

~~~~~

**The report of the Parish Remuneration Panel appointed to  
review the allowances paid to members of parish councils  
within the Borough of Guildford**

~~~~~

November 2019

## INTRODUCTION

1. Part 5 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations") as amended by The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2004, make provision for the establishment by Guildford Borough Council, as the responsible authority, of a Parish Remuneration Panel whose function is to produce a report in relation to the members of the authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations as to:
  - (a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to elected members of such authorities;
  - (b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such authorities, elected or otherwise;
  - (c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the chairman of any such authority or to all of its members;
  - (d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the chairman and the other members of any such authority, the allowance payable to the chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members and, if so, the higher amount so payable; and
  - (e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

Note: The 2003 Regulations make no provision for a parish council to pay any of its members a dependants' carers' allowance.

2. Guildford Borough Council ratified the appointment of the following members in respect of its Independent Remuneration Panel and who, by virtue of the 2003 Regulations, were also appointed as members of the Parish Remuneration Panel:

Mark Palmer (Chair)  
Vivienne Cameron  
Dennis Frost

## BACKGROUND

3. At present, parish councils may pay their chair an allowance which it thinks reasonable for the purpose of meeting the expenses of that office under Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (a "Section 15 Allowance"). The 2003 Regulations do *not* supersede these provisions. The 2003 Regulations removed the option of parish councils paying their councillors a financial loss allowance under Section 173 of the Local Government Act 1972. Other than the Section 15 Allowance for the chair, parish councils may only pay a parish basic allowance or parish travel and subsistence allowance having had regard to the recommendations of the Parish Remuneration Panel contained in this report.

4. We surveyed each of the 23 parish councils in Guildford Borough and the questionnaires were sent to each parish clerk, copies of which are attached as **Appendix 1**.

## **RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

5. Overall, 14 parish councils (61 per cent) responded to the questionnaire. We found that 3 parish councils currently paid their respective chair a Section 15 Allowance. The value of that allowance ranged from £300 up to £1000 per annum. A summary of the responses received is attached as **Appendix 2**.
6. Of the parish councils which responded to the questionnaire none expressed a wish for the Panel to make a recommendation in respect of a parish basic allowance, as envisaged by the 2003 Regulations. Only one council wished to pay an allowance to their chair.
7. Four councils expressed a wish that consideration be given by the Panel to recommending appropriate rates of parish travelling and subsistence allowance, or that such an allowance might be appropriate.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Parish Basic Allowance**

8. From the evidence obtained we do not believe that the workload or time commitments of either a parish councillor or a parish chair are sufficiently onerous to warrant payment of a parish basic allowance. We consider that this view reflects the general opinion and feeling of the local parish councils that their councillors' role is primarily and essentially voluntary.
9. Moreover, any parish council wishing to remunerate its chair by way of meeting the expenses of the office of chairman may legitimately do this via the Section 15 Allowance.
10. **WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that no parish basic allowance be payable by any of the parish councils in the Borough of Guildford to their members.**

### **Parish Travelling and Subsistence Allowance**

11. The 2003 Regulations provide that a parish council may pay to its members a parish travelling and subsistence allowance (which may include provision for the payment of an allowance for those members who travel by bicycle or other non-motorised transport); and whilst undertaking one or more of the following:
  - (i) attending a meeting:
    - of the authority or a committee or sub-committee of the authority
    - of some other body (including a committee or sub-committee of such body) to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
    - of a local authority association of which the authority is a memberor

- (ii) duties undertaken on behalf of the authority:
- in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened
  - in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises
- or

- (iii) any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

12. We consider that parish councils should be given the opportunity to offer to their councillors a parish travelling and subsistence allowance to recompense them for their expenses incurred in the course of their duties as parish councillors.
13. In our recommendations to Guildford Borough Council in relation to travelling and subsistence allowances for Borough Councillors, we suggested that the amounts payable to councillors in respect of travelling and subsistence allowance should be the same amounts which are payable to officers of the Council for travelling and subsistence undertaken in the course of their duties. These amounts are unchanged from the IRP's previous report and recommendations (in November 2015).
14. **On this basis WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the parish travel and subsistence allowances set out below, which are based on those currently recommended for adoption by Guildford Borough Council, be payable by the parish councils within the Guildford Borough area to their respective parish councillors, whether they be elected or otherwise, in respect of the duties referred to in paragraph 11 above.**

**Public Transport** – In respect of any approved duties, Councillors and co-opted members are reimbursed the cost of second class or any available cheap rate travel using public transport on production of a valid ticket.

**Motor Mileage Allowance:**

Cars: 45p per mile

Motor cycles: 24p per mile

**Cycle Allowance:** 22p per mile

**Day Subsistence Allowance**

- |                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| (i) Breakfast allowance:     | £6.88  |
| (ii) Lunch allowance:        | £9.50  |
| (iii) Tea allowance:         | £3.76  |
| (iv) Evening Meal allowance: | £11.76 |

**Overnight Subsistence Allowance**

- (i) In London: £102
- (ii) Elsewhere: £89

Signed:.....  
Mark Palmer (Chair)

Signed:.....  
Vivienne Cameron

Signed:.....  
Dennis Frost

**PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL  
PARISH COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE (1)**

**RETURN FOR .....PARISH COUNCIL**

1. Does the parish council currently pay an allowance to the Chairman in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (i.e. such reasonable allowance as the parish council thinks appropriate for the purpose of enabling the Chairman to meet the expenses of his office) and, if so, what is the level?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Does the parish council wish to consider paying the Chairman a basic allowance for time spent on that office under an allowances scheme made in accordance with The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003?

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Does the parish council wish to consider paying *elected* parish councillors a basic allowance under an allowances scheme made in accordance with the 2003 regulations to cover (a) time spent as a councillor and (b) expenses incurred?

.....  
.....  
.....

4. Does the parish council wish to consider paying travelling and subsistence allowance to parish councillors (whether elected or otherwise) under a scheme made in accordance with the 2003 regulations?

.....  
.....  
.....

5. How often does the parish council and (if relevant) its committees and sub-committees meet?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE BY NO LATER THAN -  
MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2019 TO:**

Carrie Anderson  
Democratic Services  
Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead  
GUILDFORD Surrey GU2 4BB

**PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL  
PARISH COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE (2)**

RETURN FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR.....  
REPRESENTING.....PARISH COUNCIL

**1. MEETINGS**

Parish Council/ Committee	Capacity <i>(e.g. Chairman)</i>	Average time spent each month	
		Preparing for Meetings	Attending Meetings

**2. CONSTITUENCY WORK**

Please state the approximate amount of time spent each month dealing with constituents

**3. COSTS**

Please state the approximate monthly costs involved in being a Parish Councillor e.g. phone costs, travelling etc.

**4. ANY OTHER COMMENTS** (which you feel may be of assistance to the Panel)

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE BY NO LATER THAN MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2019 TO:**

Carrie Anderson  
Democratic Services  
Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead  
GUILDFORD Surrey GU2 4BB

## APPENDIX 2

Parish Council	Presently paying (s.15 LGA 1972) Chairman Allowance	To pay a chair basic allowance in the future	To pay a basic allowance for all parish councillors in the future	To pay councillors Travel & Subsistence allowance in the future	Frequency of meetings
Albury	No	No	No	No	Main Council once a month except in August. Sub committees at various times throughout the year
Arlington					
Ash	No	No	No	No	Full Council meets second Monday of every month (but not in August) Amenities, Finance and Administration Committee meets fourth Monday of every month (but not in August or December) Planning Committee meets every second and fourth Monday of each month (or the Tuesday on a bank holiday)
Compton	Not that I am aware of	No	Not as far as I am concerned	Not as far as I am concerned	Full Council Monthly, except August. Planning, three weekly except when statutory holidays coincide. Other committees when necessary
East Clandon					
East Horsley	No	No	No	No	Parish Council every 6 weeks, Planning Committee every 2 weeks, others as required
Effingham					
Normandy	No	No	No	No	Every others week except in August and December when only one meeting is held
Ockham					
Pirbright					
Puttenham	No	No	No	Yes	6 times per annum
Ripley					
Seale & Sands	Yes, £500 p.a		No	Yes	Monthly (9 months in the year)
Send	No	No	No	YES – we pay travelling expenses in line with the rate recommended by NALC and parking allowance	Council meetings are monthly (except August and December) and Planning committee is twice a month
St Martha	No	No	No	No	Six Ordinary meetings per year, plus approx. 6 x Extra-Ordinary meetings
Shackleford	No	YES – we are now considering this	No	No	Bi-monthly meetings
Shalford					
Shere	No	No	No	No	Monthly
Tongham					
Wanborough					
West Clandon	No	No	No	No	Once a month (No meeting in August)
West Horsley	Yes, £1,000	No	No	No	Parish Council meets monthly (except August). WHPC doesn't have any committees or sub committees, only task groups
Worplesdon	Yes, £300 per year	No	No	Yes, the Parish Council would like to reimburse elected and co-opted members for travelling expenses when they attend training events. Either to fully reimburse train/bus travel or mileage as per the HMRC's basic mileage allowance (currently .45p per mile).  In the event that councillors need to stay overnight for a training event, 'reasonable' accommodation expenses and a meal allowance of £25 should also be permitted	Ten full council meetings per year. Ad hoc Extra-ordinary meetings of the Council (varies every year – generally no more than three per year) Ten Planning/General Purposes and Finance Committee meetings Four Staffing Committee meetings