



**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
FOR
SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS**

NOVEMBER 2025

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Report from the Parish and Town Councils Independent Remuneration Panel December 2025

1. Introduction

The Parish Remuneration Panel was convened by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils as the 'Responsible Authority's' so required by the 2003 Regulations:

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 and the amendment – Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1692

The Guidance issued on these regulations for Parish Allowances/ or Members of Parish Council is:

“91. Parish councils may choose to pay their members an allowance, known as ‘parish basic allowance’, to recognise the time and effort they put into their parish duties. There is no obligation on parish councils to pay such allowances. Each parish council may make an allowance available to its chair only, or to each of its members. Where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the chair may be different to that paid to other members, but otherwise the amount paid to each member must be the same. Parish basic allowance is a discretionary allowance. It may be paid in a lump sum, or at intervals throughout the year.

92. If a parish council wishes to pay a basic allowance, it should have regard to a recommendation from its parish remuneration panel. This is a panel set up to make recommendations to parishes in its area. The membership of a parish remuneration panel will be the same as the independent remuneration panel of the district or county council within whose area the parish is situated. The panel will make a recommendation as to whom basic allowance should be paid, and the level of the allowance.”

(New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances, DCLG, 2003)

2. Terms of Reference

The Panel was asked to consider and make recommendations to Parish Councils regarding:

- Basic Allowance
- Chair's Allowance
- Travel and Subsistence Allowance
- Indexation

The Parish Independent Remuneration Panel

The Parish Independent Remuneration Panel comprised the same membership as the Independent Remuneration Panel which undertook the review of allowances for the Councils.

The Panel comprised the following members:

- David Rushton, Local resident, Chair IRP Panel
- Eugenie Buchan, Local resident
- Emeritus Professor Colin Copus

The Panel agreed the report via email.

3. Approach

The Panel agreed to use the methodology adopted by previous IRPs when making recommendations on parish council allowances.

4. Arriving at the Recommendations

- 4.1 The Panel was of the view that, whilst parish councillors did not stand for office for any financial reward, an allowance could actively support someone in the councillor role and that it was essential to be able to attract parish councillors from a wide range of backgrounds.
- 4.2 Furthermore, if as a result of Local Government Reform, the formation of a new unitary authority in Oxfordshire leads to the abolition of the district council, parish councils could well take on some new responsibilities. In which case councillors are likely to play a more significant role in local governance and should not be out of pocket for undertaking the role.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Basic Allowance

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 state the basic allowance recommended by a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel can be for any amount up to 100 per cent of the basic allowance paid by South Oxfordshire District Council.

The Panel therefore recommends that those parishes who feel that a basic allowance would be appropriate should be able to pay an amount up to 5% of the Basic Allowance of South Oxfordshire District Council.

The Basic Allowance for South Oxfordshire District Council for 2025/26 is £8,391; 5% of this is **£420**. This should only be paid to Members who are elected **not** those co-opted.

5.2 Chair's Allowance.

The Chair's allowance that can be recommended by the Parish Independent Remuneration Panel can be for any amount up to 100 percent of the Basic Allowance paid by South Oxfordshire District Council. The Panel is of the view that any decision regarding the payment of a Chair's Allowance and the level of that allowance should be left entirely to the discretion of individual parish councils, taking into account individual local circumstances, whilst adhering to the recommended maximum allowance.

The Panel therefore recommends the Chair's Allowance should be up to 15% of the District Council's Basic Allowance. The Basic Allowance is £8,391; 15% of this is £1,259. The Chair's allowance can be in addition to the Basic Allowance, or not, if no Basic Allowance is paid.

5.3 Travel and Subsistence.

The Panel recommended that travel and subsistence for Parish and Town Councils should be at the same rates paid to South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Council Members. **The Panel recommends that the Parish Councils should pay a mileage allowance of 45p per mile (for a car) which is in line with the HMRC recommendations. Subsistence rates should be paid in line with the District Council councillors.**

5.4 Indexation of Allowances

The indexation of the allowances paid to Members of the parish and town councils should be in line with the indexation applied to Members Allowances at South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, namely linked to staff salary increases of Council employees.

5.5 Foregoing Allowances

A parish/town councillor may choose not to receive all or part of any allowance to which they would otherwise be entitled. To do so they must give written notice to the proper officer of the parish/town council.

5.6 Publicity

Regarding the allowances, the Panel recommends that the Parish Councils act in accordance with the following guidance (Section 5, Paragraph 30 of the Regulations (SI2003 No. 1021):

"Parish councils are required to publicise their allowances in a notice or notices conspicuous in their area. These notices must remain in place for at least 14 days. In addition, they must make a record of the allowances they have paid available for inspection at reasonable notice. They must provide copies of this record on request and may charge a reasonable fee for this. Parishes must also publish details of the parish remuneration panel reports. Again, these are minimum requirements, and parish councils

may wish to go further in making local people aware of their allowances scheme and payment levels. For example, they may wish to circulate details of their allowances in the parish newsletter, if they have one, place them on a website, or publish them in one or more local newspapers.”

5.7 Publication

The Panel recommends that the Parish Clerk should publicise the allowances scheme to all Parish Councillors

**David Rushton (Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel)
November 2025**