

REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES 2023

Background:

The Clerk has received the following from Waverley Borough council. This review happens once each Council term. None of the larger councils in Waverley currently pays their councillors a fixed allowance. Instead, councillors are remain as unpaid volunteers with all out of pocket expenses, travel and training costs being refunded by the Council. There is also an amount set aside in the budget for reimbursing costs incurred by the Mayor in carrying out their role. Again, this is not paid as an allowance, payment is made on presentation of proof of expenditure incurred.

Request from Waverley:

As you know, under Section 15 (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, a parish council may pay the chairman of the parish council such allowance as the parish council thinks reasonable for the purpose of enabling them to meet the expenses of their office.

You may also be aware that, under the Local Authorities Members' Allowances (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended), a parish council may pay a "parish basic allowance" either to its chairman only, or to each of its members, and the amount of that allowance payable to its chairman may differ from that payable to each other member of the parish council, but otherwise that amount shall be the same for each such member. Parish councils may also pay to its members a "parish travelling and subsistence allowance" in respect of travel undertaken in connection with the performance of prescribed duties as a parish councillor.

However, where a parish council proposes to pay a parish basic allowance, whether to its chairman only or to each of its members, or where it proposes to pay to its members a parish travelling and subsistence allowance, it must have regard, in setting the level or levels of such allowances, to the recommendations which have been made in respect of it by a parish remuneration panel.

However, it is worth pointing out that the payment of the chairman's expenses under Section 15 of the 1972 Act falls outside of the remit of the 2003 Regulations and does not require a specific recommendation from the parish remuneration panel, which means that if you do pay your chairman an allowance to enable him/her to meet the expenses of their office, you may continue to do so.

The "parish remuneration panel" referred to above is the independent remuneration panel appointed by the Borough Council for the purpose of reviewing the scheme of allowances for borough councillors. We have appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel, jointly with Guildford, to undertake separate reviews of councillors' allowances for both Guildford and Waverley. They will commence the review of Guildford's allowances next month and Waverley's toward the end of the year.

The Panel has asked me to write to you to ascertain whether your parish council:

- a. pays the chairman expenses under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1972 referred to above;**
- b. would like to pay either your chairman, or all elected parish councillors, a parish basic allowance; and/or**
- c. would like to pay your parish councillors a parish travelling and subsistence allowance.**