

**A Review  
Of  
Members' Allowances  
For  
Bracknell Forest Council**

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**The Tenth Report**

**By the**

**Independent Remuneration Panel**

**Dr Declan Hall (Chair)  
John Murtagh  
Andrew Stone**

**January 2022**

## Foreword

This is the tenth review by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP or Panel) for Bracknell Forest Council. The first review (see January 2001 Report) was undertaken as part of the wider implementation of the modernisation agenda arising out of the Local Government Act 2000, which in turn brought in new roles and responsibilities for Members. The first report made recommendations, which the Council broadly accepted. The 2001 review largely set the framework for the present allowances scheme; it has not altered dramatically since then.

The second review was required under the *Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003*<sup>1</sup> and subsequent amendments. These Regulations mandated all local authorities to establish and convene an advisory Independent Members' Allowances Remuneration Panel to make recommendations on certain associated allowances such as travel and subsistence, Co-optees' allowances, and pensions for Councillors before 31 December 2003. The 2003 review also tasked a new IRP to review the range and levels of the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) in light of experience of the new system of local government.

The third review was of a minor nature, prompted by an invitation by the Council to conduct a post-implementation review of the scheme to consider certain changes in roles of some Members and give further guidance on an issue surrounding the claiming of Members expenses. The fourth review arose out of issues the IRP was not in a position to address in its previous review due to lack of experience of two posts, namely Executive Support Members' and Chairs of the Licensing Panels, with a further consideration on conditions surrounding the mileage allowance. The fifth review arose out of the need to review the indices applied to the various allowances and further minor issues emerging as part of the annual review programme.

The sixth review arose out of the recommendation of the previous review to take the opportunity by the end of 2009 to undertake a fundamental review of the whole scheme in light of emerging legislation that might have affected Members' roles and responsibilities and as it not been thoroughly reviewed for a number of years. Again, it did not result in any significant changes in the Members' Allowances scheme – it was felt that the scheme was still broadly fit for purpose.

The seventh review in late 2011 arose of the need for a fresh authority for another four years to extend the right to join the Pension Scheme to review a number of specific posts and associated allowances and provide advice to the Council on whether the Council should continue with indexation provision.

The eighth review (January 2014) arose out of a number of issues raised by an audit report that require guidance and clarification mainly in relation to Members' expenses that addressed anomalies arising rather than undertaking a fundamental review as the broad framework of allowances in Bracknell Forest Council was still deemed broadly fit for purpose.

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<sup>1</sup> See Statutory Instruments 2003 Nos. 1021, 1022 and 1692 for further details.

The ninth review in late 2017 arose out of the requirement of 2003 Regulations to review allowances scheme at least once every four years to ensure that there is periodic public scrutiny of Members' Allowances. There were only further minor amendments arising from the ninth review mainly regarding Co-optees' Allowances and the Dependants' Carers' Allowance. The driver for this (tenth) review is the also the need to reconvene the IRP at least once every four years.

Finally, the IRP has been mindful of its guiding principle that it has sought to reduce financial barriers to being an elected Member while ensuring that the remuneration and expenses received by Members represents value for money.

Dr Declan Hall  
Chair of the Bracknell Forest Council Independent Remuneration Panel

January 2022

**Executive Summary: Recommendations**

Bracknell Forest Review 2022	Basic Allowance and SRAs: Recommended Maximum Payable 2022/23			
	POSITION	Nos. Paid	Basic Allowance	Total P/Member (BA+SRA)
<b>BASIC ALLOWANCE</b>	42	£8,687	£8,687	£364,854
<b>Special Responsibility Allowances</b>		<b>SRAs 2022/23</b>		
Leader of Council	1	£28,954	£37,641	£28,954
Deputy Leader of Council	1	£17,372	£26,059	£17,372
Cabinet Members	8	£15,926	£24,613	£127,408
Chair Overview & Scrutiny Commission	1	£7,239	£15,926	£7,239
Chairs Overview & Scrutiny Panels	3	£5,791	£14,478	£17,373
Chair Planning Committee	1	£7,239	£15,926	£7,239
Vice Chair Planning Committee	1	£723	£9,410	£723
Chair Licensing & Safety Committee	1	£4,343	£13,030	£4,343
Vice Chair Licensing & Safety Committee	1	£434	£9,121	£434
Chair of Governance & Audit Committee	1	£2,895	£11,582	£2,895
Chair of Employment Committee	1	£2,201	£10,888	£2,201
Member Champions	5	£2,201	£10,888	£11,005
Main Opposition Group Leader	1	£9,651	£18,338	£9,651
Deputy Leader Main Opposition Group	1	£965	£9,652	£965
<b>Sub Total - Basic Allowance</b>	<b>42</b>			<b>£364,854</b>
<b>Sub Total - Standing SRAs</b>	<b>27</b>			<b>£212,467</b>
<b>Total (BA + SRAs)</b>				<b>£577,321</b>

The IRP also recommends that:

**SRAs for Chairs of the Advisory Panels**

The Chairs of the Advisory Panels are not paid an SRA.

**Maintaining the 1-SRA only rule**

The Council maintain the 1-SRA only rule within the Bracknell Forest Council Members' Allowances Scheme so that a Member cannot receive more than one SRA.

### **The Co-optees' Allowance**

There is no change to the scope and level of Co-optees' Allowances.

### **Members appointed to the Independent Education Appeals Panels**

The remuneration for the Members appointed to the Independent Education Appeals Panels is as follows:

- £61 for a period not exceeding 4 hours
- £122 for a period between 4 and 24 hours

### **The Civic Dignitaries Allowances**

There is no change to the Civic Dignitaries Allowances.

### **The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)**

The DCA childcare maximum hourly rate is reset at the National Living Wage. Furthermore, that the claim form is amended so that care staff rather than providing their home address can declare they do not live in the claimant's household.

### **Travel and Subsistence Allowances – within the Borough**

The Basic Allowance continues to cover all in-Borough travel and subsistence costs.

### **Travel and Subsistence – outwith the Borough**

There are no changes to current terms, conditions and rates by which subsistence can be claimed for attending approved duties outwith the Borough.

The IRP also recommends that the allowances scheme is amended to include provision for when a Member is claiming out of Borough mileage rates by driving a hybrid or electric vehicle then HMRA mileage rates are applicable. The IRP recommends that the other terms, conditions and rates for claiming out of Borough travel be maintained.

### **Indexation of Allowances**

The following allowances are indexed for four years from 2022/23 to 2026/27, the maximum period permitted before the Council is required to seek advice from the IRP, as follows:

- **Basic Allowance, SRAs, Co-optees' Allowances, Civic Allowances and payments to Members of Independent Education Panels:**
  - Updated annually in line with the annual percentage pay increase given to Bracknell Forest Council employees (and rounded to the nearest £) as agreed for each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff.
- **Out of Council Area Mileage Allowance:**
  - Indexed to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) mileage rates.
- **Out of Council Area Other Travel and Subsistence:**
  - Reimbursement of actual costs taking into account the most cost effective means of transport and/or accommodation available and the convenience of use with the maximum rates indexed to the same periodic percentage

increase that may be applied to Officer Travel and Subsistence Allowances.

- **Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA):**

- The maximum hourly rates to be indexed to the National Living Wage (childcare) and the Council's hourly rate for a Home Care Assistance (care of other dependants).

**Implementation of Recommendations**

The new Members' Allowances scheme as recommended in this report be implemented from 1 April 2022 or from any date before then as agreed by the Council.

## **A Review of Members' Allowances**

**For**

**Bracknell Council**

**By the**

**Independent Remuneration Panel**

**The Tenth Report**

**January 2022**

### **Introduction: The Regulatory Context**

1. This report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the IRP) for Bracknell Forest Council to advise the Council on its Members' Allowances scheme. The IRP was convened under *The Local Authorities' (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021)* ("the 2003 Regulations"). These regulations, which arise out of the relevant provisions contained in the Local Government Act 2000, require all local authorities to establish and maintain an advisory Independent [Members] Remuneration Panel to review and provide advice on Members' allowances on a periodic basis. All Councils are required to convene their IRP and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their members' allowances scheme. They must 'pay regard' to their IRPs recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme.
2. On this particular occasion, the IRP was reconvened under the 2003 Regulations [10. (5)], which states:

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.
3. It is this mechanism, known as the '4-year rule', that ensures IRPs are convened at least every four years if a council wishes to continue indexing their allowances. Although the main allowances are not currently indexed, some associated allowances are. The 4-year rule also provides an opportunity

for IRPs to publicly scrutinise their councils' allowances schemes and enhance public accountability.

## The IRP

4. Bracknell Forest Council reconvened its Independent Remuneration Panel, constituted of the following members:
  - Declan Hall PhD (Chair):  
A former lecturer at the Institute of Local Government, the University of Birmingham; he is a political scientist by training and is currently an independent consultant specialising in members' allowances. He has taught politics in Illinois and Indiana and worked as political lobbyist in the Chicago area.
  - John Murtagh:  
An Immigration Enforcement Officer with the South Central ICE Team and a local resident
  - Andrew Stone:  
A local businessperson and local resident
5. The IRP was supported by:
  - Ann Moore:  
Head of Democratic and Registration Services, who acted as the 'Panellists' Friend'
  - Kirsty Hunt:  
Principal Democratic Services Officer (Governance) who took the organisational lead in facilitating the work of the Panel

## Terms of Reference

6. The Terms of Reference<sup>2</sup> of the IRP are to make recommendations to the Council that will be applicable from the date of April 2022 on:-
  - I. The amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members and the expenses that it is deemed to include
  - II. The responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance
  - III. The duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance

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<sup>2</sup> Terms of reference based on those laid out in 2006 Statutory Guidance paragraph 61



- IV. The co-optees to be paid a co-optees' allowance and the amount
- V. Whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
- VI. Whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended
- VII. Whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run
- VIII. Additional expenses and support received by Members
- IX. The payment of a Civic Allowance and the amount of such an Allowance
- X. Any matters that are brought to the attention of the IRP by Members in their consultation with Members and briefings from Officers

In arriving at their recommendations, the IRP shall also take into account:

- A. The views of Members both written and oral
- B. Allowances paid in comparable councils, namely the other Berkshire and CIPFA 10 Nearest Neighbours and South East unitary councils (insofar the latter comparative data is available)

## **Process and Methodology**

- 7. Due to on-going issues regarding the Covid pandemic and as permitted by the Regulations, the IRP met as a virtual IRP on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021. These meetings were in private session to enable the IRP to meet with Members and Officers and conduct deliberations in confidence. In accordance with the terms of reference, in arriving at its recommendations, the IRP took into account a wide range of evidence, both oral and written. This included but was not limited to Council and committee meetings schedules and terms of reference, relevant reports and information on the Council's governance arrangements, the 2006 Statutory Guidance on Members' Allowances, etc.
- 8. All Members who wished to meet with the IRP were accommodated as far as practically possible. In addition, all Members were sent a short questionnaire so that no Member was denied a voice in the course of review. The IRP received nine written responses. The questionnaire was also used as the template for Member interviews to ensure a common set of questions were being asked.

9. The IRP also met with relevant Officers for factual briefings on the Council, governance structures and challenges facing the Council.
10. For full details of whom the IRP met and full range of information reviewed see:
  - Appendix 1: for Members who met with the IRP
  - Appendix 2: for Officers who provided factual briefings to the IRP
  - Appendix 3: for a list of the full range of evidence considered by the IRP
  - Appendix 4: Benchmarking data, namely the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances (2020/21) paid in other Berkshire unitary councils and Bracknell Forest's 10 Nearest Neighbours as defined by CIPFA (Public Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) referred to as the benchmarking group<sup>3</sup> and where available data from the South Employers Allowances Survey (2021),

### **Key Message – Only limited change desired**

11. One of the key aspects of the Bracknell Forest Council Members' Allowances Scheme is that the main allowances (Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances) have been frozen since 2011. This is partly a choice of the Council, not wishing to increase their allowances in an era of austerity. This also had a greater appropriateness in the past when Bracknell Forest allowances were generally within the upper third of the comparative spectrum. This is no longer the case; benchmarking shows that the Bracknell Forest SRAs (with a few notable exceptions) are broadly in line with that paid in peer councils. It is less the case with the Basic Allowance.
12. Moreover, by simply following the methodology set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance the IRP can develop a case to revise the Basic Allowance and some of the current SRAs payable.
13. However, the representation received even where it can be shown where allowances were now on the low side emphasised that there is still no case to alter the allowances payable. The clear message was that the Council should continue to exercise restraint even where there was case to change allowances and the IRP should bear that in mind in making its recommendations. The only exception to this key message was that it was now appropriate to restore the indexation of the main allowances in light of the

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<sup>3</sup> The IRP has maintained its benchmarking group consisting of the other Berkshire unitary councils and CIPFA 10 Neighbours. This produced a benchmarking group of 11 Councils as all other Berkshire unitary councils except Slough were in the 10 Nearest Neighbour group. The South East Employers annual survey of allowances (2021) was only partially utilised for this review, partly due to the unreliability of some of the data, which in turn arises out of the survey being filled in by the councils with no cross referencing for veracity.

fact that Officers have had their annual salary cost of living uplift restored and now that wages were rising generally.

14. The IRP has largely accepted this key message. It recognises that it continues to be an economically tough climate for both the Council and the residents of Bracknell Forest. It was reiterated as a key message by all the interviewees with the codicil that the Council was unlikely to accept an overall increase in the current total spend on Members' Allowances. The current economic context cannot be ignored. There is little point in the IRP making recommendations that bear no relationship to economic constraints within which the Council has to operate; otherwise, the review would simply make aspirational recommendations for a future date rather than supporting Members in the present. As the recommendations stand, notwithstanding the recommendation to restore the main indexation, they will be broadly cost neutral.
15. This is not to say the role of the review is to pre-empt decisions properly reserved to the Council and seek to make savings on the current spend on Members' Allowances for the sake of it. If that were the case, the review would simply be making recommendations that would lead to 'a race to the bottom'. Ideally, the purpose of this review is to make recommendations based on knowledge of the current governance structures, an analysis of the evidence and representations and the levels and scope of allowances paid in comparator councils - thus arriving at an evidenced-based judgement on the monetary worth of the roles under consideration.
16. Yet, the IRPs recommendations need to have support of the Council as its Members make the final decision on the scope and levels of remuneration. If the IRP's recommendations do not have a large degree of acceptance amongst the Council then the IRP would be failing in its advisory duties. Furthermore, for Members it is important that, for the recommendations to be accepted, they have to stand up to public scrutiny. The IRP has already addressed this issue regarding the claiming of expenses by Members and the terms and conditions under which they are claimed. These claims no longer attract media coverage or public queries, and when they do, they stand up to public scrutiny.
17. Despite the case to revise some of the main allowances the IRP has taken the advice of the feedback received which emphasised the view that any increases in allowances would not at this juncture stand up to public scrutiny. Nonetheless, the IRP has set out its deliberations regarding some of the main allowances payable to flag up where there may be a case for change and identify the IRPs potential direction of travel in the future.

### **The IRP's Recommendations – the Basic Allowance**

18. To test the robustness of the current (2021/22) Basic Allowance (£8,687) the IRP has recalibrated the Basic Allowance by replicating the original methodology that forms the basis of the current Basic Allowance but with

updated variables This methodology is laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 67) which states:

Having established what local councillors do, and the hours which are devoted to these tasks the local authorities will need to take a view on the rate at which, and the number of hours for which, councillors ought to be remunerated.

19. The Statutory Guidance (paragraphs 68-69) expands on the above statement by breaking it down to three variables for IRPs to consider in arriving at a recommended Basic Allowance. Firstly, a time assessment for the roles associated with the Basic Allowance; secondly, an element of public service to be recognised in the Basic Allowance; and thirdly a rate of remuneration upon which to base the Basic Allowance. The IRP has recalibrated the Basic Allowance by bringing the three operative variables up to date as set out below.

### **Time required in carrying out duties associated with the Basic Allowance**

20. The Basic Allowance is primarily a time-based payment (see 2006 Statutory Guidance paragraph 10). Obviously, Members work in different ways and have varying commitments and the time spent on council duties varies. Yet, the Basic Allowance is a flat rate allowance that must be paid equally to all Members so the time assessment is typically taken to be that which is deemed necessary at a minimum to carry out all those duties for which the Basic Allowance is paid. These duties include but are not limited to preparing for and attending meetings of the Council and its committees/panels (formal and informal), addressing constituents' concerns, representing and engaging with local communities, external appointments and other associated work including telephone calls, emails and meetings with Officers.
21. The current Basic Allowance is based on a time estimate of 91.35 days per year (2003), or 14 hours per week on an eight-hour day. The IRP notes that the 2018 LGA Census of Councillors shows that Members who hold "no positions" of responsibility reported that on average they put in 22 hours per week. For recalibration purposes, the IRP has opted for a figure mid-way between the original assessment of 14 hours per week and the LGA Councillors Census average, which equates to 18 hours per week.
22. The IRP has a strong sense that the time demands on Members have increased since the original time assessment of 2003 simply through increased legislative demands placed on Members, the transfer of licensing functions from magistrates to local authorities being but one example. On the other hand, the IRP has taken the view that the Councillor Census average of 22 hours per week has been bumped up as it includes that coterie of backbenchers who have the capacity and wherewithal to put in what often amounts to a full time commitment. Thus, 22 hours per week does not reflect the minimum time required to fulfil the duties for which the Basic Allowance is paid. The IRP is assured that 18 hours per week is a more accurate reflection of the average minimum time required to fulfil backbench duties. The IRP has

translated this as 117 days per year (on a 52-week year with an 8-hour working day).

23. Thus, for the purposes of recalibrating the Basic Allowance the IRP has reassessed the required minimum average input per week for a Member to fulfil all duties associated with the Basic Allowance to be 18 hours per week. This equates to 117 days per year.

### **The Public Service Discount (PSD)**

24. The 2006 Statutory Guidance advises that to recognise there is a public service element to being an elected Member that not all the time expected from Members should be remunerated. To recognise the public service principle an element should be unpaid, known as the Public Service Discount (PSD). The normal range for this public service discount is between 30% - 40%, largely on the basis this is broadly in line with the proportion of time backbenchers spend dealing with constituents and ward issues and local and community matters. The historical PSD that has been applied in Bracknell Forest Council is one third, which in turn is the most common PSD applied across English local government. The IRP received no evidence to revise this historical figure.
25. Thus, of the expected time input of 117 days per year one third of that time, or 39 days per year, are deemed as public service and not paid, leaving 78 remunerated days per year.

### **The rate for remuneration**

26. This variable refers to the worth of a Councillor's time. The original rate of remuneration utilised by the IRP in setting the current basis of the Basic Allowance was £122 per day. This was based on an advisory day rate (2002) that used to be issued to IRPs by the LGA. This advisory day rate was discontinued in 2014. This was in part because it was based on male white earnings and it had reached such a high level it was hard to justify and partly because of the Office of National Statistics through its Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) started to publish average earnings on a council-by-council area about 10 years ago.
27. It was this latter development in particular, that hastened the decline of the LGA daily advisory rate of remuneration. IRPs started to switch to a locally based average, based on the earnings of their constituents, which is a more robust and justifiable rate of remuneration. In 2020 the median daily earnings (excluding overtime) of all full time employees resident in Bracknell Forest is £133.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> This is based on median weekly earnings of £665, which equates to £133 per day when divided by a five-day working week. See Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 8.2a, Weekly pay – excluding overtime – for full time employee jobs (home geography), Office of National Statistics, provisional results 2020. The ONS advises that the median rather than the mean figure is a better measure of the average due handful of very high earners which skews the statistical mean.

28. Following the methodology as set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance with the updated variables produces the following recalibrated Basic Allowance:

117 days per year minus one-third PSD (39 days)  
= 78 remunerated days multiplied by £133 per day  
= £10,374

### Benchmarking the Basic Allowance

29. As a further test of the current Basic Allowance, the IRP has benchmarked it against the Bracknell Forest specific benchmarking group and the South East Employers 2021 allowances survey that included all unitary councils in the South East. Benchmarking produced the following figures:

- Benchmarking group mean Basic Allowance £9,464
- Benchmarking group median Basic Allowance £8,787
- South East Employers Survey 2021 mean Basic Allowance £9,932

30. The IRP also noted that the Basic Allowance (as with all SRAs) has remained static since 2011, as indexation has not been applied since then. If the normal index (the annual percentage increase in salary for local government staff) had been consistently applied over the years then the Basic Allowance would now be £9,306.
31. There is a case to revise the Basic Allowance; it has lost value in regards to the recalibrated and benchmarked Basic Allowance. The IRP has gone through this process to flag up its potential direction of travel in the future. Despite the indicative evidence, **the IRP is not recommending any change to the current Basic Allowance (£8,687) except the application of the recommended index (see below).**

### Expenses deemed included within the Basic Allowance

32. Since the 2014 Review, the Basic Allowance has been deemed sufficient to cover broadband provision, in-Borough travel, in-Borough parking, occasional use of taxis and all incidental expenses not otherwise expressly specified in the allowances scheme.
33. There was some very limited representation arguing that Members now have greater costs, which in turn were mostly related to increased costs of fuel for travel (which has been addressed below).
34. The IRP notes that it is common for the Basic Allowance in the more compact Councils includes in-Borough travel related expenses. It is now common for the same to apply to broadband costs as broadband is now so omnipresent to be perceived as a utility. As such, the IRP has not changed the current range of expenses that the Basic Allowance is deemed to cover.

35. **The IRP recommends that there should be no change to the current range of expenses that the Basic Allowance is deemed to include.**

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

36. With a few notable exceptions there is a more limited case (than with the Basic Allowance) to revise the current SRAs payable. Benchmarking shows that Bracknell Forest SRAs are more in line with those paid in comparator councils in terms of both level and methodology. Moreover, the IRP was once more cognisant of the general thrust of representation received that even where a case could be made to enhance an SRA now was not the time to do so – with one exception.
37. The IRP has briefly set out below some of its deliberations regarding some of the SRAs where there was some representation received.

### **The Leader's SRA**

38. There was some representation that there was a case to revisit the current SRA (£28,954) for the Leader, it was argued that it is now somewhat on the low side. Being Leader, it was argued is a full time role that excludes any employment in the normal sense of the term. The demands upon the Leader have increased since the last time the Leader's SRA was fundamentally reviewed in 2003. In particular, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, made the strong Leader model of governance the only model available. The Leader now has all executive powers vested in their role and for instance determines the numbers and scope of powers of other Executive Members (although it is acknowledged that some of those powers are in operation mediated through the political group process).
39. The original basis of the Leader's SRA was arrived at by adopting a basket of approaches and the SRA adopted was the mid-point of these approaches. The most common method of arriving at a Leader's SRA is called the 'factor' approach. This approach is one of the methodologies set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 76) which states:
- One way of calculating special responsibility allowances may be to take the agreed level of basic allowance and recommend a multiple of this allowance as an appropriate special responsibility allowance for either the elected mayor or the leader.
40. Currently the Leader's SRA is a multiple of 3.33 over the current Basic Allowance. Benchmarking shows that the mean Leader's SRA is multiple of 3 times the mean Basic Allowance. This multiple level of three times the Basic Allowance is common across the country. Thus methodologically speaking the Leader's SRA is not that low, but can also be seen as a function of the low Basic Allowance paid in Bracknell Forest.
41. Benchmarking also shows that in monetary terms the Leader's SRA compares favourably with peers:

- Benchmarking group mean Leaders' SRA £28,309
- Benchmarking group median Leader's SRA £26,361
- South East Employers Survey 2021 mean Leader's SRA £24,888

42. The IRP accepts that the Leader's powers have increased since the role was last fundamentally reviewed and it has always seen the role as more or less full time. However, benchmarking does not strongly support a revision of the Leader's SRA. The IRP has also been cognisant of the representation received that now was not the appropriate time to increase SRAs.
43. **The IRP recommends no change to the current SRA (£28,954) to the Leader's SRA, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Commission (1) and Panels (3)**

44. There was some representation received querying the current levels of SRAs paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission (£7,239) and the Chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels (£5,791). The Bracknell Forest model of Overview and Scrutiny is two tiered with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission while being the Council's statutory Crime and Disorder Committee is also responsible for health scrutiny and for scrutinising budget proposals and Council performance. It undertakes its own crosscutting reviews when required. Moreover, it co-ordinates the work of the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels:
- Education, Skills and Growth
  - Environment and Communities
  - Health and Care
45. This co-ordination role also includes appointing Overview and Scrutiny Panel Members and agreeing their work programmes. The Panels carry out the in-depth reviews and support focused policy development to feed into the Executive. The Chair and Vice Chairs of the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels are automatically appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.
46. Overview and Scrutiny was reorganised in 2019 with the number of Overview and Scrutiny Panels reduced from four to three and realigned more closely reflecting Council priorities. The Panel Chairs now lead all the reviews of their respective Panel, which was not always the case previously. Moreover, benchmarking shows that the SRA (where similar Overview and Scrutiny arrangements are in place) paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels are in both cases between the mean and median SRAs payable. The mean SRA (£7,136) and median SRA (£7,459) for Chair of main Overview and Scrutiny Committees and £5,986 and £5,502 for Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Panels.



47. **The IRP is not recommending any changes to the SRAs paid to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the Chairs of the three Scrutiny Panels, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **Member Champions (5)**

48. The SRA (£2,201) paid to the five Member Champions is very much a Bracknell Forest specific remunerated post. The IRP could find no examples of similar posts being remunerated in any of the benchmarked councils. There were some questions raised regarding the appropriateness of remunerating such posts.
49. However, the IRP received other representation that these Member Champion roles had settled in over the years. They have become an accepted part of the Council's governance arrangements by acting as a positive focus for the local community at elected Member level in respect of the relevant section of the community or range of activities designated by the Council. Thus making sure that full consideration is given to the impact of Council activities and decisions upon the section of community or range of activities. These roles have role profiles, and each Champion produces an annual report setting out the work they have carried out and progress made each year. There is also an element of succession planning in these roles.
50. **The IRP recommends no change to the current SRA (£2,201) paid to the five Member Champions, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee**

51. The current SRA (£5,626) for the Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee was set (as were most SRAs) by following the 'pro-rata' approach as set out in paragraph 76 of the 2006 Statutory Guidance which states:

Having determined which duties should be acknowledged as significant additional responsibilities, the local authority will need to consider the levels of special responsibility allowance which are attached to each post. A good starting point in determining special responsibility allowances may be to agree the allowance which should be attached to the most time consuming post on the Council (this maybe the elected mayor or the leader) and pro rata downwards for the other roles which it has agreed ought to receive an extra allowance.

52. By definition, the Leader will be 100 per cent in terms of responsibility and workload. Under the pro rata approach other SRAs are assessed as a percentage of the Leader's SRA. The IRP originally set the SRA for the Chair of Licensing and Safety at 20 per cent of the Leader's SRA, which is in line with the mean ratio in the benchmarking group. In addition, the level of SRA is

in line with the mean (£5,558) SRA and median (£5,626) paid in the benchmarking group.

53. However, the IRP felt that the SRA paid to the Chair of Licensing and Safety was out of line with the SRA (£2,201) paid to the Chair of Governance and Audit (see below). The differential between the two SRAs paid was too large. The SRA for the Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee was set when the transfer of liquor licensing functions from Magistrates to local authorities (after the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003) was expected to keep the Chair of Licensing and Safety Committee particularly active through them chairing Licensing Hearings Panels which determine appeals in relation to licensing applications. This aspect of the work has settled down over the years with seven Licensing Panel hearings in both 2018/19 and 2019/20 and three such meetings in 2020/21. Moreover, there is no consistent pattern of the Chair (or Vice Chair) of the Licensing and Safety Committee chairing the Licensing Panel Hearings which was what the IRP was originally informed was going to be the case. The full Licensing and Safety Committee has met no more than 2-3 times per year the past four years.
54. Consequently (and partly to ensure no increase in overall cost regarding the small increase in the SRA for the Chair of Governance and Audit) the IRP has decided to marginally decrease the SRA for the Chair of Licensing and Safety Committee by resetting it at 15 per cent of the Leader's SRA which equates to £4,343. It is recognised that this is slightly below that paid in benchmarking group but it is line with the mean SRA (£4,233) paid to equivalent posts in the South East Employers 2021 survey of allowances.
55. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee be reset at 15 per cent of the Leader's SRA (£28,954), which equates to £4,343, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **The Vice Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee**

56. Currently the Vice Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee receives an SRA of £553, which was originally set at 10 per cent of their Chair's SRA. The Vice Chair of Licensing and Safety Committee is one of only two remunerated Vice Chairs, the other remunerated Vice Chair is that of the Planning Committee. The IRP recognises that the current SRA is not much more than an honorarium but is content with that situation.
57. The IRP has historically supported remuneration for these two Vice Chairs, as they are the two main regulatory committees of the Council. While in practice neither the Vice Chair of the Licensing and Safety and Planning Committees have had to stand in very often for their respective chairs the potential for doing so is the greatest as unlike other committees their meetings cannot be rescheduled. As such, the IRP supports the continuation of these SRAs for the two regulatory committee Vice Chairs maintained at 10 per cent of the SRA paid to their respective chairs.

58. In the case of the Vice Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee 10 per cent of their Chairs' revised SRA (£4,343) is now £434.
59. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Vice Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee be reset at £434, which is 10 per cent of the recommended SRA (£4,343) for the Chair of the Licensing and Safety Committee, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee

60. The Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee receives an SRA (£2,201) on a par with that paid to the Member Champions. This was originally set at 7.5 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that the Bracknell Forest SRA for the Chair of Governance and Audit is the most out of line with peer councils with average SRA paid as follows:

- Benchmarking Group Chair of Audit mean SRA £4,613
- Benchmarking Group Chair of Audit median SRA £3,658
- South East Employers Survey Chair of Audit mean SRA £4,824

61. The IRP has decided that the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee merits uplift to their SRA, not to the level suggested by benchmarking – partly to ensure the IRP's recommendations are broadly cost neutral. In settling on the appropriate level, the IRP has decided to reset it at 10 per cent of the Leader's SRA, which equates to £2,895.
62. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee be reset at 10 per cent of the Leader's SRA (£28,954) which equates to £2,895, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### The Chair of the Planning Committee

63. The IRP received representation that the SRA (£7,239) for the Chair of Planning should be increased. The rationale was that this SRA was reduced a number of years ago as planning applications dealt with by the Planning Committee had decreased whereas now they have increased. However, the evidence presented to the IRP showed that the number of planning applications dealt with by the Planning Committee has consistently decreased over the last five years with 80 applications considered in 2016/17, with 63 applications considered in 2020/21 – the latter figure being consistent over the past four years.
64. Benchmarking lent some weight to the argument to increase the SRA for the Chair of Planning which shows the following:

- Benchmarking Group Chair of Planning mean SRA £8,952
- Benchmarking Group Chair of Planning median SRA £8,489
- South East Employers Survey Chair of Planning mean SRA £6,557

65. However, on the basis that the number of planning applications has not increased in the last five years and the key message for any recommendations to be broadly cost neutral **the IRP is not recommending any change to the current SRA (£7,239) for the Chair of the Planning Committee, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **The Vice Chair of the Planning Committee**

66. The IRP also received representation that the SRA (£723) for the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee was too low. The IRP acknowledges that it is low, being set at 10 per cent of the SRA paid to the Chair of the Planning Committee. The IRP consciously set it at such a low level for when the Vice Chair has to stand in for the Chair of the Planning Committee, which as a regulatory committee cannot reschedule meetings when the Chair is unavailable. The IRP obtained figures on how often the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee has stood in for the Chair of the Planning Committee since 2016/17 and it has averaged once a year since then. In this context, the argument to increase the current SRA paid to the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee is not a strong one.
67. **The IRP is not recommending any change to the current SRA (£723) for the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **SRAs for Chairs of the Advisory Panels**

68. There was representation to the IRP suggesting that there was a strong case to remunerate the Chairs of the Advisory Panels, with the Climate Change Advisory Panel being quoted as a particularly high profile Panel. The Advisory Panels are appointed to provide advice to the Executive before decisions are made and the relevant Executive Member is usually appointed to them, and in several cases chair them. They are often appointed for a time-limited period, have no decision-making powers, nor are they part of the formal structures of the Council. As such, **the IRP has not accepted the case to recommend SRAs for the Chairs of the Advisory Panels.**

### **Other SRAs currently payable**

69. The IRP received no evidence to reconsider the other SRAs currently payable. Therefore, **the IRP recommends that the other SRAs currently remain unchanged, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **Maintaining the 1-SRA only rule**

70. The 2003 Regulations do not prohibit the payment of multiple SRAs to Members. However, since SRAs are not insignificant sums, Councils typically

have adopted the '1-SRA only' rule. In other words, regardless of the number of remunerated posts individual Members may hold they can only be paid one SRA.

71. Bracknell Forest Council has adopted a 1-SRA only rule and no evidence was received to change this position. **The IRP recommends that the Council maintain the 1-SRA only rule within the Bracknell Forest Council Members' Allowances Scheme so that a Member cannot receive more than one SRA.**

### **The Co-optees' Allowance**

72. The 2003 Members' Allowances Regulations provides authority to pay a Co-optees' Allowance to non-elected appointees to Council Committees. Currently Bracknell Forest pays the following Co-optees' Allowances:

- 2 Diocesan and 2 Parent Governor Co-optees on O&S           £305
- Governance and Audit Co-optee                                       £305
- + Co-optee preparing and attending Code of Conduct Panel
  - £32 up to 4 hours/£62 over 4 hours

73. The IRP received no evidence that the current scope and levels of Co-optees' Allowances required revision. **The IRP recommends no change to the scope and level of Co-optees' Allowances, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **Members appointed to the Independent Education Appeals Panels**

74. The Council also appoints non-elected people to sit on its Independent Education Appeals Panels that deal with such issues as school admissions and exclusions. The Regulations governing the appointment and remuneration of these appointees now place their remuneration within the remit of Council statutory IRPs.

75. Currently Independent Education Appeals Panels Members can be paid "for actual loss of earnings" up to the following limits:

- £31 for a period not exceeding 4 hours
- £60 for a period between 4 and 24 hours

76. The IRP heard that the Council did have some issues of being able to recruit Members to its Independent Education Appeals Panels. Moreover, as the remuneration is designed to compensate for loss of earnings the IRP has decided that it would be more appropriate to relate their level of payments to the median daily salary for all full time employees (excluding overtime) resident within the Council area as set out in ASHE table 8.2a Home Geography 2020, which is £122 per day.

77. **The IRP recommends that the remuneration for the Members appointed to the Independent Education Appeals Panels as follows:**
- £61 for a period not exceeding 4 hours
  - £122 for a period between 4 and 24 hours
78. **The IRP also recommends that the allowances paid to appointees to the Independent Education Appeals Panels should be subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **The Civic Dignitaries Allowances**

79. Currently the Council pays Civic Dignitaries Allowances as follows:
- Mayor £12,703
  - Deputy Mayor £4,234
80. This is an allowance paid under the Local Government Act 1972 (s3(5) and s5(4)) that can be determined by the Council to pay their Council Chair and Vice Chair at a level it thinks reasonable for the purpose of meeting the expenses of holding those offices. It is outwith the remit of the IRP but the Council (as many councils do) has asked the IRP to provide advice on this allowance in the absence of any other means of external validation.
81. The IRP received no evidence that the Civic Dignitaries allowances is not meeting its purpose and there does not require revision. **The IRP recommends no change to the Civic Dignitaries Allowances, subject to the application of the recommended indexation.**

### **The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)**

82. The Dependants' Carers' Allowance is given express authority under the 2003 Members' Allowances Regulations and is an allowance that can be claimed by Members who have dependants to assist with the cost of care of those dependants while undertaking statutorily defined approved duties.
83. As is often the case the Council makes a DCA available for two different categories of care at the following maximum rates;
- Childcare: capped at hourly minimum wage applicable for the carer
  - Medical/Social Care: capped at hourly rate charged by Social Services for a home help carer
84. Although it is not claimed very often the IRP did receive overall support for the continuation of the DCA in the representation received. The IRP notes that the DCA is now almost universally available across English local government. The IRP also notes that many councils have now set the childcare rate that is at least pegged to the National Living Wage and that Bracknell Forest is committed as an employer to paying as a minimum the National Living Wage,

£9.50 per hour from April 20022. This is also a more realistic reflection of the actual costs of childcare. As such, the IRP feels it is appropriate to reset the maximum hourly rate for which childcare can be claimed to the National Living Wage.

85. Furthermore, the IRP received representation that the current DCA does not cover subscription or booking fees when a babysitting agency service is used. In addition, that some agency staff are not comfortable putting their home addresses on receipts as required by the current terms and conditions for claiming the DCA. To make the DCA more flexible the IRP feels that the claim form should be amended so that care staff can declare that they do not live in the claimant's household rather than having to give their home address.
86. **The IRP recommends that the DCA childcare maximum hourly rate be reset at the National Living Wage. Furthermore, that the claim form is amended so that care staff rather than providing their home address can declare they do not live in the claimant's household.**

### **Travel and Subsistence Allowances – within the Borough**

87. Since the January 2014 review, the IRP has discontinued the right of Members to claim any travel and subsistence allowances for undertaking approved duties within the Borough. The Basic Allowance was deemed sufficient to cover these types of costs. This is common practice within geographically compact authorities. The IRP received no evidence to alter this situation.
88. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance continues to cover all in-Borough travel and subsistence costs.**

### **Travel and Subsistence – outwith the Borough**

89. In the 2014 review, the IRP tightened up considerably the terms and conditions for which Travel and Subsistence can be claimed for undertaking approved duties outwith the Borough. These conditions seem to have bedded down with the IRP receiving no evidence or representation that they required revisiting.
90. There was some representation arguing the overnight accommodation rates are too low particularly in relation to London. Currently they are as follows:
- £158 overnight stay in London
  - £100 overnight stay outside London
91. The IRP notes that these rates are higher than what are available in the other Berkshire councils. Moreover, it would only be a rare instance that a Member would be required to stay overnight in London. Finally, the scheme provides for limited exceptions to these rates, particularly in relation to attendance at approved conferences and seminars. **The IRP does not recommend any**

**changes to current terms, conditions and rates by which subsistence can be claimed for attending approved duties outwith the Borough.**

92. There was some further representation arguing that as fuel costs have increased and therefore the mileage rates should be increase. Currently, the mileage rates are linked to HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP). This is now common practice across not only local government but the public sector and if they were increased beyond the current HMRC rates then the whole rate would be subject to tax and national insurance. There may be an issue whether current HMRC mileage rates are now sufficient but to diverge from those rates would not be good practice.
93. Although the issue was not raised with the IRP, it has decided to future proof the mileage allowances for when a Member travels by hybrid or electric vehicles. The Office for Low Emission Vehicles advises that when claiming business mileage rates then HMRC AMAP rates are applicable. The scheme should be clarified to include this scenario for when a Member is claiming mileage rates by driving a hybrid or electric vehicle.
94. **The IRP recommends that the allowances scheme is amended to include provision for when a Member is claiming out of Borough mileage rates by driving a hybrid or electric vehicle then HMRA mileage rates are applicable. The IRP recommends that the other terms, conditions and rates for claiming out of Borough travel be maintained.**

### **Indexation of Allowances**

95. The 2003 Regulations permit allowances to be indexed on an annual basis but for no longer than a period of 4 years before a Council is required to reconvene and seek a view from their IRP before it can be renewed for another four years. The main allowances (Basic Allowance and SRAs) have not been indexed since 2011. The non-indexation was on the advice of the IRP up to the last review in 2017. The rationale behind this recommendation was to show that by freezing Members' allowances it demonstrated to staff and the electorate that Members were sensitive to the adverse economic conditions.
96. In the 2017 review, the IRP on the basis that Officers had had their annual cost of living salary increased restored recommended that indexation for the main allowances should be restored. The Council choose not to accept that recommendation, as it wanted to make a point of principle in a time of austerity.
97. The IRP remains even more convinced of the appropriateness of restoring indexation of the main allowances lest they start to lag behind peers which is already the case with the Basic Allowance. The historical index recommended by the IRP for the main allowances, which is also utilised by almost all English councils, is the same percentage annual salary increased applied to staff as agreed each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff, known as the NJC index.



98. The IRP confirms and recommends that the following allowances are indexed for four years from 2022/23 to 2026/27, the maximum period permitted before the Council is required to seek advice from the IRP, as follows:

- **Basic Allowance, SRAs, Co-optees' Allowances, Civic Allowances and payments to Members of Independent Education Panels:**
  - Updated annually in line with the annual percentage pay increase given to Bracknell Forest Council employees (and rounded to the nearest £) as agreed for each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff.
- **Out of Council Area Mileage Allowance:**
  - Indexed to the Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) mileage rates.
- **Out of Council Area Other Travel and Subsistence:**
  - Reimbursement of actual costs taking into account the most cost effective means of transport and/or accommodation available and the convenience of use with the maximum rates indexed to the same periodic percentage increase that may be applied to Officer Travel and Subsistence Allowances.
- **Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA):**
  - The maximum hourly rates to be indexed to the National Living Wage (childcare) and the Council's hourly rate for a Home Care Assistance (care of other dependants).

### Implementation of Recommendations

99. It is recommended that the new Members' Allowances scheme as recommended in this report be implemented from 1 April 2022 or from any date before then as agreed by the Council.

## **Appendix One: Members who met with the IRP**

### **Elected Members:**

Cllr N. Allen:	Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee and Education Employment Sub-Committee and Vice Chair of the Employment Committee (Conservative)
Cllr Bettison (OBE):	Leader of the Council and Conservative Group and Chairman of the Executive, Executive Member for Council Strategy and Community Cohesion and Vice Chair Executive Committee: Commercial Property
Cllr D. Birch:	Deputy Leader of the Council, Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board (Conservative)
Cllr G. Birch:	Chair of the Education, Skills and Growth Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Conservative)
Cllr C. Dudley:	Chair of the Planning Committee (Conservative)
Cllr L. Gibson:	Backbench Member (Conservative)
Cllr T. Parker:	Backbench Member (Liberal Democrat)
Cllr M. Temperton:	Leader of Opposition (Labour) Group

## **Appendix Two: Officers who met with the IRP**

### **Officers:**

Ann Moore: Head of Democratic & Registration Services

Kirsty Hunt: Governance and Scrutiny Manager

**Appendix Three: Papers and other Written Material Received by the IRP**

Item	Description
1.	2006 Members Allowances Statutory Guidance (extract)
2.	Briefing for Panel
	IRP Briefing/Training power point presentation which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing Allowances</li> <li>• the Bracknell model</li> <li>• an overview</li> <li>• issues and options</li> </ul>
3.	2003 Members' Allowances Regulations
4.	2017 Independent Remuneration Panel Report
5.	Minutes recording Council's decision on 2017 recommendations
6.	BFC Members Allowances Scheme 2021/22
7.	Flowcharts for claiming
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• overnight accommodation</li> <li>• taxis</li> <li>• mileage</li> </ul>
8.	Councillors' allowances and expenses 2020-21
9.	Survey results report
10.	Paper showing what BA and main SRAs would be if indexed had been applied since 2014 review
11.	Diagram of Bracknell Forest Council Committee Structure
12.	Role profiles
	All of the Councillor role profiles are set out at <a href="https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/councillor-roles">Councillor roles   Bracknell Forest Council (bracknell-forest.gov.uk)</a>
13.	Committee membership list
14.	Schedule of Council meetings 2021/22
15.	Terms of reference for Committees, Panels etc

	<p>The terms of reference of:</p> <p>The Executive and Executive Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Executive</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Executive Committee: Commercial Property</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Joint Waste Disposal Board</a></li> </ul> <p>Regulatory Committees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Code of Conduct Panel</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Education Employment Sub Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Employment Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Governance &amp; Audit Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Licensing and Safety Committee</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Licensing Panel</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Planning Committee</a></li> </ul> <p>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Commission</p> <p><a href="#">Overview and Scrutiny Commission</a></p>
16.	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report
17.	Champions Annual Report
18.	Councillor Development Annual Report
19.	Real time benchmarking against other Berkshire Unitaries and CIPFA 10 Nearest Neighbours (2014 model)
20.	CIPFA Nearest Neighbour model (2014)
21.	Summary of hours worked (mean per week) by Councillors (Census of Councillors 2018)
22.	Bracknell median & mean weekly pay (all full time jobs excluding overtime), Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (ASHE), ONS 202016 Table 7.2a work geography
23.	National Employers for Local Government Services: Local Government Pay Offer July 2021, 27 July 2021
24.	Office for Low Emission Vehicles, Ultra Low Emission Vehicles Tax Benefits 2018
25.	Number of Licensing Panel Hearings per year (2016/17 – 2020/21) including who chaired them (highlighted when Chaired by Licensing & Safety Committee Chair or

	Vice Chair)
26.	Licensing Committee meetings per year (2016/17 – 2020/21) and who chaired them
27.	Planning Committee meetings per year (2016/17 – 2020/21) setting out the number of applications considered and who chaired them
28.	The process for escalating applications to the Planning Committee
29.	Planning applications dealt with by the planning department (2016/17 – 2020/21)
30.	Overview and Scrutiny Commission number and lengths of meetings (2018/19 – 2021/22)
31.	Overview and Scrutiny Panels number of meetings and outputs (2018/19 – 2021/22)

### Appendix Four: Benchmarking Data Summary

BM1 Bracknell Forest BM Group - CIPFA 10 Nearest Neighbours & Other Berks Unitaries: BA + Exec + Scrutiny SRAs (21/22 unless indicated)									
Comparator Council	Basic Allowance	Leader or Elected Mayor	Leader Total	Deputy Leader	Executive Members	Assistant or Deputy Execs	Chair Main O&S	Chairs/Lead Scrutiny	V/Chairs Scrutiny
West Berks (19/20)	£7,697	£19,242	£26,939	£11,545	£9,622		£4,810		
Bedford	£10,425	£52,127	£62,552	£12,511	£10,452			£5,213	
Milton Keynes	£10,924	£31,836	£42,760	£15,918	£9,809		£7,959	£4,776	
Swindon	£8,787	£26,361	£35,148	£16,256	£13,181		£6,590	£6,590	
Windsor & Maidenhead	£8,306	£24,918	£33,224	£13,705	£12,459			£4,984	
Central Bedfordshire (20/21)	£10,996	£31,337	£42,333	£25,070	£18,802	£6,267		£10,655	
Reading	£8,447	£19,009	£27,456	£11,611	Committee system			£3,124	£1,104
Thurrock (19/20)	£9,200	£32,500	£41,700	£16,560	£11,500			£6,900	£1,380
South Gloucs (20/21)	£12,196	£23,172	£35,368	NA	£12,196		£8,537	£8,537	
Slough	£8,434	£21,939	£30,373	£15,357	£12,066		£7,679	£3,291	
Bracknell Forest	£8,687	£28,954	£37,641	£17,372	£15,926		£7,239	£5,791	
Mean	£9,464	£28,309	£37,772	£15,591	£12,601		£7,136	£5,986	
Median	£8,787	£26,361	£35,368	£15,638	£12,131		£7,459	£5,502	
SEE 2020 Survey	£9,932	£24,888	£34,820	NA	£12,060		NA	NA	
Highest	£12,196	£52,127	£62,552	£25,070	£18,802		£8,537	£10,655	
Lowest	£7,697	£19,009	£26,939	£11,545	£9,622		£4,810	£3,124	
Mean Ratios	Leader = 3 X BA	100%		55%	45%		25%	21%	

<b>BM2 Bracknell Forest BM Group - 10 Nearest Neighbours + Berks Unitaries: Regulatory SRAs (20/21 unless indicated)</b>									
<b>Comparator Council</b>	<b>Chair of Planning</b>	<b>V/Chair of Planning</b>	<b>Chair of Licensing</b>	<b>V/Chair Licensing</b>	<b>Chair of Audit &amp;/or Governance</b>	<b>V/Chair Audit</b>	<b>Chair Standards</b>	<b>V/Chair Standards</b>	<b>Chair Employment or Personnel</b>
<b>West Berks (19/20)</b>	£9,620		£2,887		£2,887				£2,887
<b>Bedford</b>	£5,213		£5,213		£5,213		£1,563		
<b>Milton Keynes</b>	£8,489		£8,489		£5,836		£3,183		
<b>Swindon</b>	£6,590		£6,590		£6,590		£6,590		
<b>Windsor &amp; Maidenhead</b>	£18,690		£6,230		£4,984				
<b>Central Bedfordshire (20/21)</b>	£13,162	£2,507	£2,507		£10,655				
<b>Reading</b>	£6,243	£1,104	£6,243	£1,104	£3,124	£1,104	£3,124	£1,104	£3,124
<b>Thurrock (19/20)</b>	£9,200	£2,300	£5,520	£5,060	£2,300				
<b>South Gloucs (20/21)</b>	£8,537		£8,537		£3,658				
<b>Slough</b>	£5,485	£1,828	£3,291	£1,097	£3,291				£2,194
<b>Bracknell Forest</b>	£7,239	£723	£5,626	£553	£2,201				£2,201
<b>Mean</b>	<b>£8,952</b>	<b>£1,692</b>	<b>£5,558</b>	<b>£1,954</b>	<b>£4,613</b>		<b>£3,615</b>		<b>£2,602</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>£8,489</b>	<b>£1,828</b>	<b>£5,626</b>	<b>£1,101</b>	<b>£3,658</b>		<b>£3,154</b>		<b>£2,544</b>
<b>SEE Survey 2020</b>	<b>£6,557</b>		<b>£4,233</b>		<b>£4,824</b>				<b>NA</b>
<b>Highest</b>	<b>£18,690</b>	<b>£2,507</b>	<b>£8,537</b>	<b>£5,060</b>	<b>£10,655</b>		<b>£6,590</b>		<b>£3,124</b>
<b>Lowest</b>	<b>£5,213</b>	<b>£723</b>	<b>£2,507</b>	<b>£553</b>	<b>£2,201</b>		<b>£1,563</b>		<b>£2,194</b>
<b>Mean Ratios Leaders' SRA</b>	<b>32%</b>		<b>20%</b>		<b>16%</b>		<b>13%</b>		<b>9%</b>
<b>BM3 Bracknell Forest BM Group - CIPFA 10 Nearest Neighbours + Berkshire Unitaries: Opposition &amp; Other SRAs (20/21 unless indicated)</b>									



Comparator Council	Main Opposition Leader	Main Opposition Deputy Leader	Opposition Lead or Shadow Exec	Other Opposition Group Leaders	Chair Council	Vice Chair Council	Other SRAs/Comments
West Berks (19/20)	£7,697		£2,309	£1,902	£5,773	£1,156	Planning Chairs SRA £9,620 = 2 Planning Chairs at £4,810
Bedford	£188 p/Mbr	£94 p/Mbr	£94 p/Mbr	£188 p/Mbr	£7,298	£2,398	Chairs General Purposes + (Licensing Act 2003) Licensing Committees £5,213 + Members of Licensing Act (2003) Subs £26 1/2 day & £52 full day
Milton Keynes	£658 p/Mbr			£658 p/Mbr			Chairs Scrutiny Working Groups £4,776
Swindon	£6,590			£2,197			Chair/Vice Chair Swindon & Wiltshire Police & Crime Panel £6,590/£2,197
Windsor & Maidenhead	£4,792			£1,437	£3,121	£1,040	Deputy Chair Cabinet £13,705, Mbrs Appeals Panel £34 up to 3 hours/£67 over 3 hours meeting, Chair Berkshire Pension Fund £4,984, Planning Chair SRA £18,690 = 3 Planning Chairs at £6,230
Central Bedfordshire (20/21)	£9,698			£3,649			Exec Mbrs without Portfolio £10,655, Chair General Purpses £5,014
Reading	£6,243						Lead Mbrs £9,761, Vice Chair Personnel + Mbrs Fostering Panel £1,104
Thurrock (19/20)	£9,200	£2,300		£2,300			Chair Corporate Parenting £2,300
South Gloucs (20/21)	£8,537			£8,537	£6,098	1829	Cabinet Mbr for Children & Young People £14,634, Chair Strategic Sites £8,537, Minority Lead Mbrs on Health Scrutiny, Regulatory, Development Management & Strategic Sites £4,878
Slough	£6,582			£4,388			Vice Chair Main O&S £1,536, Chair Trustee Committee £2,194
Bracknell Forest	£9,651	£965					<i>Cllr Champions (x5) £2,201</i>
Mean	£7,666			£3,487	£5,573	£1,606	
Median	£7,697			£2,300	£5,936	£1,493	
SEE Survey 2020	£7,261			NA			
Highest	£9,698			£8,537	£7,298	£2,398	
Lowest	£4,792			£1,437	£3,121	£1,040	
Mean Ratios to Leaders' SRA	27%			12%	20%	29%	