

**A Review
Of
Members' Allowances
For
Warwick District Council**

**A Report by the
Independent Remuneration
Panel**

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September 2025

Executive Summary – Recommendations

The Table below sets out the Panel's recommendations for the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs (2026/27), including methodologies, total number of SRAs and maximum amounts payable. In reality the total paid out in SRAs is likely to be less due to the 1-SRA only rule.

Warwick 2025 Review	Recommended Maximum Payable				
POSITION	Nos Paid	Basic Allowance	Method to arrive at SRA	Total P/Mbr (BA+SRA)	Sub Total Per Category
BASIC ALLOWANCE	44	£6,726			£295,944
SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES		SRA annual			
Cabinet					
Leader & PH	1	£19,505	2.9 X BA	£26,231	£19,505
Deputy Leader & PH	1	£9,753	50% X Leader	£16,479	£9,753
Other Cabinet/ Portfolio Holders	7	£8,777	45% X Leader	£15,503	£61,441
Scrutiny					
Chairs Scrutiny Committees	2	£5,851	30% X Leader	£12,577	£11,702
Regulatory					
Chair Planning Committee	1	£6,827	35% X Leader	£13,553	£6,827
Other Members Planning Committee	10	£683	10% X Chair	£7,409	£6,827
Chair Licensing & Regulatory Committee	1	£4,876	25% X Leader	£11,602	£4,876
Chair Audit & Standards Committee	1	£4,876	25% X Leader	£11,602	£4,876
Chair Employment Committee	1	£1,950	10% X Leader	£8,676	£1,950
Opposition Group Leaders					
Leader Main Opposition Group	1	£4,876	25% X Leader	£11,602	£4,876
Leader Other Opposition Groups (Where Group has reached threshold of 3 Members)	2	£1,950	10% X Leader	£8,676	£3,900
Others					
Member Champions (maximum of 5 payable)	5	£683	Equal 2 Planning Mbrs	£7,409	£3,310
Chair Conservation Advisory Forum	1	£976	5% X Leader	£7,702	£976
Sub Total - Basic Allowance	44				£295,944
Sub Total - SRAs	34				£140,819
Total (BA+SRAs)					£436,763

The IRP also recommends:

Leaders of Other Opposition Groups – reducing the qualifying threshold to at least three Members

The qualifying threshold for the payment of an SRA for Leaders of Other Opposition Group is reduced to three Members.

Other SRAs considered and not recommended

The IRP is not recommending that Members appointed to the Stratford/Warwick Local Plan Advisory Group and Budget Review Group are paid an SRA.

Maintaining the 1-SRA Only Rule

That the rule that Members can receive no more than 1 SRA should be maintained.

The Co-optees' Allowance

That provision for a Co-optees' Allowance at £359 is maintained and to be paid to any standing Co-optees the Council appoints.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

That the Dependants' Carers' Allowances continue to be differentiated to recognise two categories of dependants, namely

- Childcare maximum hourly rate claimable set at National Living Wage
- Elderly/Disabled care maximum hourly rate claimable set at hourly rate charged by Warwickshire County Council for a Home Help

The IRP also recommends that the current allowances scheme is amended to state that the DCA can be claimed up to one hour before the start of an approved duty and up to one after the end of an approved duty attended by the Member claiming the DCA.

Travel & Subsistence Allowances - for within the District

That there should be no change to current situation in that Members cannot claim travel and subsistence allowances for attending any duties within the district.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances - Outwith the District

That the current Travel and Subsistence approved duties and rates should be maintained for Members undertaking approved duties outwith the district and that the scheme should be amended to specify that where Member is attending an approved duty outwith the district by travelling in a hybrid/electric vehicle then the mileage rates are the same as when travelling by a petrol/diesel vehicle, namely the HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rate, which is currently 45p per mile.

The Civic Allowance – Council Chair and Vice Chair

The Civic Allowance for the Council Chair is reset at £6,124 and that the Civic Allowance for the Deputy Chair is reset at £2,068, and aligned with other allowances so this is the value payable before tax. Both the Council Chair and Deputy Chair's Civic Allowances should also have relevant indexation applied

Indexation

That the following indices are applied to the allowances paid to Members of Warwick District Council:

Basic Allowance, SRAs, Civic and Co-optees' Allowances:

- Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 43) as agreed each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and applicable to the same year it applies to Officers but with an implementation date from the start of the municipal rather than financial year.

Mileage Allowance (Outwith only):

- Members' mileage allowances rates should be indexed to HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rates as at present.

Subsistence Allowances (Outwith only):

- Subsistence allowances should be indexed to the same rates that are applicable to Officers, as at present.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance:

- Child care: maximum hourly rate claimable indexed to the National Living Wage.
- Elderly/Disabled care: maximum hourly rate claimable indexed to the hourly rate charged by Warwickshire County Council Social Services Department for a Home Help.

The IRP also recommends that indexation should run for four years (2026-2030), which is the maximum length of time permitted by the 2003 Regulations (10. (5)).

Implementation

The new scheme of allowances based on the recommendations contained in this Report is adopted from the date of the Council's Annual Meeting on 13th May 2026.

A Review of Members' Allowances

For

Warwick District Council

Independent Remuneration Panel

September 2025

Regulatory context

1. This Report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel or IRP) for Warwick District Council to advise the Council on its Members' Allowances scheme.
2. 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 Remuneration Panel to review and provide advice on Members' allowances on a periodic basis.
3. 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 IRP's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme. On this particular occasion, the IRP has been 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.
4. 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. It also provides an opportunity for IRPs to publicly scrutinise their Councils allowances schemes and enhance public accountability.
5. Although the authority for the Council to continue to index its allowances does not expire until the end of 2025/26 the Council has asked the IRP to reconvene in good time to ensure that any changes it recommends to the Council's allowances scheme can be factored into the budget making process for the financial year 2026/27.

Terms of Reference

6. The Council has asked the IRP to consider the current scheme in its entirety and if it is still appropriate in terms of allowances paid and the type of SRA provided. The Council also welcomed the opportunity for Members to reply to an aide memoire for Councillors to provide open feedback to the IRP.
7. As such the IRP adopted specific terms of reference (as set out in and adapted from the 2006 Statutory Guidance paragraph 61) to make recommendations to the Council 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
 - 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. The payment of a Civic Allowance and the amount of such an Allowance
 - IX. Any matters that are brought to the attention of the IRP by Members in their consultation with Members and factual briefings from Officers

In arriving at their recommendations the IRP also took into account:

- A. The views of Members both written and oral
- B. Factual briefings on the Council from relevant Officers
- C. Allowances paid in comparable councils, namely the other Warwickshire district councils and Warwick District Council's 8 Nearest Neighbours (CIPFA 2014 model)

Membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel

8. The appointees to the Warwick District Council Independent Remuneration Panel are as follows:
 - Dr Declan Hall: an independent consultant specialising in members' allowances and support and a former academic at the Institute of Local Government, The University of Birmingham.

- Christopher Purser: Former Chairman of Warwick District Council Standards Committee and former Governor of Warwickshire College. Previously the Group Treasurer of a multinational corporation. A Chartered Management Accountant and former Chartered Secretary. Also holds a MBA from Warwick University.
 - Alan Wilkinson: Former Councillor, Warwick District Council and former Leamington Town Councillor and Town Mayor. Previously a Sales Manager in a local electronics business
9. The IRP was supported by Graham Leach, Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer and Lola Burrell, Committee Services Officer, who were the organisational lead in facilitating and supporting the work of the IRP.

The Review Process and Methodology

10. The IRP met at the offices of Warwick District Council on 4th, 5th and 11th August 2025 to its conduct interviews and reach consensus on its deliberations. The IRP meetings were in closed session to enable it to meet with Members and Officers and conduct its deliberations in confidence.
11. A representative range of elected Members were invited to meet with the IRP and any other Members requesting the opportunity to meet with the IRP were also accommodated. In accordance with the request from the Council all Members were sent an aide memoire that addressed the issues the IRP was required to consider. The IRP received 27 responses to this aide memoire. The principal purpose of the aide memoire was to identify and assess the strength of any issues of concern on the part of the wider membership. The aide memoire also had the methodological advantage of ensuring all Members were being asked a common set of questions, the main point being that all Members had at least one opportunity to exercise their voice during the review.
12. In addition, the IRP met with a number of Officers for factual briefings on political structures and constitutional changes since the last review and to obtain an overview on the challenges facing the Council.
13. The IRP also took cognizance of the range and levels of allowances paid in comparable local authorities, namely the four other Warwickshire district councils and Warwick District Council's eight Nearest Neighbours as defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy or CIPFA (2014 model), which are used by councils for benchmarking purposes.¹
14. The full range of written information received and considered by the IRP is listed in the appendices as follows:

¹ Since the last review WDCs 4th Nearest CIPFA Neighbour, Harrogate Council has been abolished, so the IRP simply replaced Harrogate Council with the next Council on the list North Hertfordshire, WDCs 9th Nearest CIPFA Neighbour on the 2014 model

- **Appendix 1:** List of information and evidence that was included in the Information Pack for IRP Members
- **Appendix 2:** Members who met with the IRP
- **Appendix 3:** Officers who provided a factual briefing to the IRP
- **Appendix 4:** Summary of benchmarking of Warwick District Council Allowances against other Warwickshire Districts and CIPFA 8 Nearest Neighbours

Key Messages – The Warwick DC Model of Remuneration – now on a par

15. Historically, when compared to peers the Basic Allowance and the majority of SRAs paid in Warwick District Council were low and did not reflect a fair rate. While the Basic Allowance and SRAs were never intended to reflect the 'market value' of the workload and responsibilities undertaken by Members, they are intended to go a large way to recognising that there is a substantial time commitment and complexity to being an elected Member and where relevant a post holder that historically was not recognised in their remuneration.
16. This is highlighted by the original policy underpinning the work of IRPs when considering the principles for establishing a Members Allowances Scheme²:

The financial support for Councillors must also reinforce the culture of the modern council and address, as far as possible, any disincentives to serving in local politics. People do not enter public service to make their fortune. But neither should they pay a price for serving the public.
17. The historically low level of allowances paid to WDC Members was largely addressed in the two previous reviews (2017 – the Basic Allowance and 2021 – the SRAs). Benchmarking also shows that broadly speaking the allowances at WDC are on a par with their peers.
18. A key message emerging from this review was that the current levels of allowances by and large meet the principle that they do not serve as a 'disincentive' to becoming and being an elected Member.

Relating Members' Allowances to performance

19. Once again, a subsidiary theme emerging from both the written and oral representations was that there should be a link between the Basic Allowance and the contribution which Members put in. In particular, it was felt by a handful of the representation received that the payment of a flat rate Basic Allowance was inequitable when it was felt that some Members were working harder than others in return for that Basic Allowance, with some suggesting that an attendance element to remuneration should be introduced.
20. The IRP can only repeat what it has pointed out in previous reviews. The simple fact is that the IRP is unable to vary the Basic Allowance to differentiate between the work loads and contribution of Members. Under the 2003 Regulations a

² Modern Local Government – In touch with the People: Cm 4014 July 1998, 3.54
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Member by virtue of being elected is entitled to the full Basic Allowance. Apart from resigning the only way not to pay the Basic Allowance is for a Member to be in breach of the 'six month' rule. If a Member does not attend an approved duty within a six month period then they cease to be a Councillor and therefore no longer paid as such. This light touch had more logic 40 years ago when Members' work was more focused on meetings. As the principal remuneration was through an attendance allowance it meant if a Member did not attend their scheduled meetings they did not get paid.

21. The IRP explored this issue in depth and decided that it was not avenue it could go down on the following grounds:
- The attendance records show that by and large Members do attend most of the scheduled meetings of their committees and panels, i.e., is not a major issue
 - While indeed there are Members who are appointed to fewer committees than others and thus have fewer meetings to attend this is a function of the political process and not the remit of the IRP
 - Putting an emphasis on attendance does not take into account the work Members do outside the formal structures of the council
 - The 2003 Regulations do not permit the payment of an 'attendance allowance'

Function of this Review – To address anomalies arising

22. As a result of the representation received and the benchmarking exercise undertaken by the IRP it concluded that the allowances scheme was broadly fit for purpose. There is no need to fundamentally revise the current allowances scheme. The prime function of this review is to address the handful of particular issues that have arisen since the previous review in 2021.

The IRPs Recommendations – The Basic Allowance - Recalibrating the Basic Allowance

• Warwick current Basic Allowance:	£6,726
• Recalibrated Basic Allowance:	£7,020
• Benchmarking (BM) Group Mean Basic Allowance:	£6,444
• Benchmarking (BM) Group Median Basic Allowance:	£6,047
• Recommended Basic Allowance:	£6,726

23. In arriving at the recommended Basic Allowance the IRP has to pay regard to the 2006 Statutory Guidance 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.³

³ 2006 Statutory Guidance on Members' Allowances paragraph 67.

24. This guidance highlights three considerations when arriving at the recommended Basic Allowance, namely:
- The 'hours' or time required to be an effective ordinary Member
 - The amount of this time that should be remunerated, often known as the Public Service Discount (PSD)
 - The rate of remuneration
25. The IRP has recalibrated the current Basic Allowance for this review by replicating the methodology set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance but with updated variables where appropriate.

Time required being a Member

26. As the Basic Allowance is primarily a time-based allowance that must be paid equally to all Members, it should take into account the full range of duties and activities that Members are expected to undertake including:
- Attending meetings of the Council, Executive, Committees and related panels, forums and task and finish groups, including training events
 - Ward casework and constituent meetings
 - Attendance at meetings of external organisations (Outside Bodies) including local community groups and stakeholder organisations
 - Emails, reading reports, agendas and research, preparation and travel time where relevant
27. The most up to date source of what time is required to be an effective Member is from the Local Government Association (LGA) Census of Councillors 2022 which shows that an elected Member of a district council who does not hold any position of significant responsibility puts in on average 15.2 hours per week on 'Council business'.⁴ In effect, it is the equivalent of just under two days per week spread over a whole week and recognising that the time commitment occurs in peaks and troughs.
28. As in 2021, when the equivalent figure was 14.3 hours per week, the IRP has not opted to utilize 15.2 hours per week as the time element to calculate the recalibrated Basic Allowance partially because the IRP has recognised the extra time put in by Planning Members (which is included in the Councillor Census 15.2 hours per week) separately - see below. Also in the representation received the feedback on the average number of hours required to be a backbench Member was almost evenly split between 8-12 hours and over 12 and up to 20 hours per weeks, with a handful of responses suggesting it was 20 plus hours per week required to be an effective backbench Member. This range of responses the IRP concluded could reasonably be estimated to be 12 hours per week, which is the same figure the IRP has utilised the past two reviews. Finally, the IRP noted that the average reported time reported in the LGA Councillors Census (15.2 hours per week) will partially reflect the capacity that a number of Councillors have to put in rather than what is necessarily required.

⁴ This does not include on average an additional 4.2 hours per week on group/party business. Breakdown of means hours by type of council and by positions held supplied to Chair of Panel in email from S. Richards, LGA Councillors Census 2022, 17th May 2023

29. Consequently the IRP has continued to use an average of 12 hours per week as the time required from a 'backbench' Member to fulfil all their duties. This equates to 78 days per year on an 8 hour working day.

Recognising the Public Service Principle

30. In arriving at the recalibrated Basic Allowance the IRP has to recognise that not all the time put in by Members should be remunerated as there is an element of public service (or *pro bono publico*) in being a Member.
31. While, the normal range is between 30% and 40% the standard amount of time that is discounted by IRPs for public service is typically around one third on the basis that of the average time spent on Council business by all English Councillors this the proportion of that time that is spent engaging with constituents, surgeries and enquiries. The IRP has historically opted for a public service discount at the higher end of the normal range, which is 40%, as Members of district councils have more direct contact with constituents than would be the case for County Councillors who are responsible for strategic services.
32. Thus, out of an assessment of an average of 78 days per year required to be an effective 'back bench' Member, 40% of that time (31.2 days) should not be remunerated. This leaves a remunerated time of 46.8 days per year.

Rate for Remuneration

33. In the past IRPs were issued advisory guidance from the Local Government Association (LGA) setting out a 'day session' rate that IRPs could (and did) adopt in setting a Basic Allowance. In 2010 this day session rate was £152.77⁵. The LGA discontinued the publication of the day session rate the following year by which time it was almost £160 per day, partly because many IRPs found such a rate hard to defend or justify methodologically (it was weighted to reflect male non-manual average earnings) and partly because there has been a change in how average earnings are published in that they are now set out on a local authority area basis.
34. IRPs now typically base the rate for remuneration on the average earnings for all full time employees resident in their particular council district. A locally based rate of remuneration relates the Basic Allowance to the average earnings of those whom Members represent and thus has a greater robustness. Since 2017 the IRP has adopted a more locally based figure for the rate of remuneration, namely the daily median earnings of all employee jobs within the district of Warwick as published annually by the Office of National Statistics in its Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE).
35. The IRP one again obtained the most recent data available (2024) from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) as published in its Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) which shows the median gross weekly earnings for all full time

⁵ See LGalert 62/10, Members' Allowances, 23 June 2010

employee jobs in the District of Warwick as £753.60, which equates to £150 per day when rounded down the nearest pound⁶.

36. Consequently, in consideration of the three variables utilized to arrive at a recalibrated Basic Allowance the IRP has adopted the values as set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Variables and sources in arriving at the recalibrated Basic Allowance

Variable	Amount	Evidence provided
Time (per year)	78 days	Based on the feedback in the representation received which continues to reflect the historical time assessment = 12 hours per week multiplied by 52 weeks and divided by an eight hour working day
Public Service Discount	40% (31.2 days)	Based on the historical PSD utilised & taking into account nature of district councils
Rate for Remuneration	£150 per day	Based on ONS ASHE Table 7.1a: median gross weekly earnings of all full time employees resident in Warwick District 2024 (£753.60)

37. By following the approach set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance the IRP arrived at a recalibrated Basic Allowance based on the following calculation:

- 78 days minus 40% = 46.8 remunerated days X £150 per day = £7,020

38. Recalibration of the Basic Allowance (£7,020) shows that the current Basic Allowance (£6,726) has slightly fallen behind its original value as indexation has not increased to the same extent as local wage growth. This difference to the recalibrated Basic Allowance (£7,020) is not statistically significant.

39. Regardless, recalibration does not provide a compelling case to revise the current Basic Allowance.

Benchmarking

40. Similarly, benchmarking does not provide a case to revise the current Basic Allowance. Benchmarking shows that the current Warwick District Council Basic Allowance (£6,526) is comparable to that paid to peers, with a mean Basic Allowance of £6,444 and a median of £6,047 paid in the comparator group of councils.⁷

Representation received

⁶ See ASHE, Table 7.1a, Weekly pay - Gross - all full time jobs - work geography, ONS provisional results 2024. The IRP has used median rather than mean (£869.60 per week) as ONS advises that the median is a more accurate reflection of 'average' earnings as it better reflects the higher number of earners on or close to living wage and evens out the distortion in the mean by a relatively few very high earners.

⁷ It is noted that once the 2025/26 index of 3.2% has been applied to the WDC Basic Allowance it will be marginally above the mean/median Basic Allowance in the benchmarking group. However, the IRP was not unduly concerned as nearly all the benchmarked councils will be applying a similar indexation to their Basic Allowance and SRAs for 2025/26.

41. Finally the general view in the representation received both oral and written was the current Basic Allowance was largely fit for purpose. There was some not insignificant representation received that argued for an increase in the current Basic Allowance; largely on the grounds that it is insufficient to fulfil its primary function, namely to enable most people to be an elected Member without suffering financial penalties, particularly for those Members who have to attend day time meetings on Planning Committee and Licensing Sub Panels.
42. The IRP did not accept this argument. It notes that a Basic Allowance of £6,517 should compensate any loss of earnings (where applicable) where a Member is required to take unpaid time off work to fulfil their Councillor duties. Moreover, there is an additional minor SRA (£662) for Members of Planning to reflect the fact that these Members have a workload above and beyond that of most of other backbench Members. In the case of Licensing, the day time commitment is not in the main significant, the workload of the being on Licensing Sub Panels is shared across the whole membership of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee, except in the case of the Chair – see below for discussion on role of Chair of Licensing and Regulatory Committee.
43. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance should be maintained at £6,726, subject to any applicable indexation.**

Special Responsibility Allowances - The Leader's SRA

• Leader's current SRA:	£19,505
• BM Group Leaders Mean SRA:	£18,356
• BM Group Leaders Median SRA:	£17,997
• Recommended Leader's SRA:	£19,505

44. The Leader's current SRA (£19,505) is set at a multiple of 2.9 times the Basic Allowance in accordance with a methodology set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 76), known as the factor approach. Benchmarking shows that this is line with mean ratio for Leaders in the comparator councils. In other words, the mean SRA for Leaders in the comparator councils is also 2.9 times the mean Basic Allowance. Similarly in terms of the level of SRA payable to the Leader benchmarking shows it is broadly in line with that paid to the Leaders in the benchmarking group. It is further noted that the Leader receives the highest SRA across all the Warwickshire District Councils.
45. There was some representation arguing that the Leader's SRA should be increased on the grounds that the role has grown and it is a full time role. As to the point that the role has grown, the IRP accepted this argument at the time of the last (2021) review and as a consequence substantially increased the SRA for the Leader.
46. A view was presented that the current political context, namely running a joint administration, means the Leader has to engage with the other political group Leaders simply to ensure an orderly operation of Council business. For example, the Leader attends, with the other Group Leaders, the Leadership Co-ordination Group, which meets on average twice a month, where upcoming issues are

discussed and ways forward agreed upon (where this can be done). However, this was also the case at the time of the previous review where there was a minority administration and was part of the reason behind the increase in the Leader's SRA at the time of the last review.

47. The IRP has never accepted that the Leader's role requires a full time commitment. The Leader attends Council offices regularly and even when not at the Council Offices the Leader has to be available to talk to or email Officers and other Members every day. It can be made into a full time role but is not necessarily *required* to be full time. This is the typical view taken by IRPs at district council level.
48. Consequently, on balance the IRP concluded that there is not a compelling case to recommend an increase in the Leader's SRA and has decided to maintain it at £18,900 subject to any indexation that is applicable. It is on par with peers, the role has not substantially altered since the last review and the weight of the representation received supported the status quo.
49. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Leader of the Council should be maintained at a multiple of 2.9 times the recommended Basic Allowance (£6,517), which equates to £18,900 per annum, subject to any indexation going forward.**

The Deputy Leader of the Council

50. Previously, in recommending other SRAs the IRP has in the main followed the approach laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 76) which states:

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.

51. This is known as the 'pro rata' approach in that the other remunerated posts are assessed as a ratio or percentage of the Leader's role. By definition the size of the Leader's roles is 100%. The IRP has chosen to maintain this approach and adjusted the ratio for SRAs where there is a demonstrable case to do so.

• Deputy Leader's current SRA:	£9,753
• BM Group Deputy Leaders' Mean SRA:	£11,055
• BM Group Deputy Leaders Median SRA:	£9,834
• Deputy Leader's recommended SRA:	£9,753

52. Currently, the SRA for the Deputy Leader is set at 50 per cent of the SRA paid to the Leader.⁸ Benchmarking shows that the ratio utilised to arrive at the Deputy Leader's SRA is somewhat below the mean ratio of 60 per cent (of the mean SRA for Leaders). In terms of the level payable (£9,753) it is also somewhat below the mean SRA (£11,055) paid to Deputy Leaders in the benchmarking

⁸ The actual SRA payable may not reflect exactly the ratio utilised due to rounding up or down after indexation.

group but broadly in line with the median SRA (£9,985). It is further noted that the Deputy Leader receives the highest SRA across the five Warwickshire District Councils.

53. The Deputy Leader undertakes the traditional role of attending briefings with the Leader, acting as a sounding board and stepping in for the Leader in the Leader's absence, which occurs more frequently as the Leader has had to undertake a larger regional role. Indeed it means that the Deputy Leader (as do most other executive members but to a lesser extent) has acquired a larger regional role simply because the demands upon the Leader have grown so much that specific tasks are delegated to the Deputy Leader such as leading on special projects as assigned, for example the Local Plan as part of their wider Portfolio. The Deputy Leader is also a member of the Joint Cabinet Committee for Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils.
54. However, in the representation received the overwhelming view was that there was no need to alter the current SRA for the Deputy Leader. It was low at the time of the last review and that issue was addressed at the time. There is not an overwhelming case to revise was also a view that the SRA for the Deputy Leader as with all other Executive Members was on the low side.
55. The IRP remains of the view that current ratio of 50 per cent of the Leader's SRA is still appropriate and has maintained that ratio vis-à-vis the recommended SRA for the Leader in arriving at the recommended SRA for the Deputy Leader, which equates to £9,753.
56. **The IRP recommends that the SRA Deputy Leader/Portfolio Holder remains at £9,753, subject to any indexation applicable.**

Other Executive/Portfolio Holders (x7)

• Other Executive Members current SRA:	£8,777
• BM Group Other Executive Members Mean SRA:	£9,659
• BM Group Other Executive Members Median SRA:	£8,888
• Other Executive Members recommended SRA:	£8,777

57. Legislation puts a cap on the number of Executive Members at a maximum of 10, including the Leader and Deputy Leader. Currently there are seven other Executive Members, an increase of one since the 2017 review so they have each acquired a slightly reduced remit since that point.
58. Benchmarking shows that while the WDC Portfolio Holders are paid an SRA set at 45 per cent of the Leader's SRA the mean ratio is 52 per cent. Similarly, in terms of level paid it is somewhat below the mean SRA (£9,659) for equivalent posts in the comparator councils but broadly in line with the median SRA (£8,888). It is also noted that the Portfolio Holders at WDC are the highest paid across the four Warwickshire District Councils that remunerate an equivalent post. Moreover, despite the WDC Portfolio Holders being paid somewhat below peers it is noted that many of the comparator councils will have fewer Portfolio Holders, for instance there are four at Rugby and Nuneaton and Bedworth and

five at Chelmsford and Stratford. Finally, there was no significant representation received to alter the current SRA paid to the Portfolio Holders.

59. Consequently, despite the benchmarking that on the face of it provides a degree of evidence to alter the SRA for the Portfolio Holders the IRP concluded that the weight of the evidence and representation received supported the status quo.
60. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the 7 other Members of the Executive/Portfolio Holders remain at £8,777, subject to any indexation that is applicable.**

Chair of Planning Committee

•	Planning Chairman current SRA:	£6,827
•	BM Group Planning Chairmen Mean SRA:	£6,564
•	BM Group Planning Chairmen Median SRA:	£6,005
•	Recommended Planning Chairman SRA:	£6,827

61. Currently the Chair of the Planning Committee receives an SRA (£6,827) set at 35 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA for the Chairs of Planning has been set at 36 per cent of the mean SRA for Leaders. In terms of the level payable, benchmarking shows a mean (£6,564) and median (£6,005) SRA for Chairs of Planning Committees in the comparator group. Comparatively, the Chair of Planning at WDC is paid on a par with peers both methodologically and the level payable.
62. There was some representation that as Planning met so often the Chair should be paid on a par with the Other Portfolio Holders. The IRP has not accepted this argument. The Other Portfolio Holders exercise delegated executive decision making and does not occur in the majority of the comparator councils.
63. Planning is a statutory function and where planning applications are not delegated to Officers then that function must be discharged by a committee. Decisions of the Planning Committee are quasi-judicial in that they have the force of law. It is noted that 90% of planning applications now delegated to and decided by Officers, although often after consultation with the Planning Chairman. However, due to development pressures in the district planning is a high profile committee that meets more often than any other committee, on a four week cycle as opposed to six week cycle of Cabinet. However, due to planning pressures in the district it can and does meet more frequently, with additional meetings scheduled as required. In addition there are site visits scheduled on Saturday morning prior to Committee that is organised by the Council, at the request of the Chair ahead of the meeting or by the Committee itself. The Panel also noted these are now rare in occurrence with none taking place this municipal year. The Chair has to chair what are often raucous and contentious meetings and is subject to a great deal of lobbying, as are all Members of the Planning Committee.
64. The IRP accepts that the Chair of Planning has a larger workload and responsibility than other committee chairs, with the Planning Committee being the most active and high profile committee of the Council and the SRA for the

Chairman should reflect that reality in that their SRA should be the highest of the remunerated committee chair while differentiating sufficiently from other Executive Members to recognise the distinction in their constitutional responsibilities. Consequently, the IRP has maintained the current ratio of 35 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA (£19,505) in arriving at the recommended SRA for the Chair of the Planning Committee, which equates to £6,827.

65. **The recommended SRA for the Chair of the Planning Committee is £6,827, subject to any indexation that is applicable.**

Other Members of the Planning Committee (x10)

66. Since 2017 the other Members of the Planning Committee have been paid an SRA, currently £683, set at 10 per cent of the Planning Chair's SRAs. It is paid to recognise the additional workload of Planning Committee members being above and beyond that expected from other elected Members. In addition there was a Warwick District Council specific additional workload carried out by all Planning Members in the requirement to undertake council organised site visits on Saturday mornings (although it is noted that not all site visits scheduled actually take place) which is not typically the case in other councils.
67. It is difficult to benchmark this SRA as only two other comparator councils pay a similar SRA – Colchester at £1,193 and Stratford at £661. Nonetheless, there was overwhelming support in the representation received to continue this SRA at the current level payable. Therefore the IRP concluded that this SRA should be maintained at its current level.
68. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the other 10 Members of the Planning Committee is maintained at 10 per cent of the Planning Chair's recommended SRA, which equates to £683, subject to any indexation that is applicable.** The Planning Chair is not eligible for this SRA as they are already being recommended an SRA that takes into the account their wider workload and responsibilities on the Planning Committee. In addition where an ordinary Member of the Planning Committee is in receipt of another SRA then they are still bound by the 1-SRA only rule - see below.

Chair of Licensing & Regulatory Committee

• Licensing & Regulatory Chair's current SRA:	£4,876
• BM Group Licensing Chairs Mean SRA:	£3,976
• BM Group Licensing Chairs Median SRA:	£4,142
• Recommended Licensing & Regulatory Chairman SRA:	£4,876

69. The Licensing & Regulatory Committee and its sub Panels discharge the statutory functions in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 which mainly relates to working on the Council's licensing policy and hold hearings where there are objections to licensing applications.

70. The SRA for the Chair of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee has been set at 25 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that the mean ratio for this post is 22 per cent, so methodologically it is broadly on a par with peers. In terms of the level of SRA payable it is slightly above the average paid to similar posts in the comparator councils. In addition while in the main the representation received supported continuing this SRA at the current level there was some representation that argued it was on the high side.
71. However, the largest part of the work of Licensing and Regulatory Committee relates to liquor and gambling applications that are the subject of objections and requests made for the review of licenses. In turn these are now considered by one of the five Licensing Sub Panels, consisting of three Members drawn from the full committee. All Licensing and Regulatory Committee Members are assigned a Sub Panel with each Sub Panel scheduled to meet in rotation so the workload is spread across the full membership. Since the last review there are on average 18 Licensing Sub Panels per year. While each Member of the Committee is assigned a particular Sub Panel meeting they are not always in a position to attend and in these instances the custom and practice is for the Chair of Licensing and Regulatory to stand in, thus they attend more Licensing and Regulatory Sub Panels than anyone else, which is not necessarily the case in all the comparator councils. In addition, under Officer delegated decision making powers the Chair is consulted on the relevant decisions made by Officers.
72. Consequently the IRP concluded that the current SRA (£4,876) was still appropriate and should be maintained at its current level.
73. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chairman of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee is maintained at £4,876, subject to any indexation that is applicable.**

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

• Overview & Scrutiny Chair's current SRA:	£4,876
• BM Group Overview & Scrutiny Chairs Mean SRA:	£5,147
• BM Group Overview & Scrutiny Chairs Median SRA:	£4,482
• Recommended Overview & Scrutiny Chair's SRA:	£5,851

74. The current SRA (£4,876) for the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee has been set at 25 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows the mean ratio is 28 per cent of the mean Leaders SRA. In terms of the actual level paid the current SRA for the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny is the mid-point between the mean and median SRA. However, the benchmarking is somewhat clouded by the fact that many other Councils will have 3-4 or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees, for instance Nuneaton and Bedworth has six whereas there are only two equivalent committees in Warwick District Council.
75. Overview and Scrutiny is the process whereby executive decision-makers are held to account and is a statutory function which has to be discharged by at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Its prime purpose is to review items to be considered by the Executive, review past decisions, policy development,

health and wellbeing issues and any specific issues and problems with any service area, with the exception of housing (see below).

76. There was some substantial representation arguing that the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee merited a higher SRA. The main rationale for this view was that Overview and Scrutiny Committee now has 11 scheduled meetings per year and will also typically schedule in a couple of additional meetings per year.
77. The IRP accepted this argument, based on the number of increased meetings alone it no longer made sense for the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to be paid an SRA on par with the Chairs of Licensing and Regulatory and Audit and Standards Committees. Consequently, the IRP has decided that the current ratio of 25 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA should be reset at 30 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA, which equates to £5,851. This places the SRA for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee between that paid to the Chair of Planning and the recommended SRA for the Chairs of the Licensing and Regulatory and Audit and Standards Committees.
78. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is reset at 30 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA, which equates to £5,851 subject to any applicable indexation.**

Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee

•	Housing Scrutiny Chair's current SRA:	£4,876
•	BM Group Overview & Scrutiny Chairs Mean SRA:	£5,147
•	BM Group Overview & Scrutiny Chairs Median SRA:	£4,482
•	Recommended Housing Scrutiny Chair's SRA:	£5,851

79. The SRA for the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee has been set at 25 per cent of the Leader's SRA. The comments regarding benchmarking for the SRA paid to the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee echo those made above regarding the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
80. The Council retains its social housing stock and as such Housing is a major function of the Council. The Housing Scrutiny Committee was set up in response to a specific set of issues regarding social housing in Warwick DC. As such the Committee has a high resonance.
81. There was significant representation that due to the challenges facing social housing in WDC that the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee merited a higher SRA. Again, it is noted that the Housing Scrutiny Committee does meet more than Licensing and Regulatory and Audit and Standards Committees. For 2025/26 it has nine scheduled meetings with the prospect of additional meetings as and when required.
82. Consequently, the IRP concluded that the SRA for the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee should be paid on a par with the recommended SRA for the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and reset at 30 per cent of the Leader's SRA, which equates to £5,851.

83. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Committee is reset at 30 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA, which equates to £5,851 subject to any applicable indexation.**

Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee

- Audit & Standards Committee Chair's current SRA: £4,876
- BM Group Audit Chair's Mean SRA: £3,664
- BM Group Audit Chair's Median SRA: £3,947
- Recommended Audit & Standards Committee Chair's SRA: £4,876

84. The SRA for the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee has been set at 25 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that the mean ratio for similar posts is 20 per cent. In terms of the actual level of SRA paid, benchmarking also shows that the WDC Chair of Audit and Standards is somewhat higher than the mean and median SRA.
85. However, this benchmarking comes with a caution, unlike in many of the comparator councils such as Nuneaton and Bedworth, the WDC Audit and Standards Committee has a dual function. While the Standards function is not particularly onerous since the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 potentially there is the possibility of it holding standards hearings in which the Chair would be expected to have a leading role. Moreover, while the logic of the Localism Act now means that nearly all complaints against Members are resolved by the Monitoring Office and Independent Person, the Chair will be consulted during this resolution process.
86. It is further noted that four other Councils maintain a separate Standards Committee with a remunerated Chair in addition to an Audit Committee. Furthermore, the Audit and Standards Committee has additional functions of elections and electoral registration and boundary reviews, which is not the case in most councils.
87. While there was some representation that questioned the level of the current SRA paid to the Chair of Audit and Standards it was not significant. The IRP further noted that it discharges two statutory functions, with Audit becoming more prominent in recent years. Consequently, the IRP concluded that there was no case to be made to revise this SRA.
88. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Audit and Standards Committee is maintained at £4,876, subject to any indexation applicable.**

Chair of the Employment Committee

- Employment Committee Chair's current SRA: £1,950
- BM Group Employment Chair's Mean SRA: £1,771
- BM Group Employment Chair's Median SRA: £1,553
- Recommended Employment Committee Chair's SRA: £1,950

89. The SRA for the Chair of the Employment Committee has been set at 10 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that the mean ratio is also 10 per cent. In terms of the actual level of SRA payable benchmarking shows that the WDC Chair of Employment is broadly on a par with peers. Although, it must be pointed out this is on a small comparator group as only four out of the 14 comparator councils remunerate an equivalent role.
90. The Employment Committee is responsible for approving any policies affecting staff employment, including terms and conditions and oversees arrangements for determining staff appeals. The IRP considered whether the Chair of the Employment Committee still merited an SRA on the basis that it is scheduled to meet less than most other committees, four times per year and it is not a post that is typically paid elsewhere. However, the IRP has decided to maintain this SRA at 10 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA as it is a full committee of the Council.
91. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Employment Committee is maintained at £1,950, subject to any applicable indexation.**

Chair of the Warwick District Towns Conservation Advisory Forum (CAF)

92. The SRA (£976) for the Chair of the Warwick District Towns Conservation Advisory Forum (or CAF) has been set at five per cent of the Leader's SRA. This SRA cannot be benchmarking as the post/forum is WDC specific.
93. The Warwick District Towns Conservation Advisory Forum (or CAF) is a Warwick District Council specific body that reflects the District's special historic and architectural nature. CAF's purpose is to assist in protecting and enhancing the District's historic and architectural character. It consists of stakeholder representatives and two elected Members of the Council who have an interest in the historic environment and planning matters and are appointed as Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair also acts as the Council's Heritage Champion. CAF has 12 scheduled meetings per year to reflect the planning cycle so that it can make recommendations to the Planning Committee where applications have an impact on historical buildings or where they are of special nature. But at least half the scheduled meetings do not take place due to the nature of planning applications, i.e., they do not impact on historical buildings. It is an informal consultative body organised at the Council's discretion.
94. Again the IRP considered whether the Chair of CAF continued to merit an SRA particularly as it is not a full committee and is advisory in nature. The IRP decided to maintain this SRA as it does make a value contribution to the work of the Planning Committee. In the representation received there was general support for the continuation of this SRA at the current level payable.
95. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Warwick District Towns Conservation Advisory Forum is maintained at five per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA, which equates to £976, subject to any indexation applicable.**

Opposition SRAs - Leader of the Main Opposition Group

- Main Opposition Group Leader current SRA: £4,876
- BM Group Main Opposition Group Leaders Mean SRA: £4,581
- BM Group Main Opposition Group Leaders Median SRA: £4,491
- Recommended Main Opposition Group Leader SRA: £4,876

96. Currently the main Opposition Group Leader receives an SRA (£4,876) that has been set at 25 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows the mean ratio for this role is also 25 per cent. In terms of the level payable, it is also broadly in line with the average paid to similar posts in comparator councils.
97. There was a view expressed to the IRP that all Opposition Group Leaders should receive the same level of SRA. The IRP has not accepted this view. The Leader of the largest Opposition Group by definition will have the largest group management role to undertake. The post holder also has primary responsibility to provide challenge to the administration. It is further noted that it is common practice to pay a higher SRA to Leaders of Main Opposition Groups than to Leaders of Other (smaller) Opposition Groups. Finally, the majority of the representation received supported the status quo.
98. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Leader of the Main Opposition Group remains at £4,876, subject to any applicable indexation.**

Leaders of Other Opposition Groups – reducing the qualifying threshold to at least three Members

99. Currently, the allowances scheme only permits the payment of an SRA to Leaders of Other Opposition Groups once they reach a threshold of having four Members. This type of qualifying threshold is common across English Councils. However, the IRP received significant representation that this threshold discriminated against the smaller Opposition Groups. This is particularly inequitable considering that all Opposition Group Leaders are required to attend the Leadership Co-ordination Group (LCG) at least once a month and this body has taken on a greater significance in the current political context.
100. **The IRP recommends that the qualifying threshold for the payment of an SRA for Leaders of Other Opposition Group is reduced to three Members.**

Leaders of Other Opposition Groups with at least Three Members (X3)

- Other Opposition Group Leaders current SRA: £1,950
- BM Group Other Opposition Group Leaders Mean SRA: £2,488
- BM Group Other Opposition Group Leaders Median SRA: £2,154
- Recommended Other Opposition Group Leaders SRA: £1,950

101. The current SRA for Leaders of Other Opposition Groups has been set at 10 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows the mean ratio is 14 per cent and in terms of the level of SRA payable the WDC SRA for Leaders of Other Opposition is somewhat on the low side. However, the IRP was content with this

as it notes that in many other comparator councils this type of SRA is not paid until other Opposition Groups reach a larger threshold than the IRP is recommending here. For instance, the qualifying threshold for Leaders of Other Opposition Groups in Charnwood and Maidstone is five, North Warwickshire Stratford and Nuneaton and Bedworth it is four. Thus, as part of the quid pro quo for reducing the threshold for the payment of an SRA to Leaders of Other Opposition Groups to three the IRP is comfortable with a SRA slightly lower than that made to similar posts in the comparator councils where they often paid to Leaders of Other Opposition Groups that are larger than will be the case in WDC.

102. The IRP also received representation that Leaders of Other Opposition Groups should get paid an SRA on a sliding scale based on respective Group size. However, the IRP rejected this argument as it starts to make the allowances scheme complicated and the reality is that there is not a great deal of difference in the workload and responsibility for whether an Other Opposition Group has three or five Members.
103. **The IRP recommends that where an Other Opposition Group reaches the qualifying criteria of having a minimum of three Group Members then they receive an SRA set at 10 per cent of the Leader's recommended SRA, which equates to of £1,950, subject to any indexation applicable.**

Other SRAs considered and recommended – Member Champions (x5)

104. The IRP received noticeable representation that the role of Member Champion should be remunerated. The Council appoints five Member Champions for the following themes
- Children and Adults Safeguarding Champions (x2)
 - Armed Forces Covenant Champion
 - Heritage Champion
 - Parish/Town Champion
105. There are role profiles for the Member Champions and they are generally expected to familiarise themselves with their remit, liaise with relevant stakeholders to facilitate discussions and promote awareness of their brief.
106. Benchmarking has no utility in this context as the equivalent posts are not remunerated in the comparator councils, although it is not unknown for such posts to receive an SRA in other councils.
107. Nonetheless, the IRP was content that there was a role to undertake that merited a small SRA. In deciding on an appropriate level the IRP felt that the role was comparable to that of being a Member of the Planning Committee, who are paid an SRA of £683.
108. **The IRP recommends that the Member Champions are paid an SRA of £683, subject to any applicable indexation. The IRP also recommends that the number of Member Champions that can receive an SRA is capped at a maximum of five.**

Other SRAs considered and not recommended

– Members of the Stratford/Warwick Local Plan Advisory Group (SWLPAG)

109. There was some representation received that the five Members appointed to the Joint Stratford/Warwick Local Plan Advisory Group (SWLPAG) merited an SRA. The main argument for this was that there are lots of meetings of the SWLPAG. Indeed this is the case; it can meet as regular as fortnightly when the cycle for settling on the Local Plan is active. However, once the work of the SWLPAG is completed it goes into relative abeyance for the next couple of years. It is further noted that the Stratford Members appointed to SWLPAG do not receive an SRA. Finally, the IRP concluded that membership of this type of Working Group was the type of duty that could reasonably be expected of all Members and is covered by the Basic Allowance.
110. **The IRP is not recommending that Members appointed to the Stratford/Warwick Local Plan Advisory Group are paid an SRA.**

Members of the Budget Review Group

111. The IRP also received some representation that Members appointed to the Budget Review Group should also receive an SRA. The work of this review group feeds into the budget making process. It consists of 11 Members consisting of the Chairs and additional Members of the Audit and Standards, Overview and Scrutiny and Housing Scrutiny Committees. It typically meets three times per year.
112. The IRP notes that this role is not remunerated in the comparator councils. Again, the IRP concluded that membership of this type of review group was part of a Member's wider duties for which the Basic Allowance is paid.
113. **The IRP is not recommending that an SRA is paid to Members of the Budget Review Group.**

Maintaining the 1-SRA Only Rule

114. In common with most Councils Warwick District Council has adopted what is known as the 1-SRA only rule; in that regardless of the number of remunerated posts held by an elected Member they can be paid one SRA only. No evidence was received to change the 1-SRA only rule for Warwick District Council.
115. **The IRP recommends that the 1-SRA only rule is maintained.**

The Co-optees' Allowance

116. The scheme contains provision for a Co-optees' Allowance (£359 per year) for non-elected Co-optees appointed to the Council's committees and panels in accordance with Part III the Local Government Act 2000. This is simply an historical figure that represents an acknowledgement of the potential for a Co-optee to be

involved in a Standards Hearing. At the present time the only standing Co-optees are two Parish representatives for Standards. The IRP received no evidence that this allowance required revision.

117. **The IRP recommends that provision for a Co-optees' Allowance at £359 is maintained, subject to any indexation applicable, and to be paid to any standing Co-optees the Council appoints.**

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

118. Insofar as there was an understanding or awareness of the DCA there was universal support for the continuation of the DCA despite it being rarely claimed. What did emerge from the representation received was little awareness of the DCA and what it could be claimed for.
119. The IRP takes this opportunity to point out that this allowance was given recognition in statute and is specifically designed to reduce a potential barrier to being an elected Member for those with caring responsibilities, including childcare and elderly/disabled dependants. The IRP suggests that if it is known that a Member has caring responsibilities then the DCA is specifically brought to their attention and explained what it can be used for and how it may be claimed. It should also be noted that approved duties for which the DCA may be claimed are determined by statute.
120. There were a couple of issues raised regarding the DCA. The first was the maximum rates payable; it was felt that they were not realistic. Currently, the childcare element is capped at the hourly rate for the National Living Wage and the elderly/disabled element is capped at the hourly rate charged by Warwickshire County Council for a Home Help. These differential rates are typical for the DCA. It has to be capped at some rate otherwise it becomes an open ended allowance which is not good practice. The IRP acknowledges that the DCA may not cover all the costs of dependants care in all instances but it has always viewed the DCA as a substantial contribution to those costs as is pointed out in the current allowances scheme. The current maximum rates claimable fulfil that function.
121. The other issue raised was the need to produce receipts which it was suggested could be difficult to obtain from someone providing informal child care. Again, it is simply good practice to provide receipts where relevant when seeking reimbursement of costs. In the case of childcare it does not have to be a formal receipt per se it can simply be a simple signed acknowledgement that the child care was provided and the payment was made to the carer.
122. One area where the IRP felt that might make the DCA more accessible was if it permitted a Member to claim the DCA one hour before an approved duty starts and one hour after an approved duty ends.
123. **The IRP recommends that the Dependants' Carers' Allowance continues to be receipted and maintained to recognise two categories of dependants, namely**

- **Childcare** maximum hourly rate claimable set at

- **Elderly/Disabled care** **National Living Wage**
maximum hourly rate claimable set at
hourly rate charged by Warwickshire
County Council for a Home Help

124. **The IRP also recommends that the current allowances scheme is amended to state that the DCA can be claimed up to one hour before the start of an approved duty and up to one after the end of an approved duty attended by the Member claiming the DCA.**

Travel & Subsistence Allowances - for within the District

125. Currently Members do not have the right to claim travel and subsistence allowances for attending approved duties within the district. The IRP received some representation that Members should have provision for claiming in-authority travel restored. The issue was particularly raised in relation to travel costs of Members who represent the more rural wards and need to undertake not insignificant travel to visit constituents. It was also raised in relation to those Members who attend Parish and Town Council meetings within their electoral division in that they should be able to claim a travel allowance for such meetings.
126. The IRP has not accepted this representation. Visiting constituents and attending Parish Council meetings were never defined as approved duties even when Members had the right to claim in-authority travel. In any case, part of the rationale behind the recommended increase in the Basic Allowance back in 2017 was so that it was deemed inclusive of all such expenses.
127. **The IRP recommends that there should be no change to current situation in that Members cannot claim travel and subsistence allowances for attending any duties within the district.**

Travel and Subsistence Allowances - Outwith the District

128. It is a different context when a Member has to travel outwith the District to represent the Council at regional and national meetings or attend conferences. In these cases Members are incurring expenses that are beyond 'incidental' and are not typically incurred through a Member's routine work. The IRP received no evidence to change the current approved duties and conditions for which the Travel and Subsistence Allowances may be claimed outwith the district.
129. **The IRP recommends that the current Travel and Subsistence approved duties and rates should be maintained for Members undertaking approved duties outwith the district.**

The Civic Allowance – Council Chair and Vice Chair

130. Although the payment of the Civic Allowance is outside the remit of the 2003 Regulations the IRP has been asked by the Council, in the absence of any other external validation, to provide a view on the payment of the Civic Allowance to the Council Chair and Vice Chair.

131. The Civic Allowance is payable under the 1972 Local Government Act (s3(5) and (s5(4) whereby a Council “may pay the chair and vice chair an allowance which it thinks reasonable for the purpose of meeting the expenses of those offices.”⁹ The current Civic Allowance for the Council Chair is £6,124 and the Vice Chair £2,068. Unusually, this allowance is paid after tax, which means in effect that the Council is paying tax and where applicable national insurance on behalf of the Council Chair and Vice Chair. This is not typical in English local government.
132. The IRP was informed that the role of the Civic Head (and by extension the Deputy Civic Head) has altered over the years with a dramatic reduction in the number of external events the Council Chair is required to attend down to a handful a year. This has also dramatically reduced the “expenses of those offices.” Although the Civic Allowance is not an SRA the IRP does note that the Council Chair is still required to chair eight Council meetings per year and recognises that the Civic Allowance does in effect partially recognise this responsibility.
133. The main issue for the IRP was whether the Chair and Vice Chair were out of pocket by virtue of holding civic office. No evidence was received to suggest that they were. In fact, in the representation received the general view, where there was one expressed, was that the current level of Civic Allowances more than adequately covered expenses incurred.
134. As a result the IRP has decided that the current level of Civic Allowances payable after tax (£6,124 and £2,068) should be paid before tax – there is no reason why the Council should be paying tax and national insurance on behalf of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council.
135. **The IRP recommends that the Civic Allowance for the Council Chair is reset at £6,124 and that the Civic Allowance for the Deputy Chair is reset at £2,068, both allowances payable before tax. Both the Council Chair and Deputy Chair’s Civic Allowances should also have relevant indexation applied**

Indexation

136. The IRP has historically supported the right of the District Council to index allowances in accordance with the 2003 Regulations (10. (4)). It is now common practice across all English local authorities and was almost universally supported in the representation received. Historically and in common with most other English local authorities the principal indexation utilised has been what is known as the NJC index, which is the annual percentage salary increase local government staff as agreed each year by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services.
137. However, it is not unknown for a flat rate monetary across the board increase to be awarded to Local Government Staff which results in differential percentage salary increase depending on which Spinal Column Point (SCP) staff are on. Those staff members who are on the lowest SCP, i.e., the lowest paid, get a higher percentage increase in salary than those staff that is on the highest SCP, i.e., the highest paid. In this context, IRPs have started to link the annual indexation of

⁹ 2006 Statutory Guidance, paragraph 90

members' allowances to SCP 43 – the top Spinal Column Point, which results in the lowest percentage increase. This means that Members will not have a higher percentage increase than any member of staff.

138. The IRP has no reason to change its policy on the indexation of Members Allowances in Warwick District Council. It helps to prevent allowances losing their relative value, which necessitates periodic substantial increases simply to maintain their value. Moreover, to ensure that where there are flat sum increases each year the IRP has decided to link indexation to SCP 43.

139. **The IRP recommends that the following indices are applied to the allowances paid to Members of Warwick District Council:**

Basic Allowance, SRAs, Civic and Co-optees' Allowances:

- Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 43) as agreed each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services and applicable to the same year it applies to Officers but with an implementation date from the start of the municipal rather than financial year.

Mileage Allowance (Outwith only):

- Members' mileage allowances rates should be indexed to HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rates.

Subsistence Allowances (Outwith only):

- Subsistence allowances should be indexed to the same rates that are applicable to Officers.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance:

- Child care: maximum hourly rate claimable indexed to the National Living Wage.
- Elderly/Disabled care: maximum hourly rate claimable indexed to the hourly rate charged by Warwickshire County Council Social Services Department for a Home Help.

140. **The IRP also recommends that indexation should run for four years (2026-2030), which is the maximum length of time permitted by the 2003 Regulations (10. (5)).**

Implementation

141. **The IRP recommends that the new scheme of allowances based on the recommendations contained in this Report is adopted from the date of the Council's Annual Meeting on 13th May 2026.**

APPENDIX 1 - - Information reviewed by the IRP

1. IRP Terms of Reference
2. Warwick Council Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/251 including full schedule of SRAs payable and travel and subsistence allowances including approved duties
3. The Councils annual statutory publication of Members' allowances and expenses received by each Member including category sub totals, 2023/24.
4. Members' Allowances Review, IRP Report September 2021
5. Minutes recording decision re: September 2021 IRP Report as set out in Report to Cabinet, 10 February 2022 and Council 23 February 2022
6. Diagram/Flowchart of Warwick District Council Committee structure
7. Calendar of Council Meetings 2024/25, including the number of:
 - Meetings that were cancelled in 2024/25
 - Licensing and/or Regulatory Panel meetings for last 4 years and who chaired them
 - Standards hearings for past 4 years and who chaired them
8. Calendar of Council Meetings 2025/26
9. Terms of Reference for Committees, Panels, etc., including the membership of the Executive and Committees and who chairs them
10. Summary of main changes to Constitution/Committees since 2021
 - Verbal report from Graham Leach, Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer
11. Copy of replies to aide memoire sent to all elected Members
12. WDC pay scale points as of 1 April 2024
13. Local Government Association, summary of hours worked (mean per week) by Councillors (by Council type/positions held), Census of Councillors 2022
14. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 7.1a, average weekly earnings (gross) for all full time employee jobs in the District of Warwick, provisional results, October 2024, ONS
15. National Employers for Local Government Services: Local Government Pay Offer 2025/26, National Employers pay offer of 23.2% (on all NJC Pay points 2 and above), 22 April 2025
16. Benchmarking data - summary of allowances paid in the benchmarked councils 2024/25 or the latest data available
 - WDCs CIPFA 8 Nearest Neighbours + 4 other Warwickshire District Councils

17. Copy of power point Presentation to IRP on Reviewing Allowances and the Warwick District Council model by IRP Chair
18. Members Allowances Statutory Guidance May 2006
19. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, SI 2003/1021

APPENDIX 2 - Member Interviewees

1. Cllr A. Boad Leader Liberal Democrat Main Opposition Group & Chair of Planning Committee
2. Cllr M. Collins Chair Employment Committee (Labour)
3. Cllr I. Davison Leader of Council, Portfolio Holder for Strategic Leadership and Leader of the Green Group
4. Cllr A. Day Leader of Conservative Other Opposition Group
5. Cllr R. Dickson Backbench Member (Liberal Democrat)
6. Cllr J. Falp Leader of Whitnash Residents Association Other Opposition Group
7. Cllr C. Gifford Chair Conservation Advisory Forum (Liberal Democrat)
8. Cllr K. Gorman Chair of Licensing & Regulatory Committee (Green)
9. Cllr C. King Deputy Leader & Portfolio Holder for Place (Labour)
10. Cllr R. Margrave Backbench Councillor (Whitnash Residents Association)
11. Cllr J. Matecki Backbench Councillor (Conservative)
12. Cllr A. Milton Chair Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Liberal Democrat)
13. Cllr J. Melrose Labour Group Leader & Portfolio Holder for People & Organisational Development (Conservative)
14. Cllr G. Rosu Backbench Councillor (Labour)
15. Cllr P. Phillips Chair Housing Scrutiny Committee (Conservative)
16. Cllr N. Tangri Chair of WDC (Green)
17. Cllr H. Yellapragada Backbench Councillor (Green)

APPENDIX 3 - - Offices who provided a Factual Briefing to the IRP

Chris Elliot	Chief Executive
Graham Leach	Head of Governance and Monitoring Officer
Lola Burrell	Committee Services Officer

APPENDIX 4 – Benchmarking

BM1 Warwick DC Benchmarking Group - Warwicks DCs + 8 CIPFA NN: BA + Exec + Scrutiny SRAs (2024/25 *unless stated)									
Comparator Council	BA	Leader	Leader Total	Deputy Leader	Other Cabinet	Deputies to Cabinet	Chair If One O&S	V/Chair Main O&S	Chairs Scrutiny Panels etc
Chelmsford	£6,810	£26,727	£33,537	£17,631	£13,362	£6,681	£6,681	£3,339	
Cheltenham	£6,645	£21,154	£27,799	NA	£13,997		£2,947	£1,473	
Maidstone	£6,047	£24,189	£30,236	£14,513	£12,094		£8,456		
Stafford	£5,668	£12,779	£18,447	£9,128	£6,937		£3,894	£1,517	
Colchester (23/24)	£7,577	£22,729	£30,306	£14,320	£13,638				£7,955
Charnwood	£6,000	£14,597	£20,597	£10,216	£5,839		£4,378	£1,753	£4,088
Tunbridge Wells	£6,000	£22,000	£28,000	NA	£11,000		£1,375		
N. Hertfordshire	£5,999	£17,997	£23,996	£11,522	£8,999		£4,319		
North Warwicks	£5,998	£13,239	£19,237	committee system					NA
Nuneaton & Bedworth	£5,870	£14,675	£20,545	£8,805	£7,338				£3,669
Rugby	£7,901	£14,964	£22,865	£6,584	£6,584		£3,951		
Stratford-on-Avon	£6,526	£14,683	£21,209	£8,076	£7,342		£5,873		
Warwick (25/26)	£6,726	£19,505	£26,231	£9,753	£8,777				£4,876
Mean	£6,444	£18,403	£24,847	£11,055	£9,659		£4,653	£2,021	£5,147
Median	£6,047	£17,997	£23,996	£9,985	£8,888		£4,319	£1,635	£4,482
Highest	£7,901	£26,727	£33,537	£17,631	£13,997		£8,456	£3,339	£7,955
Lowest	£5,668	£12,779	£18,447	£6,584	£5,839		£1,375	£1,473	£3,669
SRAs Mean Ratios/mean Leaders SRA		2.9 X BA		60%	52%		25%	43%	28%
Warwick Ratios		2.9 X BA		50%	45%				25%

BM2 Warwick DC Benchmarking - Other Warwicks & 8 NNs DCs: Regulatory SRAs (2024/25 * unless stated)									
Comparator Council	Chair Planning	Planning Vice Chair	Members Planning	Chair Licensing	Licensing Vice Chair	Chrs Licensing Panel &/or Appeals	Chair Standards	Chair HR &/or Employment	Chair Audit &/or Governance
Chelmsford	£8,820	£4,410		£6,681					£1,341
Cheltenham	£5,207	£1,881		£5,207	£1,770		£1,190	£397	£1,785
Maidstone	£9,675			£4,838		£88 p/mtng			£4,838
Stafford	£5,111	£1,095				£1,947	£1,184	£1,156	£2,799
Colchester (23/24)	£7,955		£1,193	£6,819					£4,546
Charnwood	£4,378	£1,753		£2,919	£877		£1,753		£4,088
Tunbridge Wells	£6,000	£1,320		£2,800			£2,588		£3,500
N. Hertfordshire	£8,999			£1,715					£4,319
North Warwicks	£6,005	£2,104		£2,104					
Nuneaton & Bedworth	£5,136			£1,468					£4,403
Rugby	£4,611			£4,611		£569			£3,806
Stratford-on-Avon	£6,608	£2,312	£661	£3,672		£1,836		£3,582	£3,672
Warwick (25/26)	£6,827		£683	£4,876				£1,950	£4,876
Mean	£6,564	£2,125	£846	£3,976		£1,451	£1,679	£1,771	£3,664
Median	£6,005	£1,881	£683	£4,142		£1,836	£1,472	£1,553	£3,947
Highest	£9,675	£4,410	£1,193	£6,819		£1,947	£2,588	£3,582	£4,876
Lowest	£4,378	£1,095	£661	£1,468		£569	£1,184	£397	£1,341
Mean Ratio SRA/Leaders SRA	36%	32%	13%	22%		8%	9%	10%	20%
Warwick Ratios	35%		10%	25%				10%	25%

BM3 Warwick DC Benchmarking Group: Other Warwicks & 8 NNs DCs - Group & Misc SRAs 2024/25 (*unless indicated)				
Comparator Councils	Main Opposition Group Leader	Deputy Leader Main Opposition	Minor Opposition Group Leader	Other SRAs & Comments
Chelmsford	£8,820		£1,341	Chair Policy Board £8,820, Chair Governance £1,341
Cheltenham	£793		£793	Chair & V/Chair Cabinet Housing Committee £4,463/£1,517
Maidstone	£2,419		£2,419	Licensing Panel Members £67 per meeting, Chair Policy Advisory Group n£3,628, Chair Democracy & GP Committee £2,419
Stafford	£4,868			Chair Employee Appeals and Vice Chair Planning - SRAs only paid if Mbr has chaired meeting in preceding quarter
Colchester (23/24)	£7,072		£2,771	Chairs Crime & Disorder + Local Plan, Policy Board £4,546, Licensing Members £511
Charnwood	£4,894			Vice Chairs Scrutiny £1,636, 2 Vice Chairs Licensing SRA £877 each
Tunbridge Wells	£5,800		£5,800	Chair Joint Transportation Board £1,800, Chairs CABs £2,600
N. Hertfordshire	£4,319		£4,319	Chairs Area Forums (x5) £1,081
North Warwicks	£4,491	£2,104	£2,104	Chairs Safer Communities + Special Sub Committees £2,104
Nuneaton & Bedworth	£3,669			
Rugby	£3,294		£1,181	Vice-Chair Audit & Ethics £1,623, Chair Shareholders Committee £3,806
Stratford-on-Avon	£4,405		£2,203	Chair of Council £3,672
Warwick (25/26)	<i>£4,876</i>		<i>£1,950</i>	<i>Chair Warwick Towns Conservation Forum £976, Chair a Programme Advisory Board £378</i>
Mean	£4,594		£2,488	
Median	£4,491		£2,154	
Highest	£8,820		£5,800	
Lowest	£793		£793	
Mean Ratio/mean Leaders' SRA	25%		14%	
Warwick Ratios	25%		10%	