within the community, if we create the conditions for the local people to address them. The positive impact is being seen on individuals within the community.”

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Constitution	160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk 020 7525 7228

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services	
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 March 2024	
Key decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer title	Comments sought	Comments included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	15 March 2024	

Item No. 4	Classification: Open	Date: 20 March 2024	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Deputation Requests	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Proper Constitutional Officer	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That council assembly considers whether or not to hear deputations from the groups listed in paragraph 5 of this report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. Council assembly procedure rule 2.6 (11) states that no more than three deputations shall be considered at any one meeting. However the meeting can decide to suspend this rule in order to hear more or vary the order.
3. When considering whether to hear the deputation request, council assembly can decide:
 - to receive the deputation at this meeting or a future meeting; *or*
 - that the deputation not be received (if the matter is not dealt with by council assembly, the matter shall be referred without debate to the relevant cabinet member who shall after consideration, respond with an open reply to the sender); *or*
 - to refer the deputation to the most appropriate committee/ sub-committee.
4. A deputation shall consist of no more than six people, including its spokesperson. One member of the deputation shall be allowed to address the meeting for no longer than 5 minutes. The deputation spokesperson or any member of the deputation nominated by him or her shall be invited to ask a question of the leader or relevant cabinet member. After this time councillors may ask questions of the deputation for up to 5 minutes. At the conclusion of the questions, the deputation will be shown to the public seating area where they may listen to the remainder of the open section of the meeting.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Deputation requests

5. The following deputation requests have been received:

1. David Clarke, Marcia Road Residents Group

The deputation request states:

"As the lead representative of the Marcia Road Residents Group, I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the appalling state of fly-tipping and rubbish accumulation in our streets. As a resident of Southwark for over 20 years, I have noticed a significant increase in the amount of litter and illegally dumped waste in our community, which not only tarnishes the aesthetic appeal of our neighbourhood but also poses serious health and environmental hazards.

The unsightly heaps of rubbish strewn across our streets not only create an eyesore but also attract vermin and pests, creating an unhygienic environment for residents and visitors alike. Furthermore, the presence of such waste undermines the efforts of local businesses and property owners to maintain a clean and welcoming atmosphere, ultimately impacting the overall quality of life in our area.

It is evident that the current measures in place to address fly-tipping and littering are inadequate, as evidenced by the persistent accumulation of waste in our streets. Therefore, I urge the council to take immediate action to address this pressing issue."

2. Dave Gay and April Ashley, Secretary and Chair for Southwark Trades Union Council

The deputation request states:

"I am writing on behalf of a group of Southwark residents and trade unionists. We wish to take a deputation to the Council meeting on March 20th to present our view of the positions and policies the Council should adopt in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Specifically, we are calling on the Council to:

- Call for an immediate ceasefire and for the ending of the occupation
- Condemn Israeli acts of genocide
- Divest from companies that are complicit in the oppression of the Palestinian people
- Donate aid for Gaza
- Call on the government to stop arming Israel
- Call for sanctions against Israel
- Oppose any attempt by the Tory government to criminalise protest."

3. Marta Prieto, on behalf of Kirby Estate TRA

The deputation request states:

"On 12 July 2023, Kirby Estate TRA sent a deputation to the Council Assembly regarding the faulty installation of the windows in the estate as

part of the QHIP Major Works in 2020. We petitioned for a Building Control report on the installation, so that the errors will be properly identified and effective remedial works could be undertaken before the next winter. During this Council Assembly, we were guaranteed by both the previous Cabinet Member for Council Homes, Cllr. Darren Merrill, and the Leader of the Council, Cllr. Kieron Williams, that the Kirby Estate would have a visit, between July and August of a Building Control Officer, and that a Building Control report will be produced and shared with our TRA.

Eight months and one more winter later, we remain in the same situation. Building Control did not produce a report, so remedial works have not been undertaken. An inspection carried out by an independent FENSA approved company in August reported problems with the installation, but so far, LBS has only carried out minimal attempts at refilling the window frames in two pilot flats back in October, which have already proved ineffective. The drafts and cold in our flats caused by the excessive use of add-ons have not been fixed. The mould that was washed during the summer has returned.

We would like to appeal for the Councillors' help to grant a Building Control report, as we remain unsatisfied with the lack of action from LBS and believe that FENSA self-certification on the validity of this installation is not sufficient to identify and make our landlord take the necessary action.“

4. Corin Burr, Queens Road Residents

The deputation request states:

“I would like to request a deputation to the General Council Assembly on 20th March. I will be representing the residents and businesses of Queens Road in regards to the proposed revision of the CPZs.“

5. Bankside Village

The deputation request states:

“We and hundreds of other residents across Southwark from Borough and Bankside, to Elephant and Castle, Peckham, Surrey Quays and Dulwich are concerned about Southwark Council's new policy which will make selling council housing easier.

We believe the intention to sell off council housing to plug shortfalls for maintenance and new council homes is short-termism - which will have long term disastrous effects on communities, due to gentrification. The sale of council homes, especially larger properties will not equate to a net increase in council homes which are desperately needed. There are dozens of vulnerable residents who could be housed right now in the properties void and earmarked for sale.

With a change in government likely there should be greater focus on improving the funding formula, reducing the waste and mismanagement of resources so that a net increase in council homes is possible whilst maintaining the current stock. Selling off council homes now is foolish and not financially or socially prudent for the long term. The council has a duty to and must take a long term view not a short term one.”

6. Kirby Estate residents’ group and London Play

The deputation request states:

“The case for prioritising improvements to play spaces on Southwark estates

Rebecca Robins, secretary for Kirby Estate TA with Katie Gudgeon and Geraldine Howard, both residents of Kirby Estate

Rebecca will outline the difficulties that children living on the Kirby Estate have in accessing quality play opportunities due to the poor state/closure of the playground there. She and Katie and Geraldine will offer testimony about the impact on the community and the depth of feeling that exists there about the lack of what is a vital community resource. Their contribution will also feature a personal story from a resident with children on the estate.

Fiona Sutherland, director at London Play

London Play is working with residents in Southwark to support their campaigns for better play provision. Fiona will highlight that three Southwark playgrounds were put forward for the charity’s recent campaign to find ‘London’s saddest playground’ including the Kirby Estate and also note the loss and/or downgrading of several of the borough’s adventure playgrounds. She will also refer to the commitments made in Southwark’s council plan which promise to give the borough’s children the best start in life, including providing a top quality playground in every local area; and the best practice outlined in the London Plan. She will also talk about the vital importance of play for happy, healthy children and for creating opportunities for residents from all backgrounds to come together informally, and developing a stronger sense of community as well as improved perceptions of safety and pride.

The question that we would like to put to the council is:

What is Southwark Council’s plan for play in the borough as a whole and in particular on the Kirby estate, and do they remain committed to the promises outlined in the council plan for the borough’s children?”

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Deputation Request File	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Virginia Wynn-Jones 020 7525 7055
Council Assembly Procedure Rule 2.6, Southwark Constitution	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Virginia Wynn-Jones 020 7525 7055

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional Services	
Report Author	Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	15 March 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Title	Comments sought	Comments included
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	15 March 2024	

Item No. 6.3	Classification: Open	Date: 20 March 2024	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Adjustment of member allowances in line with the national local government officer pay settlement and Member Allowances Scheme 2024-2025	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Constitutional Steering Panel	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That council assembly approve with immediate effect the adjustment of member allowances in line with the national local government officer pay settlement and allowances for officers as detailed in paragraph 20 of this report.
2. That council assembly approve, with effect from 1 April 2024, the member allowances scheme for 2024-2025 as detailed in paragraphs 20 to 26 and Appendix 2 of this report, having had regard to the advice of the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel Report 2023 (see Appendix 1).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Legal background

3. Under Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Secretary of State may make regulations authorising or requiring councils to make a scheme providing for the payment of allowances to members.
4. The council is required under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) to agree on an annual basis a schedule of Allowances payable to members for the following financial year. Under section 19 of the Regulations, when making or amending a scheme, the council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
5. The council is required, if it wishes to pay such allowances, to adopt a Member Allowances Scheme on an annual basis with effect from 1 April each year.
6. The council must publish its scheme of members' allowances, dealing with basic allowances and special responsibility allowances. Payments to members of the council may only be made in accordance with this.

Current scheme and process for review

7. Southwark's member allowances scheme (see Appendix 2) is comprehensive and includes basic allowances, special responsibility allowances (for posts which carry specific responsibilities) and other allowances and expenses that may be claimed.

8. The proposed member allowances scheme for 2024-2025 is based on the current scheme, which was adopted by council assembly on 22 March 2023 for 2023-2024. The council agreed its scheme, having considered the recommendations of the constitutional steering panel and having taken into account the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel's 2023 report. The IRP usually produces a report every 3 to 4 years. The attached Appendix 1 was produced in 2023.
9. The proposed scheme for 2024-2025 maintains the following allowance arrangements previously agreed:
 - On 13 July 2022, council assembly agreed a revision to the scheme with regard to setting out members' entitlement to maternity, adoption and shared parental leave and relevant allowances.
 - On 12 July 2017, council assembly agreed a revision to the scheme with regard to arrangements for payment and leave made during periods of absence for members in receipt of special responsibility allowances.
 - On 21 January 2015, council assembly agreed the following:
 - i) That the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances be increased in accordance with the Independent Remuneration Panel recommendation for allowances to be adjusted in line with the local government officer pay settlement and that the licensing sub-committee payment and co-opted member's allowance be increased on the same basis.
 - ii) That the member allowances scheme be amended so in future years the level of the childcare and dependent carers allowances for councillors is automatically reviewed in line with changes in the London Living Wage.
10. The constitutional steering panel and council assembly are under a statutory duty to have regard to the advice of the London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel Report when considering the council's own scheme for member allowances.
11. The council is not, however, bound to adopt all or any of the panel's recommendations provided it has given them due consideration and is satisfied that it has justifiable reasons for not doing so.
12. In Southwark, the constitutional steering panel considers and recommends any changes to the member allowances scheme to council assembly for final adoption. The approval of the scheme and the setting of allowances are matters reserved for decision by council assembly.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

London Councils Independent Remuneration Panel Report 2022

13. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ('the Regulations') authorise the establishment by the Association of London Government (now London Councils) of an independent remuneration panel to make recommendations in respect of the members' allowances payable by London boroughs. Such a panel ('the panel') was established and reported in 2001, 2003, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2018, 2022 and 2023. The regulations require a review of the scheme every four years as a minimum. The 2023 report is the current review. A full copy of the report is set out in Appendix 1.

Basic and special responsibility allowances

14. The principle of pegging the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances (SRA) in line with the annual local government pay settlement is already recognised in the council's Member Allowances Scheme following the council assembly decision of 21 January 2015. The Licensing Sub-Committee meeting payments and co-opted member allowance will be increased on the same basis.
15. The member allowances scheme, paragraph 38, provides that allowances will be adjusted in line with the national local government officer pay settlement and allowances for officers¹. This includes basic allowance, SRA levels, licensing payments and co-opted member allowances
16. For 2022-2023, the local government pay settlement offer was a fixed sum rather than a percentage increase. London Councils advised all London Boroughs that it had been appraised by the Head of London Regional Employers Organisation that the fixed sum equates to an uplift of 4.04% across all allowances. London Councils recommended that boroughs also use the 4.04% uplift for their member allowances for 2022-23.
17. For 2022-23, Southwark Council agreed to:
- Increase the total budget for all councillor allowances by 5.95%, equal to the staff pay settlement increase
 - Uplift the basic allowance for all councillors by 5.95%; also to be applied to licensing sub-committee payment and co-optees' annual allowance
 - Increase the total budget for special responsibility allowances (SRAs) by 5.95%
 - Use this to fund both a 2.91% increase to all SRAs, and the proposed revaluing of some SRAs (as detailed in paragraphs 27 and 28 of the 2023-24 report).
18. This scheme has been drafted on the basis that the council still wishes to pay the current basic and special responsibility allowances.

¹ Index linking is to the general settlement rather than any special provision for particular groups of staff such as the low paid.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CURRENT SCHEME

Local government pay settlement

19. The 2023-24 pay settlement increase equates to a 5.73% percent increase across all Southwark Council officer grades.
20. It is proposed that changes be agreed as follows:
- Increase the total budget for all councillor allowances by 5.73%, equal to the staff pay settlement increase.
 - Use this total budget solely to increase the basic allowance for all councillors, for an 8.09% increase in the basic allowance, and a 0% increase in the SRAs.
 - Per-meeting payments for attendance at licensing sub-committees be increased by 5.73%.
 - Independent persons and statutory co-optees' allowance be increased by 5.73%.

Basic allowance

21. A basic allowance is paid to all councillors in recognition of their commitment to attend formal meetings of the Council as well as meetings with officers and constituents. The basic allowance is intended to cover any incidental costs which may arise.
22. Each councillor will be entitled to claim a basic allowance of £13,766 per annum (this includes the 8.09% uplift), which is payable monthly via the Council's payroll.

Special responsibility allowance

23. A special responsibility allowance (SRA) is payable in addition to the basic allowance to those councillors that are given significant additional Council duties.
24. It is recommended that no changes are made to the current SRAs.
25. The revised member allowances payments for 2024-2025 (i.e. from 1 April 2024) are as follows:

Basic allowance	
All councillors	£13,766
Licensing sub-committee	
Per meeting	£148.62
Independent persons and co-optees (i.e. statutory co-optees to the education committee)	
Annual allowance (paid monthly)	£1,348

Band 1a	SRA
Vice-chair overview & scrutiny committee	£3,235
Vice chair of planning committee	£3,235
Deputy leader majority opposition	£3,235
Leader minority opposition	£3,235
Opposition whip	£3,235
Band 1b	
Community champion	£6,495
Deputy Mayor	£6,495
Chair audit and governance committee	£6,495
Band 1c	
Scrutiny commission chair	£9,753
Planning sub-committee chair	£9,753
Deputy cabinet member	£9,753
Band 2a	
Chief whip	£16,866
Leader majority opposition	£16,866
Band 2b	
Mayor	£24,025
Chair overview & scrutiny committee	£24,025
Chair planning committee	£24,025
Chair licensing committee	£24,025
Band 3	
Cabinet member	£39,218
Deputy leader	£39,218
Band 4	
Leader	£58,427

26. Our current member allowances payments (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024):

Basic allowance	
All councillors	£12,736

Licensing sub-committee	
Per meeting	£140.57

Independent persons and co-optees (i.e. statutory co-optees to the education committee)	
Annual allowance (paid monthly)	£1,275

Band 1a	SRA
Vice-chair overview & scrutiny committee	£3,235
Vice chair of planning committee	£3,235
Deputy leader majority opposition	£3,235
Leader minority opposition	£3,235
Opposition whip	£3,235
Band 1b	
Community champion	£6,495

Deputy Mayor	£6,495
Chair audit and governance committee	£6,495
Band 1c	
Scrutiny commission chair	£9,753
Planning sub-committee chair	£9,753
Deputy cabinet member	£9,753
Band 2a	
Chief whip	£16,866
Leader majority opposition	£16,866
Band 2b	
Mayor	£24,025
Chair overview & scrutiny committee	£24,025
Chair planning committee	£24,025
Chair licensing committee	£24,025
Band 3	
Cabinet member	£39,218
Deputy leader	£39,218
Band 4	
Leader	£58,427

Policy framework implications

27. This report is not considered to have direct policy implications.

Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts

28. SRAs are paid to compensate members for their special responsibilities in addition to their role as ward councillors (for which a separate basic allowance is payable). SRAs are not deemed as salary, as members are not employees of the council. This report is not considered to have direct community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts.

Climate change implications

29. There are no immediate climate change implications arising from this report.

Legal implications

30. The council is under a duty to adopt a scheme of members' allowances by virtue of section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and relevant regulations. It may only pay allowances in accordance with such a scheme. Members are reminded of the need to have regard to the guidance issued in relation to members' allowance, which is referred to in the report of the London Councils Remuneration Panel attached (Appendix 1).

31. There is a general rule that members may not usually vote on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. However, decisions relating to the member allowances scheme are an exception to this general principle, and members may vote on this issue. The monitoring officer has granted a dispensation.

Financial implications

32. The member expenditure budget makes provision for the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances. Additional costs arising from the local government pay settlement will be met from existing base budget and will not result in a budget pressure for the council.

Consultation

33. Consultation has been undertaken with the group whips.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Member Allowances Scheme, Southwark Constitution: Members Allowances Scheme June 2023.pdf (southwark.gov.uk)	Constitutional Team 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH	Constitutional Team constitutional.team@southwark.gov.uk 020 7525 7055

APPENDICES

Appendix	Title
Appendix 1	London Council Remuneration Panel Report 2023
Appendix 2	Amended Southwark's Member Allowances Scheme

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Doreen Forrester-Brown, Assistant Chief Executive - Governance and Assurance	
Report Authors	Chidilim Agada, Head of Constitutional and Member Services Virginia Wynn-Jones, Principal Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 March 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Assistant Chief Executive - Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	8 March 2024	

The Remuneration of Councillors in London 2023

Report of the Independent Panel



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Remuneration of councillors in London 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Panel on Members' Remuneration last published a report on member allowances in early 2022. In that report the Panel did not recommend substantial changes to Member allowances, it noted that the challenges facing councils and councillors appeared to be increasing and becoming more complex. Therefore, the Panel also recommended that it undertake a more detailed review in 2023.
- 1.2 For the 2023 review, the Panel has undertaken a detailed review of member allowances with the aim of providing up to date advice on appropriate levels of reward for the work of elected members in London over the next four years. The intention was to seek a wider consultation than previously, using qualitative and quantitative research to underpin its findings and recommendations. The Panel canvassed members and officers in all London boroughs through surveys, focus groups and interviews, in order to consider whether and how the role of councillors has changed in recent years and what the main issues that may have an effect on the recruitment and retention of councillors are currently. It also carried out a considerable benchmarking exercise of allowances paid in other parts of England as well as in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and undertook an in-depth review of the methodology used by Independent Remuneration Panels across the UK.
- 1.3 The research showed that basic allowances per annum in London are significantly lower than those paid in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The assessment of members' allowances in the home nations is carried out by independent bodies whereas in England, the level of allowances is determined by the local authority members themselves. It has also become clear that allowances in many boroughs are considerably lower than remuneration received by workers in London with comparative levels of responsibilities and skills. This comparative contrast in remuneration is juxtaposed against increased workloads, time pressures, accountability, and financial pressures that councillors are presently having to manage. The Panel takes the view that it is important that there is a system of support in place that recognises the vital role that elected representatives play in local government and the full scale of their responsibilities. This support includes appropriate remuneration levels.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Local authorities are required by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003¹ to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel to make recommendations on the level of the basic and special responsibility allowances. In London the regulations authorise the establishment of an independent panel (the Panel) by the Association of London Government (now London Councils)

¹ [The Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

panel to make recommendations in respect of the members' allowances payable by London boroughs. The Regulations require a review of the scheme every four years as a minimum. Whilst the Panel makes recommendations, each council determines its own remuneration scheme for its own councillors, having regard to the Panel's recommendations.

- 2.2 The Independent Panel for London Councils currently comprises Mike Cooke (Chair), Sir Rodney Brooke CBE DL and Anne Watts CBE. It reported in 2022 and at that time recommended very few changes on the basis that more time was needed for a more detailed review during 2023, given that the Panel had received feedback that the work of councillors and the demands upon them had increased significantly.

3.0 Research

- 3.1 This review has provided the Panel with an opportunity to consider the roles undertaken by councillors in London, and to examine more deeply how the demands, responsibilities and scope of duties of councillors have evolved in recent years. This review also provided the Panel with an opportunity to review the methodology used by other Independent Remuneration Panels and to carry out benchmarking with other local authorities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 3.2 The Panel has expanded on the approaches used in previous reviews. In addition to carrying out a survey of London borough Leaders to gauge their views on the operation of the existing remuneration scheme, the Panel has held a series of feedback meetings with groups of elected councillors, conducted a survey of the London branch of the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO), and held meetings with officers from the London Borough Legal Alliance (LBLA), and the South London Legal Partnership (SLLP), in order to get a more complete picture of the challenges facing London's councillors today. The Panel also commissioned Ipsos to carry out a small number of focus groups to gauge the public perception of councillors' roles, responsibilities and levels of allowances.
- 3.3 The member engagement focus groups consisted of a range of participants from the three major political parties – Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat, and included a range of members from inner and outer boroughs, and with different levels of responsibility (e.g. newly elected backbench councillors, Cabinet Members and borough Leaders).
- 3.4 The Panel is grateful both to everyone who participated in the consultation process and thank them for their contributions as well and to London Councils for its support to the review.

4.0 The crucial role of elected councillors

The role of the councillor has fundamentally changed in recent times. There is now more reliance from the public on their local council due to challenges such as the cost of living crisis, the effects of the pandemic and the resettlement of refugees. (Borough Leader)

- 4.1 Councillors in London oversee multi-million pound budgets and employ thousands of people; all are responsible for the delivery of a wide range of crucial services. The health and wellbeing of residents and communities are at the heart of the work of London boroughs who also at one end of the age spectrum are endeavoring to give children the best start in life, whilst at the other are helping to support older people to live as independently as possible. Local councils are at the heart of developing their boroughs and working with businesses to bring local economic benefits. The building of new homes and the improvement in the standards of existing houses are crucial to their work as is their local leadership on climate change.
- 4.2 A key aspect of the responsibility of councillors is managing the complex financial pressures involved in addressing increases in the demand for services with reductions in budgets. The scale of a London council's annual expenditure budget and other financial activities are in many instances comparable with those of large publicly quoted companies.

"The budgets that borough Leaders are managing are huge, as is their level of responsibility when something goes wrong. A borough Leader's role is now similar to that of a non-executive director of a large company" (Borough Leader)

- 4.3 At the same time Councillors are integral to the effectiveness of the local democratic process. As well as representing them, they stand ready to be approached by their residents to take up matters on their behalf where appropriate. The voice of democratically elected councillors in the development of the policies and strategies of their councils is absolutely essential. Councillors also play an important role in the oversight and scrutiny of services.
- 4.4 Some Councillors have additional and burdensome responsibilities, including Leaders of Councils, Elected Mayors and council portfolio holders. Some roles have specific statutory responsibilities (e.g. in the case of elected Mayors/statutory children's and adults cabinet members).
- 4.5 The needs of Londoners and of London's communities are becoming arguably more complex, given the seismic national and international changes ranging from the

global energy crisis, climate change, patterns of migration and housing shortages. The national economic challenges directly affect households and communities as well as businesses and councils themselves.

5.0 The role of Member Allowances

- 5.1 It is important to reflect on the purpose of the allowances, payments and related arrangements for councillors.
- 5.2 The Panel draws the reader's attention to the report of the 2007 Independent Commission on the Role of Local Councillors, chaired by Dame Jane Roberts which was commissioned to consider the incentives and barriers for encouraging people who are able, qualified and representative to be candidates to serve as councillors; retaining and developing them once they are elected and enabling them to secure public interest and recognition for the work they carry out for their communities.
- 5.3 The Roberts commission considered a wide range of issues but at its heart were the key questions of: 1) how best to ensure that people from a wide range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills are encouraged to serve as local councillors; and 2) how to ensure those who participate in and contribute to the democratic process should not suffer unreasonable financial disadvantage.
- 5.4 Within these broad considerations there can be no doubt that financial compensation or a system of allowances plays a crucial part in making it financially possible for local people to put themselves forward to take on the onerous responsibilities involved in being a councillor and indeed to continue to serve as one.
- 5.5 For this reason it is crucial that allowances for councillors across London are pitched at an appropriate level such that they make a major contribution in ensuring diverse and effective local representation. This 2023 review of Member allowances has aimed to take a step back and ensure that the recommended allowances are pitched such that they serve this crucial purpose.
- 5.6 We are clear that the Panel can only make recommendations and that each council must determine its own system and rates of allowances. However each council must have regard to our recommendations. We are concerned that a wide variation in the level of allowances between councils across London has evolved over the years. **Given that this year's Panel review has been a significant stocktake and that we have made clear recommendations, with a clear rationale and for the important purpose described in this section, we strongly recommend that the findings of our review and the Panel's position are adopted across London. This is at the heart of ensuring a healthy, vibrant and representative local government in the capital.**

6.0 Time commitment and demands on councillors

6.1 Fulfilling the responsibilities of councillors in the many and various roles within a council has, arguably, always been demanding. In 2022 the Panel received anecdotal feedback that the workload and the time involved had increased significantly and so in this review we wanted to explore this in more detail.

6.2 The feedback from elected members and officers was that in the view of almost all the people we spoke to workloads, demands and pressures had increased. There appear to be a number of contributory factors:

- A wide range of recent events had added additional work; some examples given were: the demands of the pandemic years and the post-pandemic recovery work; sometimes given was the level of work in the resettlement of refugees; and the work to support residents through the very significant economic challenges of recent years, including during the energy crisis but also linked to the impact of food inflation and increased risks of homelessness.
- There has been a noticeable increase in the expectation that leading councillors work in closer partnership with other public services. The Health and Care Act 2022 in particular brings an expectation that councils will work in formal partnership with NHS organisations including NHS providers and Integrated Health Boards.
- The feedback confirmed the views we were given in 2002 that public expectations of councillors has increased especially linked to the societal changes that social media has brought about. Although most of the councillors we spoke to welcomed the flexibility that now exists for increased levels of remote meetings, the downside appears to be that there are more meetings. The representations which have been made to the Panel also suggest a picture of councillors being expected to be almost instantly available, with heavy constituency case loads and often with ever more complex responsibilities for the running of the council and overseeing its services.

***“ One resident submitted a formal complaint because they had messaged me on Friday evening and I hadn’t replied to them until the following Monday morning.”
(Backbench councillor)***

As well as these issues adding complexity, they make additional time demands.

“There are now many more meetings than pre-Covid. There are also numerous social media groups councillors are expected to be involved in, case work, and other commitments. I have worked out that on average I work 54 hours a week” (Cabinet Member)

- 6.3 Members have told the Panel that it is increasingly difficult to maintain a full-time job alongside their role as councillors, and this is particularly true for Cabinet Members and Leaders. The implication of this would be that it is more likely that people who are already financially secure who can carry out these roles, which may prevent younger candidates, people with lower incomes or those with young families, from standing or taking on special responsibilities. Taking up a role in local government could also hinder councillors’ career progression in their day job, and in most cases the special responsibility allowances do not compensate for the reduced salary people receive as a result of not being able to dedicate themselves fully to their day job. The time pressures involved in the role, particularly councillors with special responsibilities can make it difficult to combine the role with a job and caring responsibilities.
- 6.4 One borough Leader told the Panel that at the 2022 election, there were so few candidates that in some wards residents did not have a choice of councillors to vote for.
- 6.5 Councillors also expressed concern that appointments to positions carrying special responsibilities could be uncertain and not in most cases for a set term. Consequently, councillors have significant concerns about giving up full-time work to undertake more senior roles in their councils.

7.0 The Basic Allowance

- 7.1 As a result of the economic climate over the last decade and ongoing financial challenges, our recent reports have made no recommendations for increasing the levels of members’ allowances other than continuing provision for annual adjustments in accordance with the annual local government pay settlement for staff agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff.
- 7.2 As part of the research for this 2023 review, the Panel carried out benchmarking of recommendations on allowances and those paid by local authorities within the UK to see how current London allowances compare.
- 7.3 From the Panel’s benchmarking research, it is evident that the previous Panel’s recommendations for the basic allowance in London, lags behind Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. This issue was identified in the last two Panel reports, however, the Panel reluctantly decided at the time that given the financial climate it would have been inappropriate to recommend a general increase in member allowances.

- 7.4 In our last report the Panel recommended that there should be a Basic Allowance paid to every councillor of £12,014. Updated for the local government staff pay awards since then, the figure is now £12,499.
- 7.5 This allowance continues to be substantially lower than the allowance paid by all local authorities in Scotland which is presently £20,099² and similarly in Wales³ where the government-appointed commission has set the basic allowance at £17,600 for members of local authorities with populations which are generally substantially lower than those of London boroughs. Furthermore, the basic allowance in Northern Ireland from 1 April 2023 is £16,394⁴ per annum. The Panel's research has established that there are some parts of England that have similar basic allowances to those currently recommended for London boroughs. However, there are other English local authorities, where the roles and responsibilities of councillors are broadly the same to those of councillors serving in London boroughs, that pay significantly more. For example, in Birmingham⁵, in 2022-23 the basic allowance was £18,876, and in Manchester⁶ it was £18,841.
- 7.6 The Panel is of the view that when taking everything into account that the rate of the basic allowance should now be addressed.
- 7.7 As part of the 2023 review, the Panel has reviewed the methodologies used by other Panels and has identified that Independent Panels across the UK use a variety of approaches for determining how to set the member allowances. The Panel has also re-examined the methodology used in calculating allowances in the original London panel report and updated it to reflect current circumstances. The original calculation in the Panel's first report in 2001 was based on a proportion of the average 'white collar worker' wage in London.
- 7.8 Although making the comparisons with Scotland, Wales, NI and other UK cities was useful in terms of gaining a comparative perspective, the Panel has reached the view that it needed to both determine a method for London and recommend a level of allowance that was achievable, bearing in mind the historic challenges for some councils in agreeing to previous recommended allowances.
- 7.9 Having looked at various options, the Panel has concluded that the most appropriate approach is to determine the basic allowance as a proportion to the remuneration of the people councillors represent and has used the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data, published by the Office for National Statistics as a basis of its calculation. The Panel has used the median wage for all London workers for this purpose. In 2022-23, this is £38,936.73 per annum. Based on a 37 hour week, and taking into account a 30% public service discount, (as has been the custom and practice) **the Panel has determined that the recommended basic allowance should be £15,960.**

² [The Local Governance \(Scotland\) Act 2004 \(Remuneration\) Amendment Regulations 2023 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

³ [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2022 to 2023 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

⁴ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/circular-ig-0323-consolidated-councillor-allowances>

⁵ [Independent Remuneration Panel Reports | Birmingham City Council](#)

⁶ [Microsoft Word - MCC IRP Final Report \(manchester.gov.uk\)](#)

7.10 The Panel considers that this allowance better reflects the high cost of living in London, than the previous recommendations.

7.11 It is the Panel's view that it is pressing that boroughs should implement these changes in 2024, as part of the contribution to recruiting and retaining a diverse range of good quality candidates to stand for office in London.

8.0 Special Responsibility Allowances

8.1 The reasons for payment of special responsibility allowances, additional to the basic allowance, should be clearly set out in local allowances schemes. Special allowances should come into play only in positions where there are significant differences in the time requirements and levels of responsibility from those generally expected of a councillor.

8.2 Categories of special allowances:

The regulations specify the following categories of responsibility for which special responsibility allowances may be paid:

- Members of the executive where the authority is operating "executive arrangements"
- Acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority
- Presiding at meetings of a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee
- Representing the authority at meetings of, or arranged by, any other body
- Membership of a committee or sub-committee of the authority which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods
- Acting as spokesperson of a political group on a committee or sub-committee of the authority
- Membership of an adoption panel
- Membership of a licensing or regulatory committee
- Such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require of the member an amount of time and effort equal to or greater than would be required of him by any one of the activities mentioned above, whether or not that activity is specified in the scheme.

8.3 The Panel's research shows that the categories of SRAs recommended by the London Panel are comparable with those recommended by Independent Panels in other cities in the UK and in Scotland and Wales.

8.4 However, the Panel's previous recommendations have not consistently been adopted within London, and the resulting situation is that whilst there is some convergence

across London boroughs on the basic allowance, there remain substantial differences in the amounts of SRAs for similar roles in boroughs.

- 8.5 Given the extent of the responsibilities of Leaders of London boroughs, the Panel's first report in 2001 recommended that their remuneration should equate to that of a Member of Parliament. Our recommendations for other special responsibility allowances were historically determined as a sliding scale (pro-rata) proportion of the remuneration package for a council Leader. Since then, the increase in the remuneration of Members of Parliament has substantially exceeded the annual local government pay increase which was tied to the special responsibility allowance for the leader of a London borough, and the current MP salary is now £86,584
- 8.6 The Panel has taken the opportunity to review this historic link, and following feedback, we sense strong support for our own view that an MP's salary is no longer an appropriate comparator to set the Leader's allowance, as the roles are substantially different and indeed almost impossible to compare.
- 8.7 We received feedback that some members believe that the Leaders of London boroughs warrant a higher remuneration than an MP, because they have greater financial responsibility and legal burdens, and especially given the differential pension arrangements. Indeed, some respondent authorities suggested that the direct responsibilities of a Leader should command the salary of a junior minister.

"An MP does not undertake an executive role (strategic leadership, management & accountability of a complex public service operationally managed by highly paid officials) and so not a comparator to a Leader or elected Mayor"

(Borough Leader)

9.0 Leader's SRA

- 9.1 This is often a full-time role, involving a high level of responsibility. It is right that it should be remunerated on a basis which compares with roles with similar levels of responsibility, while still retaining a reflection of the voluntary character of public service.
- 9.2 For the Leader's SRA, the Panel has decided that a more appropriate comparator would be the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data for Corporate Managers and Directors as the level of responsibilities most closely align to those of a borough Leader. For 2022-23, the average gross annual salary for full time workers in London within this category was £108,242. After applying a 30% public service discount (as has been the custom and practice) this would provide for a Leader's total

package of £75,773. The 2022 Panel report recommended that the Leader's SRA should be £62,090. Taking into account this figure, when combined with the new recommended basic allowance, the total package for a Leader would be £78,050. As this figure is greater than that based on the ASHE calculation, the Panel is not recommending any changes to the existing Leader's SRA at this time.

10.0 Other SRAs

10.1 The Panel has previously determined that all other SRAs are calculated as a proportion of the Leader's SRA. Since its inception, the Panel has recommended using bands rather than fixed amounts, in order to allow flexibility and recognise local variations on how the roles are performed. The Panel has decided to continue using this methodology. However, as part of the review, the Panel has benchmarked the sliding scale recommended by other Panels and used by local authorities and has adjusted the percentages historically used in order to more closely align with the average used by other local authorities outside of London. **The recommended bands and levels of allowance are attached as Annex A.**

11.0 Bridging the Gap and public perception

11.1 When considering a members' allowances scheme, boroughs are obliged to have to a report by an independent panel, but it is a matter for boroughs themselves to decide whether to adopt its recommendations.

11.2 However, in view of the evidence obtained over the past 18 months, the Panel strongly recommends that all authorities implement the recommendations in their boroughs in the next year. On average, the total annual budget for members allowances in a London Borough is between 0.4-0.5% of the council's general fund net budget. Notwithstanding this, the Panel acknowledges the challenges that increasing allowances may present to boroughs, both financially and reputationally; however, the Panel is concerned that if member allowances do not keep up with its recommendations, there is a risk that they will fall significantly further behind their comparators and that councils will consequently face even greater challenges in recruiting and retaining a good calibre of councillors in the future.

11.3 The Panel perceived that there was some concern from councillors about the public acceptability of increasing allowances. As a result the Panel sought to test the public view and therefore commissioned Ipsos to undertake qualitative research, through a number of focus groups, on the public's perception on councillors remuneration. The Ipsos research was small scale but provides indicative evidence of public views.

11.4 Ipsos held three discussion groups with a representative sample of the general public in June 2023 using a deliberative approach to enable participants to reach an informed perspective. The stimulus material included pen portraits of councillors based on information received from London Councils' members on their working hours and

levels of responsibility. The information given to participants also included typical allowances received in London, in Essex, and in Wales for councillors receiving a basic allowance and average SRAs paid to Cabinet Members, and council Leaders.

- 11.5 The research found that the Londoners in focus groups felt that allowances in London needed to increase to provide a more accurate reflection of councillors' responsibilities and hours.

"I thought at least [the Council Leader's remuneration] would be about a £100,000 plus for the amount of work that she does because she's taken on casework as well... and that's time-consuming."

When exposed to allowance comparisons in different parts of the country, participants thought the current allowances did not reflect the fact that the cost of living in London was higher than elsewhere in the country.

"Councillors' pay should take into account that living in London is more expensive, so they should immediately just be paid more in general."

In addition, they recognised that the level of allowances can have a detrimental effect on the diversity of councillors and would deter those from a lower income background from becoming councillors.

"It feels like [we're] paying them so little, it feels like there are some people who can't afford to be a councillor. And that has consequences on the democratic process"

- 11.6 Participants also suggested changes to remuneration for councillors: raising the basic allowance and increasing allowances to better reflect responsibilities and hours; and additional allowances provided to support councillors with childcare costs and saving for a pension.
- 11.7 Participants expressed surprise at the range of allowances paid across London, particularly at the cabinet member and council leader level and supported greater consistency in such remuneration levels across councils in London.
- 11.8 Although the sample of Londoners was only small, it indicates that with due briefing and deliberation there is likely to be support for the increase in allowances.
- 11.9 During the consultation process, a significant number of councillors told the Panel that they do not think that councillors should be responsible for setting their own allowances, and that this is perhaps one of the reasons why the basic allowance in London lags behind Scotland and Wales, where allowances are set by outside bodies and it is mandatory for local authorities to adopt the recommendations. The Panel is supportive of this view, but recognizes that this would need a change in legislation. The Panel intends to raise this issue with the Secretary of State.

12.0 Training and support

- 12.1 The responsibilities of councillors are substantial, extensive and complex, particularly since the Pandemic and its aftermath, which has seen a rapid increase of using digital technology, and flexible ways of working. The training and development of councillors is beyond the remit of this Panel. However, the feedback we received was that councillors require the logistical and clerical support and appropriate IT equipment which will help them carry out their roles efficiently. The Panel supports this view and recommends that boroughs undertake their own stock takes to ensure appropriate support is in place to enable members to fulfil their responsibilities.
- 12.2 Furthermore, we have heard from boroughs that councillors are experiencing increased levels of abuse on social media, and so we recommend that training in navigating the increasingly challenging world of social media is also provided.

13.0 Care Costs

- 13.1 It is important that obstacles to becoming a councillor should be removed wherever possible. Care costs could be a significant deterrent to service as a councillor. Our strong view is that in appropriate cases when they undertake their council duties, councillors should be entitled to claim an allowance for care of dependents. The dependents' carers' allowance should at least be set at the London living wage but payment should be made at a higher rate when specialist nursing skills are required or to reflect higher costs during non-standard working hours. We have had representation that the carers allowance should be payable to family members on the basis that it is preferable for family members to look after a dependent, especially in the evening but that the frequency is often such that it is unreasonable for this to be expected to be with no financial allowance.

The level of dependent carers allowance does not recognise the fact that babysitters tend to charge more for evening and weekend work. In addition, the carers allowance should be able to be claimed even if a family member was looking after the councillors' dependents" (Newly-elected Backbench Councillor)

- 13.2 The Panel recognises that allowance payments for family carers who are not members of a councillor's household would need to be designed with some careful consideration but is very sympathetic to this need and recommend that councils review their schemes to make this possible.
- 13.3 It's view is also that members' allowances schemes should allow the continuance of Special Responsibility Allowances in the case of sickness, maternity and paternity leave in the same terms that the council's employees enjoy such benefits (that is to say, they follow the same policies). To this end, London boroughs are recommended to adopt a related parental leave and sickness policy as an appendix to their allowances scheme.

13.4 The Panel has received feedback that there is a need to reform the legislation governing membership of the Cabinet/Executive and how this impacts Councillors who wish to take parental leave. Councils have a strict statutory limit of ten members of the cabinet/executive – including the Leader. Should one of those members wish to take parental leave for any significant period during their tenure as a cabinet member, and there is already a full complement of cabinet and leader up to the statutory limit they are faced with what is an entirely unfair dilemma. They either resign from the post so another councillor can be appointed or they leave their colleagues with an additional workload for their period of absence. While some Councils have sought to appoint deputy cabinet members or the like these are not proper answers to this issue as they are not cabinet members with the appropriate legal and constitutional authority. It is very easy to compare this to the position of an employee where a replacement can be appointed for the duration without prejudice to the individuals' rights to return. While self-evidently Councillors are not employees there should not be any additional hurdles to participation for any section of the population.

13.5 The Panel support the view that the legislation needs reviewing.

14.0 Travel and Subsistence allowances

14.1 The Basic Allowance should cover basic out-of-pocket expenses incurred by councillors, including intra-borough travel costs and expenses. The members' allowances scheme should, however, provide for special circumstances, such as travel after late meetings or travel by councillors with disabilities. The scheme should enable councillors to claim travel expenses when their duties take them out of their home borough, including a bicycle allowance.

15.0 Allowances for Civic Mayor or Civic Head

15.1 Many councils include the allowances for the mayor (or civic head) and deputy in their members' allowance scheme. However, these allowances do serve a rather different purpose from the 'ordinary' members' allowances, since they are intended to enable the civic heads to perform a ceremonial role. There are separate statutory provisions (ss 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act 1972) for such allowances and councils may find it convenient to use those provisions rather than to include the allowances in the members' allowance scheme.

16.0 Allowances that fall outside this scheme

16.1 Within the context of this review, the Panel has not looked at remuneration that councillors may receive for their roles on outside bodies, wholly owned companies or joint venture partnerships. However, in the interests of transparency, the Panel requests that councils consider how information on all members remuneration within their borough is made easily available to the public in the same place. The Panel recommends that where local authorities have set up companies which remunerate councillors who act as directors these allowance should be set out in the members allowances scheme.

17.0 Local discretion

- 17.1 It is for each borough to decide how to allocate their councillors between the different bands, having regard to our recommendations and how to set the specific remuneration within the band. The Panel believes these should have the merits of being easy to apply, easy to adapt, easy to explain and understand, and easy to administer.
- 17.2 The scheme should be able to be applied to different types of governance arrangements and interpreted flexibly. The Panel has received legal advice that suggests that in boroughs which operate through the Committee System, where a Committee Chair has identified responsibilities in a role profile for particular services, then in practice the duties and responsibilities of a Committee Chair are equivalent to the role of a Cabinet Member and that a similar system of allowances should be used. For example, in some boroughs which use a committee system, the Statutory Lead Member for Children's Services is the Chair of the Children and Community Services Committee. In this case, it would be reasonable to suggest that this Committee Chair should receive the SRA equivalent to that of a Cabinet Member. The Panel must emphasise that these decisions are dependent on the arrangements adopted by the authority in question and should be decided on a case by case basis.

18.0 Pensions

- 18.1 There is a widespread view amongst the councillors we spoke to in 2022 and this year that a disincentive to the recruitment and retention of councillors has been the Government's decision in 2014 to remove the right of councillors to join the local government pension scheme. This was keenly felt by those councillors the Panel heard from. The Panel notes that the rationale behind that decision was unclear and that councillors in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland continue to be entitled to a local government pension. The Panel is of the view that this inconsistency should be addressed. Although this issue is beyond the remit of the Panel, the Panel will nevertheless write a letter to the Secretary of State asking the government to look again at this important issue,

19.0 Annual uplifts

- 19.1 The Panel continues to recommend that all allowances should be updated annually in line with the percentage pay award agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services staff.
- 19.2 In some years the NJC national pay award is agreed as being in the form of a lump sum for all or the majority of staff or the rate of increase is different at different levels on the NJC pay spine. In such situations a method of deriving an appropriate increase in the Members' basic allowance (so it keeps in line with the staff pay award) is required. To achieve this the panel will have regard to any NJC guidance such as guidance on what any lump sum equates to as an average percentage pay increase, and guidance on the percentage increase to any staff allowances. The Panel will also consider the average (mean) percentage increase to the spinal column points,

but excluding any exceptional increases such as measures to rectify a low pay problem at the lowest level of the pay spine. For illustrative purposes, for April 2023 the figure was 3.88%“

20. Review of implementation

- 20.1 The Panel proposes to convene in the final quarter of 2024 to review how its recommendations have been implemented by boroughs across London and at the same time consider the most recently published ASHE data on median salaries of those working in the Greater London area, as well as any agreed NJC national pay award.

Mike Cooke

Sir Rodney Brooke CBE DL

Anne Watts CBE

December 2023

Appendix A

THE RECOMMENDED MEMBER ALLOWANCE SCHEME FOR LONDON

The Basic allowance: £15,960

Special responsibilities – beyond the basic allowance

Calculation of special allowances

The proposed amounts for each band are a percentage of the figure suggested for a council leader depending upon levels of responsibility of the roles undertaken and are explained below.

BAND ONE

The posts that the Panel envisages falling within band one, include:

- Vice chair of a service, regulatory or scrutiny committee
- Chair of sub-committee
- Leader of second or smaller opposition group
- Service spokesperson for first opposition group
- First opposition group whip (in respect of council business)
- Vice chair of council business
- Chairs, vice chairs, area committees and forums
- Cabinet assistant
- Acting as a member of a committee or sub-committee which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods
- Acting as a member of an adoption panel where membership requires attendance with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods
- Leadership of a specific major project.

Remuneration

The Panel proposes that band one special responsibility allowances should be on a sliding scale of between 5-15% per cent of the Leader's SRA.

This would be made up as follows:

Basic allowance: £15,960

Band One allowance: £3,105 - £9,314

Total: £19,065 - £25,274

BAND TWO

The Panel considers that the types of office being within band two are:

- Lead member in scrutiny arrangements, such as chair of a scrutiny panel
- Representative on key outside body
- Chair of major regulatory committee e.g. planning
- Chair of council business (civic mayor)
- Leader of principal opposition group
- Majority party chief whip (in respect of council business).

Remuneration

The Panel proposes that band two allowances should be on a sliding scale between 25-50 per cent, pro rata of the remuneration package for a council leader.

This is made up as follows:

Basic allowance £15,960

Band two allowances: £15,523 - £31,046

Total: £31,483 - £47,006

BAND THREE

The Panel sees this band as appropriate to the following posts:

- Cabinet member
- Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- Chair of the main overview or scrutiny committee
- Deputy leader of the council

Remuneration:

The Panel proposes that band three allowances should be between 60-75 per cent pro rata of the remuneration package for a council leader.

This is made up as follows:

Basic allowance: £15,960

Band three allowance: £37,255 - £46,569

Total: £53,215 - £62,529

BAND FOUR

Leader of the Council

This is often a full-time role, involving a high level of responsibility. It is right that it should be remunerated on a basis which compares with roles with similar levels of responsibility, while still retaining a reflection of the voluntary character of public service.

Remuneration:

The Panel proposes that the remuneration package for a council leader under band four of our scheme should be £78,052.

This is made up as follows:

Basic allowance: £15,960

Band four allowance: £62,092

Total: £78,052

BAND FIVE

Directly elected mayor

A directly elected mayor has a full-time job with a high level of responsibility and exercises executive responsibilities over a fixed electoral cycle. It is right that it should be remunerated on a basis which compares with similar positions in the public sector, while still retaining a reflection of the voluntary character of public service. However, the Panel believes that this post remains different to that of the strong leader with cabinet model. The directly elected mayor is directly elected by the electorate as a whole. The strong leader holds office at the pleasure of the council and can be removed by the council. The Panel believes that the distinction is paramount and this should be reflected in the salary level.

Remuneration:

The Panel proposes that a directly elected mayor should receive a remuneration of **£93,575**.

Appendix B

A Job Profile for councillors

In its previous reports, the Panel reflected on the importance of the role of elected members. The 'job profile' for councillors originally included in the Panel's 2010 report is repeated in as the Panel still considers it to be accurate and up to date.

On behalf of the community – a job profile for councillors

Purposes:

1. To participate constructively in the good governance of the area.
2. To contribute actively to the formation and scrutiny of the authority's policies, budget, strategies and service delivery.
3. To represent effectively the interests of the ward for which the councillor was elected, and deal with constituents' enquiries and representations.
4. To champion the causes which best relate to the interests and sustainability of the community and campaign for the improvement of the quality of life of the community in terms of equity, economy and environment.
5. To represent the council on an outside body, such as a charitable trust or neighbourhood association.

Key Tasks:

1. To fulfil the statutory and local determined requirements of an elected member of a local authority and the authority itself, including compliance with all relevant codes of conduct, and participation in those decisions and activities reserved to the full council (for example, setting budgets, overall priorities, strategy).
2. To participate effectively as a member of any committee or panel to which the councillor is appointed, including related responsibilities for the services falling within the committee's (or panel's) terms of reference, human resource issues, staff appointments, fees and charges, and liaison with other public bodies to promote better understanding and partnership working.
3. To participate in the activities of an outside body to which the councillor is appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations. Also, for the same purpose, to develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority's policies and practices in relation to that body and of the community's needs and aspirations in respect of that body's role and functions.
4. To participate in the scrutiny or performance review of the services of the authority, including where the authority so decides, the scrutiny of policies and budget, and their effectiveness in achieving the strategic objectives of the authority.
5. To participate, as appointed, in the area and in service-based consultative processes with the community and with other organisations.

6. To represent the authority to the community, and the community to the authority, through the various forums available.
7. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the authority's services, management arrangements, powers/duties, and constraints, and to develop good working relationships with relevant officers of the authority.
8. To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the organisations, services, activities and other factors which impact upon the community's well-being and identity.
9. To represent effectively the interests of the ward for which the councillor was elected, and deal with constituents' enquiries and representations including, where required, acting as a liaison between the constituent and the local authority and where appropriate other public service providers.
10. To contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement of the community to participate generally in the government of the area.
11. To participate in the activities of any political group of which the councillor is a member.
12. To undertake necessary training and development programmes as agreed by the authority.
13. To be accountable for his/her actions and to report regularly on them in accessible and transparent ways.

Appendix C

The independent panel members

Mike Cooke

Mike Cooke was the Chief Executive of the London Borough of Camden for seven years, where he had also been Director of Housing and Adult Social Care and HR Director. He has extensive experience of partnership working across London including as the Chief Executive Leadership Committee lead on children and chairing the London Safeguarding Children Board. Mike also has worked for seven years in financial services where he developed an expertise in remuneration.

Until November 2020 Mike had been a Non-Executive Director of the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust where he was chair of the HR Committee. Mike's current role is the Chair of the North Central London Integrated Health and Care System.

Sir Rodney Brooke CBE, DL

Sir Rodney Brooke has a long career in local government, including as chief executive of West Yorkshire County Council, Westminster City Council and the Association of Metropolitan Authorities.

He was knighted in 2007 for his contribution to public service.

Dr Anne Watts CBE

Anne Watts has an extensive career in governance, diversity and inclusion spanning commercial, public and voluntary sectors. She has held executive roles for HSBC and Business in the Community and was chair of the Appointments Commission. She has carried out reviews of Government departments and the Army. In addition she has been a member of Government Pay review bodies and Deputy Chair, University of Surrey where she chaired the Remuneration Committee and the new Vet School.

She is a non-exec of Newable (previously Greater London Enterprise) where she chairs the Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance Committee and is a non-exec of Newflex subsidiary. In addition she continues to sit on the Race and Gender Equality Leadership teams for Business in the Community.



MEMBER ALLOWANCES SCHEME

Introduction

1. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require authorities to make a scheme for payment of allowances to councillors. The regulations do not limit the amount that can be paid.
2. Before making, amending or reworking its allowance scheme, the council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an independent remuneration panel. The council is not, however, bound to adopt all or any of the panel's recommendations provided it has given them due consideration and is satisfied that it has justifiable reasons for not doing so. For this authority, the relevant independent panel is the London Councils Panel.
3. The member allowances scheme is agreed by council assembly in March of each year to set the allowances for the following municipal year.

Basic allowance

4. Each member of the council is entitled to receive the annual basic allowance of £13,766. This is paid on a monthly basis rather than as a lump sum.

Special responsibility allowance

5. The council has decided to pay special responsibility allowances (SRAs) to those members whom it considers to have special responsibilities for the discharge of the council's functions. This allowance is in addition to the basic allowance. No member may receive more than one SRA.

Where the leader of the council has appointed two members to the cabinet in a job share, the SRA is split between the members with 50% payable to each member.

The list of SRAs payable is set out below:

Band 1a	SRA
Vice-chair overview & scrutiny committee	£3,235
Vice chair of planning committee	£3,235
Deputy leader majority opposition	£3,235

Leader minority opposition	£3,235
Opposition whip	£3,235
Band 1b	
Community champion	£6,495
Deputy Mayor	£6,495
Chair audit and governance committee	£6,495
Band 1c	
Scrutiny commission chair	£9,753
Planning committee (smaller applications) chair	£9,753
Deputy cabinet member	£9,753
Band 2a	
Chief whip	£16,866
Leader majority opposition	£16,866
Band 2b	
Mayor	£24,025
Chair overview & scrutiny committee	£24,025
Chair planning committee	£24,025
Chair licensing committee	£24,025
Band 3	
Cabinet member	£39,218
Deputy leader	£39,218
Band 4	
Leader	£58,427

6. The level of allowance paid to a band 3 or band 4 member is dependent on the average number of hours per week the member is employed elsewhere, as set out below:
- less than 11 hours elsewhere, full SRA
 - 11 to 24 hours elsewhere, two thirds SRA
 - more than 24 hours elsewhere, one third SRA.

Where cabinet members are appointed in a job share, the average number of hours employed elsewhere are doubled.

Licensing committee

7. Ordinary members of a licensing sub-committee will receive a payment of £148.62 per meeting attended.

Members will be selected to attend the sub-committee in accordance with a system of rotation agreed by members of the licensing committee, which ensures all members have an equal opportunity to attend.

Where a sub-committee is cancelled, ordinary members summonsed to sub-committee meetings will be eligible for the attendance payment unless a cancellation notice is sent by 10.00am on the second working day prior to the date of the meeting, thereby giving one clear working day's notice.

Ordinary members attending the licensing committee will not be eligible for the attendance payment.

Travel allowance

8. Councillors (and co-optees receiving a special responsibility allowance) may only claim travel expenses necessarily incurred in carrying out their approved duties outside the borough, subject to the following exceptions:
- Members with mobility difficulties are able to claim the cost of travel when on council business
 - Members are able to claim for taxis home after council meetings ending after 9.00pm in summer (BST) and 7.00pm in winter (GMT)
 - It is noted that when undertaking civic duties, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor may be required to use taxis when other forms of transport are unavailable. Similarly cabinet members may on occasions need to take taxis to allow them to efficiently and effectively perform their approved duties, e.g. to enable them to attend back to back meetings.
 - Non statutory co-optees (who do not receive an allowance) can claim their travel expenses.

A full list of approved duties is set out in paragraph 27 below.

9. Members cannot reclaim expenses they have incurred due to:
- a) congestion charges, including fines or penalties
 - b) parking/clamping fines.
10. For public transport, receipts must be produced in respect of all claims. Members using their own transport may submit mileage claims. The maximum rates per mile are set out below.
11. The following is a summary of the conditions, and has been excerpted and adapted from those which apply to officers.

Car users

12. Casual car users allowances – general conditions:
- Public transport must be used on all appropriate occasions, e.g. where more economic, timely etc
 - Members should not use their own cars when there is room in one of the local authority's cars or in the car of another member making the same journey on the same business. As far as possible journeys over the same route should be arranged so as to synchronise
 - All official mileage has to be recorded
 - Members shall have included and maintain in their insurance policy a clause indemnifying the local authority against all third party claims (including those concerning passengers) arising out of the use of the vehicle on official business

- Members must ensure that the car they are travelling in has current insurance and MOT certificates and are encouraged to ensure that their car has passed emission checks:
 - For cars less than three years old, annually
 - For cars three years and above, twice yearly.
13. The national joint council reviews the rates payable to staff on an annual basis. The current rates are set out below. There are three bands of allowance according to the cubic capacity of the car: 451-999 cc; 1000-1199 cc; 1200 cc and above.

Casual Users	451-999 cc	1000-1199 cc	1200 cc and above	Fully electric
Per mile-first 8,500 miles	46.9 pence	52.2 pence	65.0 pence	65.0 pence
Per mile-after 8,500 miles	13.7 pence	14.4 pence	16.4 pence	16.4 pence

Motorcycles and mopeds

There are five bands of allowance according to the engine size of the motorcycle: the rates are set out below:

Engine Size (cc)	
Up to 150	9 pence per mile
151 – 244	14 pence per mile
245 – 500	17 pence per mile
501 – 999	23 pence per mile
1000+	27 pence per mile

Pedal cycles

A monthly cycle allowance is payable to councillors, independent and co-opted members who use their own cycles in connection with their official duties. The rate is currently £20 per month. Members must notify the proper constitutional officer of their intention to claim this allowance, as unlike other travel allowances it is not paid as an expense. Except in circumstances agreed by the proper constitutional officer members in receipt of the cycle allowance may not claim other travel allowances. Except in circumstances agreed by the proper constitutional officer members who have taken advantage of the Bikes4Work scheme are required to use their cycle for normal council business whether they claim the cycle allowance or not and will not be eligible to claim other travel allowances.

Subsistence allowance

14. Subsistence allowance may be claimed in respect of approved duties, except where food is provided, if they involve an absence from the normal place of residence exceeding four hours in total, which includes one hour travelling time.

15. Claims are subject to the following maximum, which are the same for members as they are for officers:

Breakfast	£6.05
Lunch	£8.34
Evening Meal	£10.30

16. The amount to be reimbursed in respect of approved duties is the actual amount spent subject to the maximum figures quoted above. Receipts must be produced in respect of all claims.

Child-care and dependant carers allowance scheme

17. Members may claim this allowance against any costs they incur in arranging carers to look after dependants who cannot be left by themselves by reason of age or other special needs. The allowance may only be claimed in respect of approved duties and is subject to tax and national insurance deductions at personal rates.
18. The maximum rate claimable shall be set at the level of the London living wage rate set annually by the Living Wage Foundation and calculated by the Greater London Authority. The rate shall be reviewed annually so it keeps in line with changes to the London Living Wage and be reported to the chief executive.
19. The following criteria also apply:
- payment is claimable in respect of children aged 15 or under or in respect of other dependants where there is medical or social work evidence that care is required
 - the allowance is not payable to a member of the claimant's own household
 - the carer must be 18 or over (and not a spouse or partner/co-habitee of the member or a relative living at the same address)
 - the claim shall cover the time spent at the meeting plus up to one hour for travel to and from the meeting
 - the allowance will be paid upon submission of the claim form and accompanied by relevant receipts
 - claims must be submitted within two months of the duty undertaken
 - any dispute as to entitlement and any allegation of abuse will be referred to the audit, governance and standards sub-committee for adjudication.

Co-opted members

20. The following allowances are payable to co-opted members:
- a) All statutory co-optees (i.e. statutory co-optees to the education committee) should receive an annual allowance; this is £1,348.
 - b) No statutory co-optees may receive more than one allowance under (a) above

- c) That statutory co-optees should be subject to the same travel and subsistence claim regime as councillors, i.e. not able to claim for intra borough travel and subsistence except where one of the exceptions applies
 - d) Non-statutory co-optees should be able to claim reimbursement of travelling and subsistence expenses.
21. Co-optees may, in writing to the proper constitutional officer, elect not to receive allowances.
 22. The allowance to education co-optees should be payable from the date of appointment.
 23. Co-optees allowances are subject to the same index linking as members' allowances generally.
 24. Co-optees do not receive the basic allowance.
 25. If a co-opted member does not serve for the whole of the 12 month period, or become disqualified, they will only be entitled to pro-rata payments for the period(s) during which they were actually a serving co-opted member.
 26. Both statutory and non-statutory co-opted members are entitled to claim dependant carer's allowance as set out in paragraphs 17 - 19.

Approved duties

27. For a member, an approved duty for the purpose of travel, subsistence and childcare and dependant carers allowances means:
 - a) attendance at a meeting of the council or of any committee or sub-committee of the council
 - b) attendance at a meeting of a body to which the member has been nominated by the council or of any committee or sub-committee of such a body, provided they are a member of the body concerned
 - c) attendance at any other meeting, the holding of which is authorised by the council, or a committee or sub-committee of the council or a joint committee of the council, or a sub committee of such a joint committee, provided that it is a meeting to which members of at least two political groups have been invited
 - d) attendance at a meeting of any association of authorities of which the council is a member
 - e) attendance at a meeting of the cabinet or of any of its committees
 - f) performance of any duty in connection with the discharge of a function of the authority empowering or requiring the inspection of premises
 - g) performance of any duty in connection with arrangements made by the authority for the attendance of pupils at special schools
 - h) any other duty approved by the council for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the council, or any of its committees or sub-committees

- i) any duty for the purpose of or in connection with the discharge of the functions of the cabinet
 - j) attendance at neighbourhood forums that fall within the member's ward
 - k) attendance at tenants' council and leaseholders' council
 - l) attendance at licensing or planning committees as a ward representative.
28. No allowances can be claimed in respect of political group meetings, members' surgeries or attendance at college or school governing bodies.

Entitlement to allowances

29. Allowances are paid automatically in equal monthly instalments. If a member of the council does not serve for the whole of the year, becomes disqualified or ceases to be entitled to a special responsibility allowance (SRA), they will only be entitled to payments for the proportion of the number of days served in that year. Overpayment of SRAs for continuing members will be automatically deducted from the basic allowance. Other overpayments must be repaid to the authority. If the scheme is amended to affect entitlement, any variation will be paid from an agreed date only. Retrospective payments will not be made to members who are no longer serving.

Parental Leave for Councillors

30. The following leave periods will apply:
- a) Members giving birth are entitled to up to 39 weeks maternity leave, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks if required, by notifying the monitoring officer, (subject to 30(h) – six months attendance rule).
 - b) In addition, where the birth is premature, the member is entitled to take leave during the period between the date of the birth and the due date in addition up to the 52 weeks' period. In such cases any leave taken to cover prematurity of 28 days or less shall be deducted from any extension beyond the initial period up to 52 weeks.
 - c) In exceptional circumstances, and only in cases of prematurity of 29 days or more, additional leave may be taken by agreement, and such exceptional leave shall not be deducted from the total up to 52 week entitlement.
 - d) Members shall be entitled to take maternity/adoption support leave (formerly known as paternity leave) with up to two weeks paid SRA allowance and up to 13 weeks with no SRA allowance if they are the biological father or nominated carer of their partner/spouse following the birth of their child(ren).
 - e) A member who is seeking to make Shared Parental Leave arrangements is requested to advise the Council of this intention at the earliest possible opportunity. Every effort will be made to accommodate such arrangements.

- f) Where both parents are members, leave may be shared up to a maximum of 52 weeks. Special and exceptional arrangements may be made in cases of prematurity.
- g) A member who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency shall be entitled to take up to 39 weeks adoption leave from the date of placement, with the option to extend up to 52 weeks by if required, by notifying the monitoring officer.
- h) Any member who takes maternity, shared parental or adoption leave retains their legal duty under the Local Government Act 1972 to attend a meeting of the Council within a six-month period unless Council Assembly agrees to an extended leave of absence prior to the expiration of that six-month period.
- i) Any member intending to take maternity, maternity/adoption support, shared parental or adoption leave will be responsible for ensuring that they comply with the relevant notice requirements of the Council, by notifying the monitoring officer, both in terms of the point at which the leave starts and the point at which they return.
- j) Any member taking leave should ensure that they respond to reasonable requests for information as promptly as possible, and that they keep officers and colleagues informed and updated in relation to intended dates of return and requests for extension of leave.
- k) If an election is held during the member's maternity, maternity/adoption support, shared parental or adoption leave and they are not re-elected, or decide not to stand for re-election, their basic allowance and SRA if appropriate will cease from the Monday after the election date when they would technically leave office.

Basic Allowance

- 31. All members shall continue to receive their basic allowance in full whilst on maternity, adoption or maternity/adoption support leave.

Waiving right to receive allowances

- 32. Members do not have to take their allowance(s) – if a member wishes to waive their right to receive a basic allowance, SRA, any other allowance, or part thereof, they must notify the proper constitutional officer in writing.

Claiming allowances

- 33. Claims for travel, subsistence, child-care and independent carers allowances must be submitted within two months of the duty undertaken and accompanied by relevant receipts. Claims submitted outside of the two month period may be put forward to the audit, governance and standards sub-committee for consideration.

Taxation and allowances

- 34. Allowances are not salaries but are subject to tax and national insurance as any allowance is considered as income. Any such deductions are subject to personal circumstances. Members should note that the council

is unable to deal with personal tax enquiries on their behalf and should inform their tax office of any change in circumstances.

Publication of allowances

35. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the council is required to publish details of any basic and special responsibility allowances paid to councillors for the previous financial year, along with details of the allowances scheme which applied at that time. This statutory notice also includes details of subsistence, travel and carer's allowance. In addition, the council publishes further information regarding members' expenses. Any payments to cabinet members for loss of office will also be published.

Withholding allowances

36. The audit, governance and standards sub-committee may withdraw allowances from individual members (including co-opted members) in whole or in part for non-attendance at meetings, or, for elected members only, for failure to attend required training. Withheld allowances are not repayable / recoverable.
37. Audit, governance and standards sub-committee may also consider the withdrawal of allowances for a member given approval by council assembly for a failure to attend, subject to a referral being made by council assembly.

Amendments to the allowances scheme

38. Allowances will be adjusted in line with the national local government officer pay settlement and allowances for officers¹. This includes basic allowance, SRA levels, licensing payments and co-opted member allowances.
39. Travel and subsistence allowances will be amended in line with changes to allowances for officers.
40. Dependant carer's allowance shall be set at the level of the London living wage rate set annually by the Living Wage Foundation and calculated by the Greater London Authority. The rate shall be reviewed annually so it keeps in line with changes to the London Living Wage and be reported to the chief executive.

Special leave arrangements

41. The special leave arrangement for members applies to all recipients of special responsibility allowances. Where SRAs are paid at a reduced level, that level will apply during any special leave absence. Where

¹ Index linking is to the general settlement rather than any special provision for particular groups of staff such as the low paid.

members have elected not to receive their allowance no special leave payment will be made.

42. Where a period of special leave includes the annual meeting of council assembly and the member is not reappointed to a post attracting an SRA, the special leave allowance will cease on the day following council assembly.

Maternity leave

43. The maternity leave arrangement will be for up to 6 weeks full SRA allowance, 20 weeks half SRA allowance and 13 weeks SRA unpaid (subject to 30(h) above – six months attendance rule). No additional allowance will be paid for absence beyond 26 weeks. Antenatal care is part of the normal arrangements for short term absence and is not affected by special leave arrangements.
44. Members are not eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) if they are not employed elsewhere. The council cannot pay SMP.

Adoption leave

45. The adoption leave arrangement will be for up 6 weeks on full SRA allowance, 20 weeks half SRA allowance and 13 weeks SRA unpaid. No additional allowance will be paid for absence beyond 26 weeks.

Maternity/Adoption Support Leave

46. The maternity/adoption support leave arrangement will be for two weeks paid SRA allowance and up to 13 weeks with no SRA allowance.

Sick leave

47. The sick leave arrangement will be for up to six months full allowance in any 12 months.

Other special leave

48. Normal leave arrangements and emergency situations do not affect SRAs. Extended absence e.g. service abroad in the Territorial Army or jury service to be in line with officer guidelines.

Other arrangements

49. During any period for which special leave arrangements are in place any member who is appointed to deputise for the absent member will be eligible for the full SRA payments due in the same period up to a maximum of 52 weeks. Where a substantive member has more than one position with an SRA, only one member can deputise and receive one SRA for both positions. Payment to cabinet members for loss of office will not apply to members who deputise for a cabinet member.

AMENDMENTS

ITEM 3.2: THEMED DEBATE – Southwark 2030: A proud history and a vibrant future: harnessing all of the strengths of our borough to deliver opportunity for all

(see pages 11-15 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT A

Proposed by: Councillor Rachel Bentley

Insert before paragraph 1:

1. Council assembly notes with concern:
 - a. Southwark Labour is failing to get the basics right in delivering for residents.
 - b. The recent peer review stated that the council needs to “collectively to get the basics of some aspects of service delivery right”.
 - c. Housing in Southwark has been in a protracted crisis.
 - i. The repairs service is not functioning, letting down residents and leaving vulnerable people in unacceptable conditions.
 - ii. Recent scandals relating to major works programmes, with millions overspent and unreserved apologies made to residents for a litany of mistakes, have destroyed resident trust in Southwark’s housing department and seriously damaged the reputation of the council. One in four major works have run over schedule and overspent, with overspending by more than £1m.
 - iii. Housebuilding has ground to a halt, with multiple developments being cancelled leaving residents in limbo and living on building sites for the foreseeable future.
 - d. Falling pupil numbers, caused in large part by the lack of affordable housing in Southwark, has caused a crisis for our primary schools and nurseries through which the council has wholly failed to properly support them. Multiple schools have reported an unacceptable lack of communication, openness and transparency leaving staff, parents and children in limbo.
 - e. Southwark Labour have failed to act with the urgency needed to tackle the climate emergency. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019 the council has dragged its heels, only

spending half of the £25m climate reserve in the following five years. Southwark Council needs to move faster and invest more in green travel, retrofit and emission reduction.

- f. Southwark streets are plagued with litter and flytipping, leading to vermin infestations, accessibility issues and affecting residents' pride in their communities. Southwark was the seventh most flytipped borough in London and Southwark Labour have consistently to address this issue by enforcing the powers they have at their disposal, with just 2% of reported cases of fly-tipping resulting in a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- g. The quality of customer service under Labour in Southwark is appalling and getting worse due to the trend towards centralisation and digitalisation. Residents with serious issues find themselves unable to access the services they need. Southwark needs to urgently re-localise services to ensure communities can access support they need.
- h. Despite all these issues, Southwark Labour have made the insulting decision to spend a further £148k a year on a new spin doctor role. The new 'Director of Communications and Engagement' will serve only to promote the political narrative of the Labour leadership, diverting money away from efforts to solve the very real issues people face right now.

Insert before paragraph 2. a.:

- a. Treat residents with the respect they deserve by immediately ending the ceaseless self-congratulation and acknowledging the lived experiences of people in the borough who are struggling.
- b. Stop looking to the future and instead focus on getting the basics right in order to improve the lives of residents now, not in six years' time.

Delete paragraph 2.d and replace with:

- d. Immediately allocate all resources in the Southwark 2030 fund to projects and services that will solve the issues that are affecting peoples' lives right now.

Renumber all paragraphs and sub-paragraphs accordingly.

ITEM 5.2.1: MEMBERS' MOTIONS – Back the Bakerloo Line Extension (see pages 38-39 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT B

Moved: Councillor Irina von Wiese

Seconded: Councillor Jane Salmon

Insert after 2.i

- j. That so far the councils of Southwark and Lewisham, Members of Parliament across Southwark, London Assembly Members, and the Mayor of London, have collectively failed to deliver on the Bakerloo Line Extension.
- k. That this failure has affected the viability of the construction of homes, with the UK Government being forced to step in to keep the Malt St redevelopment viable.
- l. That as of 2023, only 235 homes have been completed for social rent since 2016, an average of 30 a year. That's just 1.8% of the homes promised when the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area was designated in 2016.
- m. That pipeline figures are meaningless when multiple pipeline schemes intended to deliver social housing have been paused within both the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area (Lindley Estate), and elsewhere in the Borough. This is whilst the housing waiting list continues to climb to a record high of 17,700.
- n. That despite this, even the pipeline projects are nevertheless projected to miss the council's own target of social housing a proportion of affordable housing by twenty percentage points.
- o. That against a potential of 20,000 homes, a total delivery of just 708 houses does not represent success, and instead represents a failure to secure funding to realise the opportunity in the Old Kent Road.
- p. That the long-awaited "Bakerloo Bus" is not a sufficient replacement for the vital transport infrastructure that South London desperately needs and hasn't even come to fruition despite repeated promises.

Insert after 3.e

- f. To measure success by completed and pipeline projects as separate KPIs, with the overall impact on the housing waiting list to be the key figure to monitor.

Renumber all paragraphs and sub paragraphs accordingly

ITEM 5.2.2: MEMBERS' MOTIONS – A fair deal for housing in Southwark
(see pages 24-28 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT C

Moved: Councillor Emily Hickson

Seconded: Councillor Kath Whittam

Delete all, replace with:

1. Council Assembly notes the context that Southwark finds itself in:
 - a. In the context of a housing crisis, Southwark Council is building more council homes than any other local authority. Everyone should be able to afford somewhere they can call home. That is why we are focusing on building new council homes that Southwark residents can actually afford.
 - b. Building genuinely affordable homes is the way to tackle the housing crisis. That is why since 2014 we have built or started building over 3,000 new council homes.
 - c. The latest 'London Assembly Affordable Housing Monitor 2023' reported that there were more social rent and London affordable rent starts in Southwark than in any other London council since 2015.
 - d. The council works with external partners to ensure that social rent homes are delivered as part of every major schemes. This has led, directly, to the planning consent being granted to at least 14,985 affordable homes, including 9,623 social rent homes in Southwark since 2010.
 - e. We have a plan to deliver affordable homes for Southwark residents who do not qualify for social housing, and are working on pilots for Keyworker Homes and a Community Land Trust.
 - f. We are the largest social landlord in London, and look after 55,000 homes.
 - g. The council is always working to improve our housing stock, since 2010, we have installed 23,500 new bathrooms and kitchens.
 - h. Satisfaction with repairs is now up to 90%. Feedback from residents shows has been significant improvement in our repairs and maintenance service delivery over the past 12 months, continued implementation of our repairs service improvement

plan will ensure that this pace of progress continues as we head further into 2024.

- i. The council has created a Repair Improvement Residents Board, a panel of residents who can now get involved in making decisions about their home and estates to make improvements to our service.
 - g. One third of our residents live in privately rented homes; that is why Southwark Council introduced the Gold Standard Charter (GSC) which is a voluntary scheme that rewards landlords and managing agents who provide a professional level of service and good practice to their tenants in the private rented sector.
 - h. The council has now rolled out its Private Rented Property Licensing scheme, one of the largest in the country to protect residents in the private rented sector.
 - i. Whilst the challenges around Temporary Accommodation are significant, we have an action plan to address homelessness and rough sleeping, set out alongside our draft strategy published for Cabinet last month. Southwark has also introduced the Good Homes Standard for Temporary Accommodation and signed the London Mayor's Charter to End Rough Sleeping
 - j. We are committed to using all powers at our disposal to reduce the number of Empty Homes in the borough. The council will be extending the council tax premium in 24/25 to homes empty for one year or more, and to second homes. While there is more work to do, we are making significant progress bringing homes borough back into use and have developed a comprehensive action plan to use all the available powers to reduce the number of empty homes in the borough, in the continuing housing crises.
 - k. Last week, Southwark Council hosted the Future of Council Housing summit the first of its kind, bringing together the country's largest local authority social landlords, each managing around 20,000 council homes or more. The Summit will inform a major report, authored by respected housing policy, to be published in June. It will set out a comprehensive plan to fix a broken financial model and enable councils to play their part in addressing the national housing crisis.
2. Council Assembly further notes:
- a. What Southwark has achieved is remarkable against the backdrop of all councils facing extraordinary challenges in delivering and retaining council homes.
 - b. The UK is facing a national housing crisis; the scale of the challenge is huge. Across our country over a quarter of a million

people are homeless, with one and a half million more living in overcrowded homes. 1 in 23 children in London are living in temporary accommodation.

- c. In addition, almost one in five council leaders and chief executives in England surveyed by the Local Government Association think it is very or fairly likely that their chief finance officer will need to issue a Section 114 notice this year or next due to a lack of funding to keep key services running.
- d. Since 2010, Conservative and Liberal Democrat governments have taken political decisions, in the full knowledge it would directly impact local government and most importantly our residents.
- e. The Affordable Housing Grant was reduced by 60% in 2010 by the Coalition, making it much harder to build social rent homes without significant borrowing and private subsidy.
- f. That the increase in overcrowding and escalating need for temporary accommodation is worsened by the Benefit Cap agreed by the Coalition which makes it impossible for low-income families to access appropriate housing in the private rented sector in Southwark.
- g. The Conservatives, with their former Prime Minister Liz Truss, crashed the economy with the disastrous mini budget, and as a result, house building across London and the country has stalled
- h. There has been a significant reduction of income into the HRA when taking inflation into account as a result of 1% rent cap for 4 years, and then a 7% rent cap. This was right decision for our tenants during a cost-of-living crisis, but without central government financial support local councils are bearing this cost.
- i. Significant new spending pressure at approx. £100 million to works from Fire and Building Safety Acts on 180 high-rise buildings, again lacking any funding support from the Government
- j. The impact of the rent cap and the Building Safety Act costs alone will result in £40 million additional cost for Southwark Council in 2024/25.
- k. In contrast to this, in government Labour delivered a huge upgrade to homes social rent homes – through the Decent Homes Programme, over a million homes were improved between 2001 and 2010.including 810,000 new kitchens, 610,000 new bathrooms and 1,140,000 new central heating systems.

- I. Labour in government also presided over a halving in homelessness and all but eliminated rough sleeping
3. Council Assembly recognises:
 - a. It was right that residents of Devon Mansions and Canada Estate received an unreserved apology, due to the frustration and stress caused during recent major works, and the poor communications they received throughout the project. Labour ward councillors pushed hard for residents to be heard, referring these cases to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - b. A Task and Finish Group has been established, internal and external audits will be carried out, to put right what is wrong. This root and branch examination of what went wrong here will lead to changes in the Housing Team and how it operates, to ensure this situation never reoccurs.
 - c. The Council is committed to re-establishing trust with residents, dramatically improving communication with residents and to learn from these events. Residents' voices will be heard in the investigation process and residents are helping to appoint an independent surveyor.
 - d. It has been incredibly disappointing to have to temporarily pause the new homes schemes on four sites: Sceaux Gardens, Bells Gardens, Lindley Estate and Styles House. In addition, that the Council is committed to working with residents to bring forward short-term solutions for these sites, as well as viable plans for the delivery of new homes.
4. Council Assembly resolves to:
 - a. Make improving the condition of our council homes the first priority for the council, continuing to improve repairs and bring forward a new Safe, Dry, Warm programme
 - b. Continue to build more council homes, bringing forward plans to deliver the next round of our new council homes programme, including viable schemes on sites which are currently 'paused'.
 - c. Continue to use our planning policy to secure new affordable and social homes.
 - d. Campaign for Bakerloo Line Extension which would directly support an additional 10,500 homes in Southwark.
 - e. Deliver on building safety and fire safety work, ensure that our homes are safe and that our residents feel safe in their homes.

- f. Imbed the learning from Devon Mansions and Canada Estates, committing to re-establishing trust with residents and dramatically improving communication with residents
- g. Roll out more protections and support for private renters, extending our licensing scheme so landlords have to meet higher standards and funding free advice services so support is there if your landlord is acting unfairly. Campaign for further powers to regulate the sector including three-year tenancies and powers to control rents.
- h. Support homeowners affected by the Cladding Crisis, campaigning for remedial costs to be paid for by developers and will do everything within our power to fight for a fair deal so that leaseholders are not left bearing these costs.
- i. We will take a zero tolerance approach to rogue landlords and empty homes, using all the powers available to the council to tackle the worst offenders and campaigning for the resources and powers to bring more long-term empty homes back into use.
- j. Following the general election work with the government to Get Britain building again by reforming planning laws to kick-start 1.5 million new homes, transport, clean energy, and new industries in all parts of the country. Because cheaper bills, the chance to own your own home, and modern infrastructure are key to growth and the foundations of security.
- k. Call on the government to invest supporting local authorities in making future improvements to council homes, and use the finding of the Council House 20 report that will be produced later this year.

ITEM 5.2.4: MEMBERS' MOTIONS – Protecting play spaces in Southwark
(see pages 30-32 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT D

Moved: Councillor Joseph Vambe

Seconded: Councillor Esme Hicks

Delete paragraph 1. f and **replace** with:

- f. The Southwark Plan 2022 policies P13-15 and P57 and London Plan 2021 policies D6, H16 and S4 set out the council's requirements in respect of design and open space. These policies are relevant for amenity space, play space and open space. Open spaces are an essential resource for residents and visitors and all development should ensure that there is sufficient amenity and play space in accordance with GLA guidance. Where the council accepts that the policy requirements cannot be met fully onsite, a financial S106 planning obligation is required in order to ensure that the impact of development is mitigated.

Delete paragraph 2 and **replace** with:

2. Council assembly further notes:
- a. The council has just completed an initial phase of an audit of all play provision in Southwark. This has identified 200 play sites, placing Southwark and one of the best provided boroughs for play in London.
- b. In recent years the council has made significant investment into play spaces, investing;
- I. £1.2 million at St Marys Churchyard Playground and Plaza,
 - II. £1.1 million at Camberwell Green Playground,
 - III. £680,000 at Nelson Square Playground and MUGA,
 - IV. £600,000 at Pullens Gardens Playground and park,
 - V. £500,000 at Southwark Park Playground,
 - VI. £4 million at Peckham Rye Park Playground and new playroom building,
 - VII. £1.5 million at Mint Street Adventure Playground and building,
 - VIII. £700,000 at Leyton Square Playground,
 - IX. £3.3 million at Burgess Park West Playground and park expansion and
 - X. £1.5 million at Dickens Square Park Playground and park expansion.

- c. Many playground improvements are instigated by active ward councillors who have access to Cleaner, Greener Safer funding and local CIL. They can and do use this money to prioritise the improvement of play spaces within their ward. Initial development and assessment studies funded by CSG can then ensure that well designed schemes can be consulted on with the local community and additional a or external funding found to deliver these improvements.
- d. Council recognises and is grateful for the efforts made by active ward councillors to improve play spaces in our local parks and housing estates. This can be done with initial funding from the Cleaner, Greener, Safer fund and local CIL.
- e. This is also done, by working with local community partners to support provision of better quality play space; in locations, the Council does not direct responsibility for. An example of this can be seen at Dog Kennel Hill Adventure Playground in Champion Hill ward.

Delete paragraph 3, and **replace** with:

- 3. Council assembly resolves to:
 - a. Complete the next phase on the 2024 Play Audit, which will include a detailed design and costing plan for priority play areas, and consultation with key stakeholders.
 - b. Continue to invest in our 200+ play spaces in parks and on estates.
 - c. Based on information highlighted by the Play Audit, work to secure funding for inclusive play spaces and equipment.
 - d. Based on information highlighted by the Play Audit, work to secure the funding for phase 1 for further playground investment, to encompass a range of possible actions from remedial improvements and better maintenance, additional and more inclusive accessible facilities or the full refurbishment of a site.
 - e. Establish clear prioritisation and delivery programme for further phases of playground investment and improvement.

ITEM 5.2.5: MEMBERS' MOTIONS – Improving inclusivity for people with dyslexia (see pages 32-33 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT E

Moved: Councillor Darren Merrill

Seconded: Councillor Stephanie Cryan

Delete all and **replace** with:

1. Council assembly notes:
 - a. The council has a duty to ensure all services and materials are accessible to everyone.
 - b. Dyslexia is a protected characteristic covered by the Equality Act 2010.
 - c. This year the council launched a new branding and visual identity that includes a guide to be used in all council documents on 'How to write in plain English' and 'Write accessible content for our website and intranet'
 - d. These contain information to ensure that all written documents and webpages are accessible to everyone.
 - e. The 'How to write in plain English guide' contains guidance on layout, headings and structure and writing style that reflect the much of the guidance within the Dyslexia friendly style guide.
 - f. Both the Dyslexia friendly style guide and Southwark's house style guide recommends:
 - I. The use of Arial typeface, no smaller than font size 12.
 - II. Avoiding the use of underlining and italics.
 - III. Avoiding the use of all capital letters and uppercase letters for continuous text.
 - IV. Using headings and styles to create consistent structure to help people navigate through your content
 - V. For headings, use a font size that is at least 20% larger than the normal text.
 - VI. Add extra space around headings and between paragraphs.
 - VII. Ensure hyperlinks look different from headings and normal text.
 - VIII. Using single colour backgrounds, avoiding background patterns or pictures and distracting surrounds.
 - IX. Using sufficient contrast levels between background and text.
 - X. Using dark coloured text on a light (not white) background.

- XI. Left align text, without justification.
 - XII. Being concise, avoiding using long, dense paragraphs
 - XIII. Using simple clear language and every day words.
 - XIV. Using bullet points and numbering rather than continuous prose.
 - XV. Avoiding abbreviations where possible
- g. The new house branding and visual identity does not currently offer specific guidance on:
- I. Inter-character spacing and inter-word spacing
 - II. The use of alternatives to white paper
 - III. The use of matt paper rather than gloss
 - IV. Using images to support text.
 - V. Giving instructions clearly
 - VI. Avoid double negatives
 - VII. Providing a glossary of abbreviations and jargon.
2. Council assembly resolves to:
- a. Implement the full roll out and adoption of the new style guide, continuing to make all staff aware of the guides
 - b. Ask officers to explore how we could incorporate guidance on the areas within the Dyslexia style guide that are not currently referenced within the new visual identity guides
 - c. Regularly review documents and webpages for internal and external use, to make sure that where possible, the house guide is being followed and that all written documents and webpages are accessible to everyone on the understanding that documents may need to tailored to be accessible to a specific audience.

ITEM 6.1: Proposed constitutional updates 2023-24: Council assembly procedure rules (see pages 34-74 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT F

Moved: Councillor Graham Neale

Seconded: Councillor Adam Hood

In report: **delete** paragraph 8.d

In Appendix 1:

CAPR 2.2: **Reorder** items l, m, and n to before items h, i, and j, such that "Time for Members to bring issues to assembly" is before "Themed Debates"

CAPR 2.7.2: **delete** "one hour", and replace with "30 minutes"

Delete CAPR 2.10.3

Renumber accordingly.

ITEM 6.3: Adjustment of member allowances in line with the national local government officer pay settlement and Member Allowances Scheme 2024-2025 (see pages 141-171 of the main agenda)

AMENDMENT G

Moved: Councillor Emily Tester

Seconded: Councillor Maria Linforth-Hall

Delete paragraph 24 and **replace** with:

24. It is recommended that the following changes are made to the current SRAs:

- Regrade the community champion role to 1a (currently 1b)
- Cease provision of SRA for vice-chair of planning.
- Cease provision of SRAs to deputy cabinet members.
- Regrade chair of overview, scrutiny chair of planning committee and chair of licensing committee to 1b (currently 2b)
- Regrade scrutiny commission chair roles to 1a (currently 1c)

The above changes amount to a total saving of £108,681 in the SRA budget compared to 2022/23 spend.

Insert after section 24:

25. Introduce a new cap on total SRA budget paid for cabinet member positions of £156,872 – equivalent to 3 full-time cabinet position SRAs and one deputy leader SRA in 2024/25 scheme.
26. Changes outlined in sections 24 and 25 amount to a saving of £304,771 per year.
27. Require all members in receipt of an SRA to provide an annual report on their work relating to their role for which they receive an SRA in order to improve transparency and ensure Southwark residents are getting value for money.

Delete paragraph 25 and **replace** with:

28. The revised member allowances payments for 2023-2024 (i.e. from 1 April 2023) are as follows:

Basic Allowance	
All councillors	£13,766
Licensing sub-committee	
Per meeting	£148.62
Independent persons and co-optees (i.e. statutory co-optees to the education committee)	
Annual allowance (paid monthly)	£1,348
Band 1a	SRA
Vice-chair overview and scrutiny	£3,235
Chair audit & governance committee	£3,235
Deputy leader majority opposition	£3,235
Leader minority opposition	£3,235
Opposition whip	£3,235
Scrutiny commission chair	£3,235
Planning sub-committee chair	£3,235
Community champion	£3,235
Band 1b	SRA
Deputy Mayor	£6,495
Chair planning committee	£6,495
Chair licensing committee	£6,495
Chair overview and scrutiny	£6,495
Band 2a	SRA
Chief Whip	£16,866
Leader majority opposition	£16,866
Band 2b	SRA
Mayor	£24,045
Band 3	SRA
Cabinet member	£39,218
Deputy leader	£39,218
Band 4	SRA
Leader	£58,427

Renumber all paragraphs and sub-paragraphs accordingly.

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MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023/24**

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