

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	
DATE OF DECISION	19 th February 2024	
REPORT TITLE:	Members' Allowance Scheme [2023/24] and 2024/25	
DIRECTOR	Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services	
LEAD OFFICER:	Adrian May Interim Head of Democratic Services adrian.may@croydon.gov.uk	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	Part 3 Responsibility for Council Functions in the Constitution, identifies the General Purposes Committee (GPC) are responsible for reviewing the Member's Allowance Scheme with approval of the scheme reserved to full Council.	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	NO	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A	

1 SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1** Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Councils must, each year, approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for the next financial year. On 1st March 2023, Full Council agreed that there would be no uplift to the Members Allowance Scheme for 2022/23 and that the 2023/24 Scheme should be materially the same as the 2022/23 Scheme.
- 1.2** In January 2024, the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London published its report on the remuneration of Councillors in London for 2023 ("Remuneration Report") and amongst other matters recommended that with regards to annual uplifts, all allowances should be updated annually in line with the percentage pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Staff. This represents a 3.88% increase from April 2023. The Council must have regard to this and the other Independent Panel Recommendations as attached at Appendix 1.
- 1.3** The purpose of this report is to consider the Independent Panel Remuneration Report and recommendations; determine whether in light of the Independent Panel recommendation, there should be an uplift in members allowance of 3.88% and when this should commence; and determine the Members Allowance Scheme for

2024/25 and finally, whether there should be a review of the Scheme in 2024. These matters are to be the subject of recommendation to Full Council for a final decision.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For the reasons set out in the report, the General Purposes Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 give due consideration to the Independent Panel Report on the Remuneration of Councillors in London for 2023 (“Remuneration Report”) including the recommendation that all member allowances should be updated annually in line with the percentage pay award agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Staff. This represents a 3.88% increase from April 2023. The Remuneration Report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2 agree to recommend to Full Council that an uplift in members allowance of 3.88% in line with the Independent Panel recommendation be made, and to determine when this uplift should commence (i.e., from April 2023 or April 2024) and recommend the same to Full Council.
- 2.3 if the Committee decides that the uplift should commence from April 2023, to agree to recommend to Full Council in-year amendments to the Members Allowance Scheme for 2023/24 to permit such uplifts and which is in line with the Independent Panel Remuneration Report recommendation on member allowances for 2023.
- 2.4 Subject to Paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3, to agree to recommend to Full Council the Members’ Allowances Scheme for 2024/25 (Appendix 2).
- 2.5 to agree to recommend to Full Council that the Director of Legal Services be authorised to comply with the statutory requirements to publicise the 2024/25 Members’ Allowances Scheme together with the Independent Panel Remuneration Report and to make all necessary updates to the Constitution.
- 2.6 to agree to undertake a review of the Members Allowance Scheme in 2024 to further consider the remuneration report and feedback received on the Scheme.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 There is a statutory duty for a Members Allowance Scheme to be agreed by Full Council before the commencement of the financial year to which it applies. In doing so, there is a statutory duty for Full Council to have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, Appendix 1 to this report.
- 3.2 There is a statutory duty to advertise and publicise locally the Members’ Allowance Scheme each year as well as statutory duties to ensure publication of the Independent Remuneration Panel report, details of the main recommendations of the report, details of how the Council has considered the report and annual publication of allowances paid/received pursuant to any adopted scheme for the year to which it applies.

- 3.3 Whilst the Council's current scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment, no provision is made for the backdating of such adjustment within the scheme as recommended by previous Remuneration Panel reports and as required by regulation 10 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 . In the event that Full Council agrees that an uplift is to be applied from April 2023, the scheme for 23/24 will need to be amended to permit backdating of any uplifted allowances.
- 3.4 In respect of the scheme for 24/25, it is recommended that the scheme be updated to make provision for such backdating in the event that an uplift is approved for future years.

4. BACKGROUND AND DETAILS

- 4.1 The current Scheme provides for the payment of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, Dependent Carers, Travel and Subsistence Allowances and an allowance (without travel or subsistence) for the Independent Chair of Audit and Governance Committee where applicable.
- 4.2 The Croydon Member's Allowance Scheme already provides that the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, Civic Mayor and Deputy Civic Mayor Allowance shall be subject to an annual adjustment in accordance with the annual National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services staff (LGSS) pay settlement but that any such review may only be undertaken once annually in respect of the *upcoming year*.

The details of the final settlement are often not known until towards the end of the financial year to which the settlement relates, meaning that in-year adjustments to a scheme may need to be considered.

- 4.3 At the 1st March 2023 Budget Council, it was agreed that no annual increase would be agreed for 2022/23 and that the 2023/24 Scheme should be materially the same as the 2022/23 Scheme. The annual adjustment is a long-standing recommendation of the Independent Panel however, currently in the Members Allowance scheme there is no provision for in-year annual adjustments to be backdated whether that is to the beginning of the year in which the adjustment is made or to some other date within the current year. It is proposed that specific provision be made to provide for clarity and transparency, in the event that an uplift is agreed in-year.
- 4.4 There is a legal requirement to have regard to the latest 'Remuneration of Councillors in London' report of the Independent Panel when amending / agreeing a new scheme. Their latest report, 'Remuneration of Councillors in London 2023' was published in January 2024.
- 4.5 The 2023 report of the Independent remuneration panel, alongside a recommendation as to the revised recalculation of the basic allowance level so that it more accurately reflects the requirements placed on members (as detailed in section 4.4 below) retains the LGSS settlement as the recommended index for annual adjustment, with 3.88% increase being the amount applicable for 2023/24.
- 4.6 The identified key recommendations from the 'Remuneration of Councillors in London' report for 2023 are:

- The panel conducted a thorough and detailed review of allowance for the 2023 report having not conducted an in-depth review for several years.
- 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.
- Panel says it has 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 levels of basic allowances for members in London were also found to be significantly below the levels approved in respect of Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish authorities and less than similarly sized authorities to London Boroughs outside of London.
- 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.**
- the Remuneration Report 2023 continues to recognise the LGSS increase as a basis for annual uplifts.
- Directly Elected Mayor should receive a remuneration of £93,575
- Cabinet Members, Chair of Scrutiny, recommending to be £37-46k
- Other SRA allowance are within £3,105 to £31,046
- 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.

- 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 recognised that this would need a change in legislation. The Panel intends to raise this issue with the Secretary of State.
- The panel noted that 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. The Panel's 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. *An amendment to the Council's scheme to reflect this element regarding specialist nursing is proposed in the scheme for 24/25 as set out at Appendix 2.*
- Panel strongly recommends that the findings of the review are adopted across London for 2024. This is at the heart of ensuring a healthy, vibrant and representative local government in the capital.

4.7 The Independent Panel is clear that they can only make recommendations and that each council must determine its own system and rates of allowances. 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. 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.

4.8 The most significant recommendation was the Basic Allowance in London for 2024 being £15,960. The Panel considered that this basic allowance amount better reflects the high cost of living in London, than previous recommendations (last being effectively £12,499).

4.9 Croydon's Basic Allowance is comparable with other London Boroughs. During 2022/23 (Borough IPMR Report London Wide report) Basic Allowances ranged from £8,694 to £12,736 across Boroughs, with the Croydon allowance at £11,692 (which has not increased since 2019/20).

- 4.10 The Independent Panel's (IP) proposed Basic Allowance of £15,960 when compared to Croydon Basic Allowance of £11,692 represents a 36% increase. The cost of implementing the recommendation would be approx. £300k+.
- 4.11 The recommendation from the Independent Panel is for step-change in the Basic Allowance, whilst it is not proposed to increase the Basic Allowance by, what would constitute 36%+ increase on Croydon's Basic Allowance, it does strengthen the recommendation for Council to consider an inflationary increase for 2023/24 and/or 2024/25. It is proposed the IP recommendations are further considered by GPC as part of a wider review during 2024, to inform the 2025/26 scheme proposals (if not earlier).
- 4.12 Whilst no specific recommendations are made at this time, it should be noted that the Independent Panel recommended SRA levels are much higher than the Croydon Members Allowance Scheme provides for - including the Executive Mayor, Cabinet and Scrutiny Chair.
- 4.13 The Remuneration Report 2023 continued to recognise the LGSS increase as a basis for annual uplifts, and it's recommended that for 2024/25 this continues in the Croydon Scheme. The Panel also reconsidered how the basic allowance level should be assessed (as a proportion to the remuneration of the people councillors represent) and it is proposed that this approach could be considered as part of the General Purposes Committee review during 2024.
- 4.14 Whilst Croydon's Members Allowance Scheme has dependent carer's allowance provision, there is no provision, as recommended, for a higher rate when specialist nursing skills are required or to reflect higher costs during non-standard working hours.

To partially meet this recommendation, it is proposed that the 2024/25 Members Allowance Scheme be amended to include the payment of enhanced rates where specialist nursing care is required, and that these are agreed prior to claiming. Historically, there has been no to low levels of claims against the provision, the cost is anticipated to be relatively negligible. Furthermore it is proposed that dependent carer's allowances are further reviewed with Members and GPC, due to the relative short time for consultation to amend the 2024/25 scheme.

- 4.15 It should be noted that the Independent Panel is proposing to convene in the final quarter of 2024 to review how the recommendations have been implemented across London. This will allow the General Purposes Committee to consider more informed recommendations related to significant amendments to the Members Allowance Scheme (2025/26).
- 4.16 Whilst the Council's current scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment linked to the LGSS, no provision is made for the backdating of such adjustment within the scheme as recommended by the previous Remuneration Panel reports and as required by the applicable regulations.
- 4.17 The scheme currently provides that if Council wishes to apply an annual adjustment (related to the Local Government Staff Settlement) this should be agreed for the following year.

- 4.18 The LGSS has historically been known before the start of the next financial year for which it is applicable. In more recent years, the LGSS has not been known until late in the year for which it was applicable. For example, the LGPSS increase of 3.88% for 2023/24 was confirmed only in November 2023.
- 4.19 In order for improved transparency to Members and the Public and to allow Council to agree annual adjustment based on actual known % increases, it is proposed to both allow agreement of increases applicable for the coming year or in-year. For clarity and to confirm - No more than one inflationary related uplift can be agreed or be applicable for any given year.

It is therefore proposed that the Members Allowance scheme be amended, to make the following provision to accommodate backdating of any adjustments when agreed for a given year:

Unless agreed otherwise by Full Council that no uplift will apply, the level of the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, Civic Mayor's and Deputy Civic Mayor's Allowances shall be subject to annual adjustment in line with the percentage pay award agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services staff (LGSS). Members may review this aspect no more frequently than annually to determine whether there will be an adjustment for the Council year in question. Where it is necessary to consider a potential uplift in-year (where the details of the annual LGSS settlement is not agreed until after the commencement of the year to which the scheme applies) paragraph 5 below will apply.

Where an amendment is to be made by virtue of an uplift which affects an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, the entitlement to such allowance as amended is to apply with effect from the beginning of the year in which the amendment is made. There is no ability to backdate any entitlement beyond the current year.

- 4.20 Whilst the Council's current scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment no provision is made for the backdating of such adjustment within the scheme as recommended by previous Remuneration Panel reports (2006) and required by the regulations. The above is proposed, so that Council, given the challenging financial circumstances to the authority, can consider inflationary increases when knowing the actual financial cost. The backdating provision is proposed so inflationary increase if agreed for a year can be applied for that year.
- 4.21 As part of the lead up and consultation with Members on the Members Allowance Scheme, the following was highlighted.

Scrutiny related SRAs

Special Responsibility Allowances are afforded to the Chair, Deputy Chair and Vice-Chair of Scrutiny & Overview Committee. Historically, the three positions chaired three scrutiny sub-committees.

Due to the configuration of Scrutiny during 2023/24, the Deputy Chair and Vice Chair of Scrutiny & Overview chair two of the four Scrutiny sub-committees. There is no specific SRA provision within the Members Allowance Scheme for a Scrutiny Sub-Committee Chair. This leaves two sub-committee Chairs without a scrutiny related SRA.

2nd Opposition (non-principal opposition) Group Leader

Whilst Special Responsibility Allowances provision is made for principal opposition groups across authorities, the Croydon scheme does not recognise a 2nd opposition group.

Only a limited number of London authorities (20%+) make such provision. One authority makes a leader SRA provision for smaller (non-principal opposition) groups of a minimum size (i.e., 4 seats or more on Council).

- 4.22 It is proposed that time is afforded to consider the raised points, so to present options to General Purposes Committee during 2024 for consideration as part of future schemes for 2025/26
- 4.23 No further changes to Member roles, functions and responsibilities or Committee functions and business have been identified, as part of the consultation.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 A Council's Members' Allowance Scheme needs approving by Council before the start of the next financial year.
- 5.2 Should Council wish to make changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme at a full Council meeting, Council must give due regard to the Report of the Independent Panel 2023, just as Council needs to give due regard to the Report when considering proposals by the General Purposes Committee.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 In advance of this Committee meeting, the key proposals were circulated to all political groups and parties reflected on Croydon Council on the 2nd Feb 2024.
- 6.2 Before and as part of Member consultation, Members of all parties on the Council were sent benchmarking information (Borough IPMR Report London Wide), a copy of the Independent Panel's 2023 report and key proposals and points of discussion covered in this report.
- 6.3 Informally no negative feedback to the proposals has been provided yet, and Members understood the rationale for proposing the IP recommendation related to the LGSS increase. Whilst recognising the financial challenges of the Council and residents, Members also recognised the increased living costs faced by their Members. Given

the relative short time for consultation however, further feedback from the consultation is anticipated, and will be verbally provided at the Committee meeting.

- 6.4 It should be noted that should any Member not wish to take up the proposed increase in their allowance, Part 6A the Member’s Scheme of Allowances includes provision that any Member may elect to forego all or part of the Basic Allowance and if appropriate the Special Responsibility Allowance, to which they are entitled, by writing to the Council’s Monitoring Officer.
- 6.5 The proposed change to the dependent carers allowance was not part of the consultation, however this, along with other provision of the Member Scheme is proposed to be reviewed during 2024.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 7.1 Through taking into consideration the recommendations of the IP report, it supports the Council to achieve, priority 4 of the Mayor’s Business Plan: Ensure good governance is embedded and adopt best practice.

8. IMPLICATIONS

8.1 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The annual cost of the Members Allowance Scheme for 2023/24, including the council’s national insurance contributions, will be approx. £1.54m

It is assumed that any increases in members allowances for inflation in future years will also be funded by the corporate provision for pay awards as part of the provision for council officers. The in year if agreed can be met by existing budget.

8.1.1 Revenue consequences of report recommendation

The report is recommending further consideration of the Members Allowance Scheme which could impact on 2023/24 and 2024/25 if agreed at Budget Council.

For illustration, if a 2023/24 increase is applied, aligned to the Local Government Pay Settlement. The associated budgets are presented below:

	Current Year	Medium Term Financial Strategy – 3 year forecast		
	2023/24 £’000	2024/25 £’000	2025/26 £’000	2026/27 £’000
Current Revenue	1,502	1,502	1,502	1,502

Budget Available				
Current salaries expenditure	1,433	1,433	1,433	1,433
Effect of decision from report reflected in budget virement above	55	55	55	55
Remaining Budget	14	14	14	14

Comments approved by Lesley Sheilds, Interim Head of Finance, (12/02/2024).

8.2 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.2.1** The Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances is required to comply with the relevant provisions of the Local Authorities (Elected Mayor and Mayor's Assistant) (England) Regulations 2002, Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2000. In addition, there are separate provisions, namely sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act 1972 for the payment of allowances to the current civic Mayor and the deputy civic Mayor which Croydon has traditionally referenced as part of its Scheme of Members' Allowances, although the Council is not obliged to make such an inclusion as it sits outside the statutory regime for Members' Allowances.
- 8.2.2** The 2002 Regulations specifically allows for an elected mayor to be treated as a councillor of the local authority for the purposes of schemes relating to basic attendance and special responsibility allowances for local authority members as set-out within the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
- 8.2.3** Regulation 10 of the 2003 Regulations provides that before the beginning of each year, an authority shall make the scheme required by regulation 4(1)(a) for the payment of basic allowance for that year. The scheme shall also make provision for the following allowances if an authority intends to make such payments in respect of the year–
- (a) special responsibility allowance;
 - (b) dependants' carers' allowance;
 - (c) travelling and subsistence allowance; and
 - (d) co-optees' allowance.
- 8.2.4** Subject to regulation 12 the scheme may be amended at any time but may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of a year. A scheme may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to such index as may be specified by the authority and where the only change made to a scheme in any year is that effected by such annual adjustment in accordance with such index the scheme shall be deemed not to have been amended.

- 8.2.5** Regulation 10 (5) provides that where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the independent remuneration panel established in respect of that authority on the application of an index to its scheme. The Independent remuneration panel, in its current report, continues to recommend that any proposed annual adjustment be linked to the Local Government Staff Settlement (LGSS). Whilst the Council's current scheme makes provision for an annual adjustment, no provision is made for the backdating of such adjustment within the scheme as detailed within the report.
- 8.2.6** Where an amendment is to be made which affects an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, the scheme may provide for the entitlement to such allowance as amended to apply with effect from the beginning of the year in which the amendment is made. (Regulation 10(6).)
- 8.2.7** In accordance with regulation 21, An independent remuneration panel is required to produce a report in relation to the authority or authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations in respect of, among other matters–
- as to whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with regulation 10(6);
 - as to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed.
- 8.2.8** Regulation 19 of the 2003 Regulations provides that the Council must have regard to the recommendations of the independent remuneration panel before making or amending a Scheme of Allowances for its members.
- 8.2.9** Regulation 5(1) of the 2003 Regulations provide that the Scheme can make provision for an SRA to be paid to members who have such "special responsibilities in relation to the authority as are specified in the Scheme" and are within one or more of nine categories of responsibility identified in sub-paragraphs (a) - (i). This includes responsibilities such acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority; acting as a member of an Executive, presiding at meetings of a committee or sub-committee and acting as a spokesman of a political group on a committee or sub-committee.
- 8.2.10** Regulation 13 requires that the Council's scheme shall provide that a person may, by notice in writing given to the proper officer of the authority, elect to forgo their entitlement or any part of their entitlement to allowances.
- 8.2.11** Regulation 22, which makes provision for the required publicity for recommendations of Independent Remuneration Panels requires that once an authority receives a copy of a report made to it by an independent remuneration panel in accordance with regulation 21, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable–
- (a) ensure that copies of that report are available for inspection by members of the public at the principal office of the authority, at all reasonable hours; and
 - (b) publish in one or more newspapers circulating in its area, a notice which–

- (i) states that it has received recommendations from an independent remuneration panel in respect of its scheme;
- (ii) describes the main features of that panel's recommendations and specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance mentioned in the report in respect of that authority;
- (iii) states that copies of the panel's report are available at the principal office of the authority for inspection by members of the public at such times as may be specified by the authority in the notice; and
- (iv) specifies the address of the principal office of the authority at which such copies are made available.

8.2.12 Comments approved by Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer (12/02/2024).

8.3 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.3.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must evidence consideration of any potential impacts of proposals on groups who share the protected characteristics, before decisions are taken. This includes any decisions relating to how authorities act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policies; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and also how they commission and procure services from others.

8.3.2 Section 149 of the Act requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

8.3.3 There are no direct equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The provision for annual increases reflected in the scheme however does reflect the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel views that allowances should be set at a level that enable people from a diverse range of backgrounds to become Councillors.

8.3.4 Councillors who require reasonable adjustments for disabilities should seek support from Democratic Services under PSED Equality Act 2010.

Approved by: Denise McCausland Equalities Programme Manager 12/02/2024

9 APPENDICES

1 - The Independent Remuneration Panel report on Councillor Allowances 2023

2 – Proposed 2024/25 Members Allowance Scheme

10 SUPPORTING DOCUMENT

Borough IPMR Report London Wide (2023 London Benchmarking of Allowances)

<https://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk/who-we-are/about-us/financial-information/leadership-and-expenses/remuneration-councillors-london>