

Cheltenham Borough Council

Council – 13 October 2025

Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Accountable member:

Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel, Graham Russell

Accountable officer:

Director of Governance, Housing and Communities (Monitoring Officer), Claire Hughes

Ward(s) affected:

Not applicable

Key Decision: No

Executive summary:

The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) met on the 22 September 2025 and reviewed the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee. They also considered the allowances for co-optees on Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee.

The Council is now required to consider the recommendations of the IRP. If the Council rejects the recommendation, the status quo will prevail.

IRP Recommendations:

- 1. That the Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee be awarded a Special Responsibility Allowance of £5,363, to be backdated to the 1 October 2025.**
- 2. That the Vice Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee be awarded a Special Responsibility Allowance of £1,823, to be backdated to the 1 October 2025.**

3. That the allowances for co-optees/independent persons are noted.

1. Implications

1.1 Financial, Property and Asset implications

The financial implications of the increases in member allowances will be included in the revised budget proposals for 2025/26. There are no property implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Signed off by: Jon Whitlock, Head Of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)

1.2 Legal implications

When setting its Members' Allowances levels, the Council is required, under Regulation 19 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, to have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel that is established for the purpose of reviewing and providing advice on the council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

Signed off by: One Legal – legalservices@onelegal.org.uk

1.3 Environmental and climate change implications

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

Signed off by: Maizy McCann, Climate Officer, maizy.mccann@cheltenham.gov.uk

1.4 Corporate Plan Priorities

This report contributes to the following Corporate Plan Priorities: Securing our future

- Reducing inequalities, supporting better outcomes
- Taking care of your money

1.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

Please see the equality impact screening assessment in Appendix 2.

2 Background

Cabinet Housing Committee Appointments

- 2.1 Following the [Cabinet decision in October 2023](#) to wind-up Cheltenham Borough Homes and to re-integrate housing services under Cheltenham Borough Council, Cabinet approved the creation of a new governance structure on the 11 June 2024 including the establishment of a Cabinet Housing Committee.
- 2.2 The new structure established effective and robust governance and set a framework that will help to facilitate and create ways in which our residents can play an essential part in helping to shape CBC's housing service. In addition, it provides the mechanism by which elected members can provide strong governance and understanding of our housing services and facilitates a link between the council and its tenants and leaseholders. The Committee has co-opted two tenant representatives and one leaseholder representative.
- 2.3 The Cabinet Housing Committee met for the first time on the 25 September 2024 and appointed the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 2.4 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) are paid in addition to the basic allowance received by all Members to those Members who hold positions with significant responsibilities over and above the general duties of a councillor, such as chairing of meetings.
- 2.5 As this was a newly developing committee working within a changing regulatory landscape, the IRP set the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chair and Vice Chair in line with that paid to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (£4497 and £1563 respectively). Recognising that the workload may differ from what was anticipated, the IRP recommended that this be reviewed after 12 months of operational experience.
- 2.6 At its meeting on 22 September, the IRP invited the Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee to provide deeper insight into the role, having been active for a year, and used the opportunity to assess the scope of responsibilities, required knowledge and time commitment associated with the position.
- 2.7 In recognition of this, and after careful consideration, the IRP recommended that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee should be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance on par with the amount paid to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Planning and Licensing Committees, namely £5363 and £1823 respectively, to be backdated to 01 October 2025.

Independent Person/Co-optee Appointments

2.8 In June 2025, the council advertised and subsequently appointed independent persons/co-optees to the Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee (ACG) and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S). A nominal annual allowance of £397 is paid for the independent role on ACG, and £250 for the role on O&S. These amounts align with the allowances previously granted to Independent Members of the Standards Committee and members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, respectively.

2.9 On further reflection, given the significant expertise required in financial management, audit, risk oversight, and governance for the ACG co-optee, it is now proposed that the annual allowance for that role should be increased from £397 to £500. This adjustment brings the payment in line with those offered to co-optees serving on equivalent committees in neighbouring authorities.

2.10 In light of the council's approach to nominal allowances for co-optees, it is also felt appropriate to consider the contributions of tenant and leaseholder representatives on the Cabinet Housing Committee. A nominal annual allowance of £250 is proposed for these representatives.

3 Reasons for recommendations

3.1 The proposed changes to all Member and co-optee allowances are outlined in Appendix iv.

3.2 The recommendations proposed are considered to establish a consistent framework for awarding allowances that appropriately recognises individuals who dedicate their time to fulfilling the functions of the authority, as well as any specialist knowledge required in undertaking their roles. The approach ensures fairness, transparency, and parity across all roles, reinforcing the value placed on voluntary and co-opted contributions.

4 Alternative options considered

4.1 Consideration was given to maintaining the current Special Responsibility Allowance for Cabinet Housing Committee. However, it was felt that the role of Chair and Vice Chair of Cabinet Housing Committee more closely aligned with that of Chair and Vice Chair of regulatory committees.

5 Consultation and feedback

5.1 Director of Governance, Housing and Communities, Finance Officers

6 Key risks

6.1 Key risks are identified in the risk register attached at Appendix i.

Report author:

Bev Thomas, Democratic Services Team Leader, bev.thomas@cheltenham.gov.uk

Appendices:

- i. Risk Assessment
- ii. Equality Impact Assessment – Screening –
- iii. Role Profile – Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee
- iv. Proposed changes to Member Allowances

Background information:

[Council – 16 December 2024 -Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel \(IRP\) regarding Members' Scheme of Allowances](#)

[Council – 11 December 2023 – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel \(IRP\) regarding Members' Scheme of Allowances](#)

[Cabinet – 11 June 2024 – Housing Transition Governance Arrangements](#)

Appendix i: Risk Assessment

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
1	If some provision is not made for increasing the basic allowance and SRAs then new councillors may not be attracted to stand for the role or existing members may step down.	Chief Exec	3	2	6	Reduce	The views of existing Councillors should continue to be fed back to the IRP and they should be made aware of any difficulties in attracting future councillors	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	Ongoing
2	If Members Allowances are increased there is a risk that public perception will be that councillors are receiving an increase during financially challenging times.	Chief Exec	2	2	4	Accept	Recent increases in basic and special responsibility allowances have been based on the average mean officer salary increase, weighted by full time equivalent and as detailed in the report. Members can forgo any element of their allowance should they wish to do so.	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	n/a
	If the council does not have a governance structure that is fit for	Director of Governance, Housing and	4	4	16	Reduce	Review the structure after 12 months of	Director of Governance, Housing and	July 2025

Risk ref	Risk description	Risk owner	Impact score (1-5)	Likelihood score (1-5)	Initial raw risk score (1 - 25)	Risk response	Controls / Mitigating actions	Control / Action owner	Deadline for controls/ actions
3	purpose, then it may not fulfil its statutory requirements in relation to the Housing Regulations	Communities					operation	Communities	
4	If the council does not have a governance structure that is fit for purpose then it may result in an inability to identify areas of failure and areas of improvement	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	4	4	16	Reduce	Review the structure after 12 months of operation	Director of Governance, Housing and Communities	July 2025

Appendix ii: Equality Impact Assessment (Screening)

1. Identify the policy, project, function or service change

a. Person responsible for this Equality Impact Assessment

Officer responsible: Bev Thomas	Service Area: Democratic Services
Title: Democracy Officer	Date of assessment: 22/09/2025
Signature: <i>B Thomas</i>	

b. Is this a policy, function, strategy, service change or project?

Function

If other, please specify:

c. Name of the policy, function, strategy, service change or project

Review of Member's Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee.

Is this new or existing?

Is changing

Please specify reason for change or development of policy, function, strategy, service change or project

The Independent Remuneration Panel have reviewed the allowance for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Cabinet Housing Committee after one year in operation.

d. What are the aims, objectives and intended outcomes and who is likely to benefit from it?

Aims: To ensure that councillor roles continue to attract and retain suitable candidates and provide effective governance.

Objectives: To ensure that councillor roles continue to attract and retain suitable candidates and provide effective governance.

Outcomes: To ensure that councillor roles continue to attract and retain suitable candidates and provide effective governance.

Benefits:	Ensures that councillor roles continue to attract and retain suitable candidates to provide effective governance.

e. What are the expected impacts?	
Are there any aspects, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could have an impact on the lives of people, including employees and customers.	Yes
Do you expect the impacts to be positive or negative?	Positive
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Increase in allowance payments have a positive impact on councillors.	

If your answer to question e identified potential positive or negative impacts, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

f. Identify next steps as appropriate	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment	n/a
Completion date for Stage Two assessment	n/a

Appendix iii: Cabinet Housing Committee Chair Role Profile

Role Profile:	Chair of Housing Cabinet Committee
Responsible to:	Cheltenham Borough Council and the local people
Role purpose:	To ensure that the housing regulatory responsibilities of the Council are undertaken in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

Main Duties and Responsibilities – *in addition to those duties of all elected members*

1. To chair meetings of the Housing Cabinet Committee in accordance with the relevant terms of reference and the Council's Standing Orders and Constitution.
2. To consider the submission of late items and to determine whether or not these are sufficiently urgent to be considered by the Committee.
3. To arrange proper consideration of the issues presented to the Committee and ensure that it has all the necessary information before it to make informed decisions.
4. To refer matters to cabinet for decision or action as required
5. To represent tenants and leaseholders and ensure that they live in safe, high quality homes
6. To represent the Council during inspections from the Regulator of Social Housing
7. To maintain awareness of national and local issues and regulations relating to Housing.
8. To liaise with officers as to the training and development requirements for committee members.
9. To lead the Committee in its role in reviewing, assessing and understanding the council's management of its housing stock, including property compliance and health and safety
10. To lead the Committee in its role in monitoring performance and delivery of the consumer standard including the new tenancy satisfaction measures.
11. To lead the Committee in its consideration of complaints data
12. To provide strong and effective connectivity between the Council and the Tenant and Leaseholder Panels

Appendix iv: PROPOSED CHANGES TO MEMBERS ALLOWANCES (highlighted and with effect from 1 October 2025)

ROLE	ALLOWANCES
Councillor – Basic Allowance	6,844
Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)	
Leader	21,789
Deputy Leader	19,307
Cabinet Member	18,388
Chair of Planning Committee	5,363
Vice-Chair of Planning Committee	1,823
Chair of Licensing Committee	5,363
Vice-Chair of Licensing Committee	1,823
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	4,597
Vice-Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	1,563
** Proposed increase in allowance : Chair of Cabinet Housing Committee	5,363 (currently 4,597)
** Proposed increase in allowance : Vice-Chair of Cabinet Housing Committee	1,823 (currently 1,563)
Chair of Audit, Compliance and Governance Committee (now incorporates Standards)	1,839
Chair of Appointments and Remuneration Committee	409
Group Leaders	817

ROLE	ALLOWANCES
Mayor (Chair of Council)	613
Mayor (Duties of Civic Head)	8,173
Deputy Mayor	1,587
Independent Remuneration Panel Members	250
** Proposed increase in Allowance -Independent Members of Audit, Compliance and Governance (including Standards)	500 (currently 397)
Co-opted Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	250
** Proposed New Allowance - Tenant, Leaseholder and shared ownership representatives on Cabinet Housing Committe	250