A Review
Of
Members’ Allowances
For
Northumberland County Council

The Eighth Report
By the
Independent Remuneration Panel

Shelly Allsopp
Norman Dunn
Dr Declan Hall (Chair)
Craig Moore
Richard Waters

September 2013
Foreword

This report sets out the deliberations and recommendations of the eighth independent review of Members’ Allowances by the statutory Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) for Northumberland County Council. The Panel has been set up and maintained in line with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowance) (England) Regulations 2003 and has been reconvened to advise the Council on its Members’ Allowances scheme in light of changes in the Council’s constitution and the requirement to seek fresh authority for indexing of allowances.

The last major review (the sixth – see Sixth Report December 2008) recommended some substantial revisions to the current scheme to facilitate the transition to unitary status and support the roles and responsibilities that Members would be required to fulfill in the new single tier unitary context – the majority of the recommendations were accepted by the Council. As such, the current scope and level of allowances payable to Members of Northumberland County Council was largely established by the sixth review.

The remuneration model that has historically been recommended by the Panel, and adopted by the Council, has been a consistent one in that, as a rule, Vice Chairs have not been paid an SRA. Moreover, compared to other similar councils the numbers of SRAs payable has not been significantly expanded over the years. The recommendations from this review depart from this historical pattern. The changes in the governance of the Council are intended to lead to a more inclusive policy development, review, and decision-making process. To a degree, the Panel has had to accept this intention without the benefit of long-term experience, as the governance model was only adopted in late May 2013. If the intentions of the new governance model are borne out by experience then the Panel will revisit its recommendations contained in this report to make amendments accordingly.

While it is never a good time to review allowances the Panel is cognisant that it is a particularly challenging time to do so in light of the on-going financial pressures on the public sector and local government in particular. While the review has not been driven by desire to find savings, the Panel cannot but be mindful of the current economic climate and has sought to balance this context against what it feels the posts under consideration are worth based on the new model of decision-making, policy development and review, and scrutiny.

Dr Declan Hall
Chair of the Northumberland County Council Independent Remuneration Panel
September 2013

1 See Statutory Instruments 2003 Nos. 1021, 1022 and 1692 for further details.
## Executive Summary: Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Nos.</th>
<th>SRA</th>
<th>Sub-Total</th>
<th>Total Per Member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader of Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£27,000.00</td>
<td>£27,000.00</td>
<td>£39,625.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£18,090.00</td>
<td>£18,090.00</td>
<td>£30,715.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Board Members with Portfolio</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>£14,850.00</td>
<td>£74,250.00</td>
<td>£27,475.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Chair of Council</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£14,850.00</td>
<td>£14,850.00</td>
<td>£27,475.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Board Member without Portfolio/Opposition Group Leaders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£12,150.00</td>
<td>£36,450.00</td>
<td>£24,775.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Scrutiny Committees</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>£12,150.00</td>
<td>£48,600.00</td>
<td>£24,775.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chairs Scrutiny Committees</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>£3,645.00</td>
<td>£14,580.00</td>
<td>£16,270.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Central Planning, Environment &amp; Rights of Way Committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£12,150.00</td>
<td>£12,150.00</td>
<td>£24,775.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair Central Planning, Environment &amp; Rights of Way/Chair of Rights of Way Sub-Committees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£5,467.50</td>
<td>£5,467.50</td>
<td>£18,092.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Area Committees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£10,800.00</td>
<td>£32,400.00</td>
<td>£23,425.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chairs Area Committees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£2,700.00</td>
<td>£8,100.00</td>
<td>£15,325.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Area Planning Committees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£9,450.00</td>
<td>£28,350.00</td>
<td>£22,075.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chairs Area Planning Committees</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>£3,307.50</td>
<td>£9,922.50</td>
<td>£15,932.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Licensing &amp; Regulatory and Licensing Committees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£9,450.00</td>
<td>£9,450.00</td>
<td>£22,075.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair Licensing &amp; Regulatory and Licensing Committees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£2,362.50</td>
<td>£2,363.00</td>
<td>£14,987.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Audit Committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,630.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Pensions Panel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,630.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Executive Working Groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,200.00</td>
<td>£16,675.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Council Working Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>£1,350.00</td>
<td>£2,700.00</td>
<td>£13,975.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Opposition Group Deputy Leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,860.00</td>
<td>£4,860.00</td>
<td>£17,485.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Opposition Group Deputy Leaders (with 7 Members)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£2,430.00</td>
<td>£2,430.00</td>
<td>£15,055.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Licensing &amp; Regulatory and Licensing Committees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£9,450.00</td>
<td>£9,450.00</td>
<td>£22,075.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice Chair Licensing &amp; Regulatory and Licensing Committees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£2,362.50</td>
<td>£2,363.00</td>
<td>£14,987.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair of Audit Committee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,630.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chair Pensions Panel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,630.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Executive Working Groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>£4,005.00</td>
<td>£16,200.00</td>
<td>£16,675.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs Council Working Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>£1,350.00</td>
<td>£2,700.00</td>
<td>£13,975.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Opposition Group Deputy Leader</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£4,860.00</td>
<td>£4,860.00</td>
<td>£17,485.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Opposition Group Deputy Leaders (with 7 Members)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£2,430.00</td>
<td>£2,430.00</td>
<td>£15,055.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group Secretaries SRA @ £15 per Group Member:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Secretaries not subject to 1-SRA only rule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour Group Secretary (31 Members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Group Secretary (20 Members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democrat Group Secretary (9 Members)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total SRAs recommended**

| 49 |
| £377,093.00 |

**Total Basic Allowance recommended**

| 67 |
| £12,625.00 |
| £845,875.00 |
The Panel also recommends the following, namely that:

A Future Review
A mini-review of allowances is undertaken within 12 months so the Panel can re-assess the recommendations of this review with the benefit of having experience of the Council’s new governance structures.

The Basic Allowance
There is no change to the current Basic Allowance (£12,625) payable.

Working Groups
Until it undertakes a further review to assess the appropriateness of recommended SRAs contained in the review that regardless of other Working Groups set up or those outside the current terms of reference, the only SRAs paid to the Chairs of Working Groups are those specified in this review.

Opposition Group SRAs – Qualifying Criteria: the 10% Rule
Before any Opposition Group SRA is payable then an Opposition Group must have at least seven group members (10% of Council membership).

Opposition Group Leaders – if not on the Policy Board
Subject to meeting the qualifying criteria, if an Opposition Group Leader is not on the Policy Board then the Opposition Group Leaders SRAs are payable as at present, namely:

- Main Opposition Group Leader: £12,150
- 1st Minor Opposition Group Leader: £8,100
- 2nd Minor Opposition Group Leader: £5,400

If the largest Opposition Group does not meet the qualifying criteria, i.e., it has less than seven members, then it is recommended they receive an Opposition Group Leaders SRA of £5,400 – on the condition that the post holder is not on the Policy Board.

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Council – Civic Allowance
The SRAs for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council be discontinued from the date the new scheme is implemented and they are each paid a Civic Allowance that reflects the cost of holding office.
Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board
The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board is not paid an SRA at this stage.

Members of the Police & Crime Panel
The two Northumberland County Council appointees to the Northumbria PCP are not paid an SRA at this stage.

Confirming 1-SRA Only Rule
The 1-SRA only rule be maintained, with the exception of Group Secretaries who are able to receive the relevant SRA for being Group Secretary (subject to their group attaining the 10% qualifying criteria) and one other SRA where applicable.

The Co-optees’ Allowances – Members of Audit Committee
The Co-optees’ Allowance of £1,000 per year paid to the two co-opted Members of the Audit Committee remains unaltered.

Standards – Ordinary Co-optees
The Co-optees’ Allowance of £500 per year paid to the three co-opted Members of the Standards Committee remains unaltered.

The new Co-opted Chair of the Standards Committee
The co-opted Chair of the Standards Committee receives a Co-optees’ Allowance of £2,700 per year.

The Independent Person
The Independent Person receives a remuneration of £2,700 per year.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances
The Panel supports the principle of offering Members access to the car-leasing scheme via salary sacrifice that is also being made available to Officers and on the same terms and conditions, subject to the Council being satisfied that it will lead to savings vis-à-vis the current spend on mileage allowances.

Furthermore, the approved duties for which members may claim travel and subsistence allowances and the rates at which they are payable remain unchanged for 2013/14, except where a Member leases a car through the Council’s salary sacrifice scheme, in which case the Company Car Advisory rates should be applicable.

The Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance (DCA)
The current maximum rates (including indices), terms and conditions and approved duties for which the DCA may be claimed remain unchanged.

Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)
The Council continues to enable all Members to join the LGPS, subject to the outcome of the government’s consultation on councillor access to the LGPS.

Indexation
The Northumberland County Council members’ allowances are indexed as follows:

- **Basic Allowance, SRAs, Co-optees’ Allowances and IP remuneration:**
  - Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 49), to applied from the same date and for the same period that applies to staff.

- **Travel Allowance – Mileage Rates:**
  - Indexed to HMRC approved mileage rates for motor vehicles, motor cycles and bicycles
  - Where a Member has joined the Council’s car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice then the HMRC company car advisory mileage rates should apply

- **Subsistence Allowance – Maximum Rates:**
  - Indexed to the same rates that apply to Officers

- **Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance – Maximum Rates:**
  - Indexed to the hourly rate payable for Northumberland County Council Home Carers, including both the weekday and weekend rates depending when care is being claimed for

Implementation of Recommendations
The new Members’ Allowances scheme as recommended in this report, is implemented from the date of the Council’s Annual Meeting on 22nd May, 2013, or at any date thereafter as agreed by the Authority, subject to the following exceptions:

- Where remunerated appointments have been made since the date of the 2013 Annual Meeting then the recommended SRAs should only be payable from the date of appointment.

- Where the Panel has recommended a decrease for a current post holder’s SRA then the lower SRA payable should take affect from the date the Council formally adopts the new Members’ Allowances scheme.
A Review of Members’ Allowances

For

Northumberland County Council

By the

Independent Remuneration Panel

The Eighth Report

September 2013

Introduction: The Regulatory Context

1. This (eighth) report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) reconvened by Northumberland County Council to advise the Council on its Members’ Allowances scheme for 2013/14.

2. The Panel was convened under The Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021), or 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 (the Panel) to review and provide advice on Members’ allowances on a periodic basis. All Councils are required to convene their Panel and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their members’ allowances scheme and they must ‘pay regard’ to their Panel’s recommendations before setting a new or amended Members’ Allowances Scheme.

3. On this particular occasion, the Panel has been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations [19. (1], which states that before an authority makes or amends:


… a scheme, the authority shall have regard to the recommendations made in relation to it by an independent remuneration panel.

4. Due to recent changes in its governance model the Council will need to change its Members’ Allowances scheme accordingly and, therefore, is required to seek independent advice from the Panel in accordance with the Regulation outlined above.

The Panel

5. Northumberland County Council reconvened its Independent Remuneration Panel, constituting of the following:

- **Shelly Allsopp:**
  Member of the Northumberland County Council People’s Panel and a county resident

- **Norman Dunn:**
  Vice President of Northumberland Association of Local Councils and a county resident

- **Dr Declan Hall (Chair):**
  Former academic at the Institute of Local Government, currently an independent consultant specialising in members’ allowances

- **Dr Craig Moore:**
  Associate Dean for Internationalisation Centre of Public Policy, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne and county resident

- **Richard Waters:**
  A self employed businessman and county resident

6. The Panel was supported by Lesley Bennett, Team Leader (Governance/People) Democratic Services, whose role was to service the Panel, and take the organisational lead in facilitating the whole process. Additional support to the Panel was provided by Nichola Turnbull from Democratic Services.

Terms of Reference

7. The Panel was given a general terms of reference, namely to review the Members’ Allowances scheme for Northumberland Council in accordance with the requirements of 2003 Members’ Allowances and 2006 Members Allowances statutory guidance and make recommendations accordingly.

8. In particular, the Panel was asked to consider the following:
(i) The categories of Members who should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance, with specific reference to the new posts namely

A. Business Chair of the Council

B. Non-Portfolio members of the Policy Board (Executive)

C. Chair of the Central Planning and Environment & Rights of Way Committee

D. Vice Chair of Central Planning & Environment and Rights of Way Committee

E. Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee

F. Vice Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory Committee

G. Chairs of the following Council Working Groups (WGs):
   - Constitution WG
   - Parish Liaison WG

H. Chairs of the following Executive Working Groups
   - Housing
   - Streetcare and Infrastructure and Culture (Urban) WG
   - Streetcare and Infrastructure and Culture (Rural) WG
   - Capital Works Programme WG
   - Regeneration WG

(ii) The Panel was also asked to consider whether there is a case to revise any of the current SRAs payable, with specific reference to

   - Vice Chairs of the Area Committees
   - Vice Chair of Area Planning Committees

(iii) The scope and level of Co-optees’ Allowances, in particular for the Chair of the Standards Committee which will be occupied by a non-council appointee in future

(iv) Advise upon the remuneration of the post of Independent Person – Standards Committee

(v) The expenses of arranging for the care of children and other dependants and the amount of these Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance (DCA) and the means by which they are determined

(vi) The scope and rates of travel and subsistence allowances taking into account the geography of the county, including advising the Council
whether Members should be offered access to the car-leasing scheme via salary sacrifice

(vii) The application of an index to allowances payable and, if so, what the relevant indices should be

(viii) The pensionable allowances for Members and whether any changes should be made to the current provision

(ix) The implementation date for the new scheme of Members’ allowances, including if backdating should take place and, if so, the effective date

9. In arriving at its recommendations, the Panel is to take into account:

- The Council’s adverse financial position and budgetary constraints
- The existing Northumberland County Council Members’ Allowances scheme
- The role descriptions and responsibilities of posts as supplied
- The views of Members and Officers, both written and oral
- Relevant benchmarking data, with specific reference to the Members’ Allowances schemes from the other six authorities that make up the “LA7 Leadership Board” that will be forming the North East Combined Authority in April 2014 and other unitary county councils in England.

Process and Methodology

Evidence Reviewed by the Panel

10. The Panel met at County Hall, Morpeth on 20th – 21st June, 2013 and on 23 September, 2013. The Panel meetings were held in private session to enable the Panel to meet with Members and Officers and conduct deliberations in confidence. In arriving at its recommendations, the Panel took into account the following range of evidence:

- The new constitution, including supplementary amendments, for Northumberland County Council, which outlined the changes in political structures and roles and responsibilities of Members, including role profiles where available
- The views of Members, both written and oral
- Officer briefings outlining how the new Policy Board, committees and working groups will operate
- The range and level of allowances payable in the comparator group of authorities
• Other relevant supporting material such as the guidance from Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the meetings schedule of the Council and its committees, last year and this year, and terms of reference of the new committees and role profiles where available

11. All Members were invited to make written submissions to the Panel and all Members who wished to meet with the Panel were accommodated as far as practically possible. See Appendix 1 for Members and Officers who met with the Panel, including written submissions and Appendices 2 and 3 for the full range of evidence considered by the Panel.

Observations and Comments

Limited Knowledge of New Governance Arrangements

12. The Council only formally adopted the new governance structures on 2nd May 2013 and this review has taken place very much in the context whereby the full impacts and operation of the new structures cannot yet be fully ascertained. There are some metrics available to Panel by which to assess the new roles and responsibilities, such as the number of meetings and terms of reference of the reconfigured and new committees and the scope of constitutional responsibilities for relevant post holders. However, what the new governance model will mean in practice will only become known after a longer period of operation and consolidation. Moreover, some of the posts that the Panel has been asked to review, particularly the Chairs of the Working Groups, have yet to be formally appointed and (at the time of writing) no role profiles have been developed.

13. As with all new structures, there will be an element of ‘bedding in’ and, therefore, the recommendations contained in this report reflect the early stages of the operation of the new structures. The recommendations should not be viewed as the final statement on members’ allowances for Northumberland County Council for the next 3-4 years but rather a reflection of what is known now and how the new governance model is intended to operate.

14. Consequently, the Panel recommends that a mini-review of allowances be undertaken within 12 months so the Panel can re-assess the recommendations of this review with the benefit of having substantial experience of the Council’s new governance structures.

A New SRA Model: Recognising the enhanced role of all Members

15. Nonetheless, the legal and constitutional changes are clearly significant and provide the starting point for the Panel to make its assessment of the new governance model. Overall, the powers and responsibilities of the Council will not alter but how they are exercised will. Some roles will not change, such as
being the Chair of the Audit Committee, others will change such as 
Opposition Group Leaders who are now on the new executive Policy Board 
as Non-Portfolio Holders, other roles are completely new while other roles 
have changed since the last review and their SRA needs revisiting.

16. More importantly, a key message presented to the Panel is that a central theme underpinning the new governance structures is the genuine desire to operate as a more inclusive Council and for that greater inclusiveness to be successful the scope of SRAs payable needs expanding. Local government in general and Northumberland County Council in particular will be required to take unprecedented tough decisions regarding finding further savings and what and how services will be delivered. Consequently, the message to the Panel is that a substantially revised model of remuneration is required, particularly in the context of a minority administration. For the Council and Members to have the means to meet the new challenges in the new world of local government that there has to be a wide as possible Member ‘buy-in’ and the remuneration, such as remunerating all vice chairs, needs to be able to support this way of working.

17. Historically, the Panel has taken the view that, in the main, Committee Vice-Chairs have not met the test of holding additional significant responsibility to warrant an SRA. Yet, the model presented to the Panel was that now Vice-Chairs, in particular, merit an SRA to reflect the more inclusive nature of policy and decision-making of Northumberland County Council. The Panel has to a large degree, accepted the vision behind the new governance model in that, for it to work, greater incentives are required through paying more SRAs, and reconfiguring other SRAs.

Recognising the current economic context and role of review

18. However, another key message emerging from the review was that while there is a strong case to change the Council’s current SRA model, the reality is that the Council is not in a position to accept any recommended increase in the total spend on members’ allowances. The current economic context cannot be ignored – there is little point in making recommendations that bear no relationship to economic constraints within which the Council has to operate; otherwise, the review is simply making aspirational recommendations for a future date rather than supporting the new demands being placed on Members.

19. This is not to say the role of the review is to pre-empt what are 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 current knowledge of the new 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 what the roles under consideration are worth.

20. Yet, the Panel’s recommendations need to have support of Council as the Members make the final decision on their scope and levels of remuneration. Consequently, for Members it is important that, for the recommendations to be accepted, they have to stand up to public scrutiny, which means not increasing the 2012/13 allowances budget. Indeed, there is a public duty on the Panel to ensure that a degree of public accountability is brought to bear through the process of the review and the public would rightly question if 2012/13 allowances budget were increased. Consequently, as the recommendations stand and, if accepted and implemented in full, they will result in a saving of £4,257 on the 2012/13 budget for Northumberland County Council Members’ Special Responsibility Allowances.²

21. To ensure the current spend on allowances is not increased in a context where a larger number of SRAs are to be paid, monies has to be freed up elsewhere. Fortunately, much of this money has come from the abolition of some posts, most noticeably the Secretary to the Cabinet and three Project Development Posts, and the reduction of the number of Portfolio Holders on the new executive Policy Board. However, the Panel has still had to find more money and it has done this by increasing the differential between the SRAs paid to Chairs and Vice-Chairs and recommending cuts in some SRAs where the Panel feels that some roles have not developed as intended and taken a relatively cautious view on some new roles.

The Panel’s Recommendations

22. To set out a marker for the future, an evidence-based Basic Allowance (and Chair’s SRA) has been set out to show what the Panel would probably be recommending if it was not constrained by economic considerations. In doing so, it enables the Panel to test the robustness of the current Basic Allowance and Leader’s SRA (and by definition, all other SRAs that are in turn related to the Leader’s SRA). Moreover, if there is a case to increase any of the main allowance currently payable it enables the Council to consider doing so when it is not so constrained economically.

Recalibrating the Basic Allowance from the 2008 Review

23. While the terms of reference do not specifically ask the Panel to pay particular attention to the current Basic Allowance, the Panel did review it for a health check, as it has not undergone a fundamental review since the 2008 review.

² The estimated annual saving of £4,257 vis-à-vis last year’s allowances budget is based on the assumption that no Member will hold more than one remunerated post. In 2012/13, the actual spend on SRAs was £379,029 due to the 1-SRA only rule. With the new remuneration model it is inevitable that the savings on the actual spend on Members’ Allowances in 2013/14 will be greater than £4,275, as more Members will hold two remunerated posts, thus resulting in further savings.
The 2008 Approach – Triangulating the Basic Allowance

24. In the 2008 (sixth) review the recommended Basic Allowance (£12,500) was arrived at by a process of triangulation based on

- The formulaic approach laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance, which is based on time required to undertake back bencher role minus a public service discount multiplied by an appropriate rate of remuneration
- Adding the average Basic Allowance (2008) paid in the soon to disappear Northumberland district councils to the Basic Allowance for Northumberland County Council in 2008
- Benchmarking against other county unitary authorities, which in 2008 were largely confined to Wales and Scotland

25. The current Basic Allowance of £12,625 is accounted for by the application of one year’s indexation in 2009/10 of 1% that was applied to the Basic Allowance only and not applied to SRAs.

A recalibrated Basic Allowance for 2013/14

26. The Panel is not able to replicate the triangulation process from 2008 to arrive at a recalibrated Basic Allowance, as the district council approach no longer has any validity. However, for the purposes of this review a triangulation approach can be developed that still has robustness.

27. By following the formulaic approach as laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance there are key changes to the values assigned to 2 of the 3 variables utilised, namely time to undertake the role of the backbencher and the rate of remuneration.

28. The 2010 census of councillors, published 2011 and the latest date for which figures are available shows that the average input by Members in unitary authorities with no positions was 24.7 hours per week\(^3\). Based on the local government standard working week for local government employees of 37 hours per week, this time input is the equivalent of 34 weeks, or 170 days per year. This is a small increase from the assessment of 156 days per year from the 2008 Review.

29. The 2012 rate of remuneration (median gross daily salary for all full time employees resident in Northumberland) is now £93.04 per day.\(^4\) In 2008, the equivalent rate of remuneration was £87 per day.

---

\(^3\) Evans, K. and Aston, H. (2011) National Census of Local Authority Councillors 2010 Slough: NFER. Detailed breakdown by type of authority and positions held was supplied by Stephen Richards, Senior Analyst, Research and Innovation, LGA in email to Declan Hall, 25 January 2012

\(^4\) See ASHE, Table 8.1a Weekly pay –Gross (£) – For Full Time employee jobs – United Kingdom 2012, which shows median weekly earnings to be for residents of Northumberland to be £465.20, which was divided by 5 working days to
30. Thus a recalibrated Basic Allowance can be arrived at with updated values to two key variables by following the formula set out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (see paragraphs 66-69) as follows

- 170 days expected input per year minus 25% of that time (42.5 days) for the PSD X £93.04 per day
  = £11,863

**Benchmarking**

31. The second element to the triangulation is benchmarking against other comparator authorities. Rather than benchmarking against unitary authorities in Wales and, in particular, Scotland, which in 2008 were the only unitary county authorities in the UK comparable to a unitary Northumberland County Council, the Panel now has real experience of allowances paid in other comparable unitary county councils in England. To this benchmarking group, and in line with the terms of reference, has been added the LA7 group of Tyne and Wear (T&W) unitary metropolitan authorities and Durham (which is in both groups anyway). A main reason to add these seven authorities, which includes Northumberland County Council, is that they will be forming the North East Combined Authority in April 2014 – see Appendix 3 for full comparisons of allowances paid in benchmarking group.

32. Taking both groups of authorities together it shows that the average Basic Allowance paid in 2012/13 was £10,412, with the lowest being South Tyneside (£7,226) and highest being Durham (£13,300) – see table 1 below. Clearly, the current Basic Allowance of £12,625 is noticeably in excess of the average paid in the comparator group. However, it is also noticeable that all the Tyne and Wear metropolitan unitary authorities pay a lower Basic Allowance than the English unitary counties. The average Basic Allowance paid in the (admittedly small) group of English unitary county councils is £12,347, a figure more in line with that paid in Northumberland County Council.

33. Moreover, the benchmarking particularly against the T&W authorities needs to come with a health warning. For instance, Newcastle City Council has a relatively low Basic Allowance of £8,775 but its allowances scheme also provides an SRA (£828) for all ordinary Members on its planning committee as well as those on its Licensing Act and Appeals Committees (£414). In effect nearly all ordinary members are able to receive an SRA for sitting on a statutory committee which, while it may not substantially alter the average Basic Allowance paid in the full benchmarking group, does show that the ‘real’ remuneration received by ordinary members in Newcastle is not necessarily

---

3 A similar health warning can be applied to the Wiltshire allowances scheme, which provides SRAs for 18 Area Chairs (£5,034) and 13 “portfolio holders” (£5,663), in addition to remunerating the maximum of 10 executive members and all committee Vice Chairs.
reflected in the published Basic Allowance. Also the T&W unitary councils (bar Sunderland) as a general rule remunerate all their respective committee vice chairs and a wider range of chairs than is currently the case in Northumberland County Council.

Table 1: Basic Allowance & Leaders/Elected Mayor SRA – benchmarking group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T&amp;W Mets/County Unitary Councils</th>
<th>Basic Allowance</th>
<th>Leader or Elected Mayor SRA</th>
<th>Total Remuneration Elected Mayor or Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>£12,128</td>
<td>£20,000</td>
<td>£32,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>£13,300</td>
<td>£36,575</td>
<td>£49,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>£10,120</td>
<td>£30,369</td>
<td>£40,489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>£8,775</td>
<td>£16,550</td>
<td>£25,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Tyneside</td>
<td>£7,896</td>
<td>£53,838</td>
<td>£61,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>£11,514</td>
<td>£23,028</td>
<td>£34,542</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Tyneside</td>
<td>£7,226</td>
<td>£26,496</td>
<td>£33,722</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>£8,369</td>
<td>£37,667</td>
<td>£46,036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>£12,167</td>
<td>£31,178</td>
<td>£43,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>£12,625</td>
<td>£27,000</td>
<td>£39,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>£13,300</td>
<td>£53,838</td>
<td>£61,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>£7,226</td>
<td>£16,550</td>
<td>£25,325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>£10,412</td>
<td>£30,270</td>
<td>£40,682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland (actual)⁶</td>
<td>£16,234</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales (actual)</td>
<td>£13,175</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjusting for not increasing the number of Northumberland Councillors

34. In the 2008 review, the Panel’s recommended Basic Allowance was predicated on assumption that the review of electoral arrangements by the Boundary Commission would increase the number of councillors to 79 which, at the time, was also the Council’s preferred option, when the Council formally became a unitary council in 2009. The Panel suggested that in the event there would be less than 79 elected Members of the new unitary council then the total sum allocated to the recommended Basic Allowance for 79 Members (79 X £12,500 = £987,500) be divided by the eventual number of elected Members decided by the Boundary Commission, or £13,500 whatever figure was lower.

⁶ Although the Basic Allowances payable in the unitary authorities in Scotland and Wales have not been utilised for benchmarking purposes for this review they have been set out for information purposes.
35. In the event, the Local Government Boundary Commission maintained the number of Northumberland County Councillors at 67. Thus, by dividing the total sum that would have been paid in Basic Allowances (£987,500) if there were 79 councillors by the unaltered number of councillors of 67, it produces a figure of £14,731. If the Council had followed the Panel’s suggestion this figure would have automatically be reduced to a recalibrated Basic Allowance of £13,500 as the lower figure and the Panel’s suggested cap.

The 2013 triangulation of the Basic Allowance

36. Through an updated process of triangulation the Panel arrived at 4 tentative figures for a recalibrated Basic Allowance:

- Statutory Guidance Approach: £11,863
- Bench marking Group A (full comparator group): £10,412
- Bench marking Group B (unitary counties only): £12,347
- No increase in councillor numbers: £13,500

37. This shows that the current Basic Allowance (£12,625) is still broadly appropriate and has not fallen behind in relative value. Therefore, the Panel is not recommending any change in the current Basic Allowance for 2013/14, subject to any indexation that may be applicable.

The Leader of the Council

38. With the new Policy Board the role of Leader of the Council will be larger, simply by virtue of having an enhanced portfolio, which now specifically includes Branding and Communications, e.g., marketing and promoting the Council, as well as the typical corporate and budget strategy and community leadership and engagement duties. In addition, the “external relationships” responsibilities of the Leader have been given further enhancement by making it explicit that it includes “partnership development coordination with local organisations and other external relationships including relevant national, regional, and sub-regional bodies.” This sub-regional aspect will become particularly important when the North East Combined Authority is established next year.

39. It is too early to accurately ascertain how the new governance arrangements will impact on the Leader’s role beyond a demonstrably larger portfolio remit and sub-regional working interface there can be little doubt that the dynamics of the new executive or ‘Policy Board’ will change. The Policy Board is no longer composed wholly of majority group members and now includes the three Opposition Group Leaders, who do not hold specific portfolio responsibilities. It is only to be expected that the non-portfolio holders/Opposition Group Leaders will be outvoted when the Policy Board is
making decisions on matters that have a strong party political resonance. Yet, the reality is that a great deal of local government decision-making and policy development is not based on strict party considerations. The Policy Board provides a platform for the Opposition Group Leaders/Non-Portfolio Holders that should mean that the Leader will be required to liaise, explain, listen, and engage in robust debate at meetings of the executive that would normally not be to the same extent when it was wholly controlled by the majority group.

40. The Leader’s SRA of £27,000, which like all SRAs was never subject to the 1% indexation that was applied to the Basic Allowance, has not changed since 2009/10. Benchmarking (against the full comparator group shows the average Leaders/Elected Mayor’s SRA to be £30,270, which is admittedly inflated by the presence of an elected Mayor in North Tyneside whose remuneration is normally set with reference to an MPs salary. However, this inflated figure is counterbalanced somewhat by the comparatively low SRA (£16,550) paid to the Leader of Newcastle. However, the health warning needs to be repeated once again; Newcastle members are permitted to receive more than 1 SRA, and in 2012/13, the Leader was paid £17,426 in SRAs, part of which is explained by the Leader’s membership of the planning committee which attracts an SRA in its own right.

41. The same benchmarking shows that the average total remuneration of Leaders/elected Mayor in the wider comparator group is £40,682, ranging from £25,325 for the Leader of Newcastle (subject to same health warnings as above) to £61,734 for the elected mayor of North Tyneside. The SRA (£27,000) received by the Leader of Northumberland County Council is noticeably lower than the average in the full comparator group. However, once the Leader’s total remuneration (£39,625) is taken into account it is much close to the average total remuneration package (£40,682) for the comparator authorities which suggests that, despite the Leader’s SRA being frozen since 2009, there is not an overwhelming case to be made to increase the Leader’s SRA at this stage.

42. Bearing this in mind and taking into account the need to ensure any changes in the current scheme are self-financing, the Panel recommends that the Leader’s SRA of £27,000 remains unaltered for 2013/14, subject to any indexation that may apply.

---

7 The allowances scheme for N. Tyneside shows that the total remuneration for the elected Mayor is £61,734 and does not differentiate for BA and SRA purposes so the figures listed to the elected Mayor’s SRA is £61,734 minus the North Tyneside BA (£7,896)

Deputy Leader of the Council

43. The SRA (£18,090) for the Deputy Leader (and most other SRAs) was arrived at in 2008 by following an approach laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance which states (paragraph 76) that:

‘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.’

44. Consequently, the Panel arrived at the recommended SRA for the Deputy Leader by applying a pro rata of 67% against the Leaders SRA (£27,000 x 67%, which is £18,090). This ratio and other SRA ratios or differentials used in arriving at the recommended SRAs were arrived at through a mixture of historical practice, interview feedback, and benchmarking.

45. As with the Leader, the reconfiguration of the Policy Board (executive) has created a corresponding reconfiguration of the role and responsibilities of the Deputy Leader due the need to share the former portfolios of 10 executive members amongst 7 portfolio holders on the Policy Board. The Deputy Leader has retained previous responsibilities, in the main relating to safer communities, engagement with community and voluntary sectors, organisational development, strategic and local partnership development and co-ordination and Health and Safety and Risk strategy. In addition, the Deputy Leader has also taken on what was previously the Corporate Resources portfolio, which includes HR and People Strategy, ICT strategy legal and democratic, financial strategy and services and procurement strategy.

46. Benchmarking against the wider comparative group shows that the average SRA for Deputy Leaders/Deputy Mayor is £16,485, with the highest being Sunderland (£25,325) and the lowest being North Tyneside (£6,792). The North Tyneside outlier can largely be explained by having the mayoral executive model in place. An elected mayor has complete discretion on extent to which they delegate all executive powers that is vested in the office of elected Mayor. The very low SRA for the Deputy Mayor and even lower SRA (£3,003) for other cabinet members in North Tyneside would suggest the elected Mayor has chosen not to delegate a great deal of executive powers, whether individually or collectively.

47. Furthermore, the average SRA (£16,485) paid to Deputy Leaders/elected Mayor in the comparator group is 55% of the average SRA (£30,270) paid to the Leaders/elected mayor. Thus, in terms of differentials and actual remuneration the Northumberland Deputy Leader is somewhat higher than the average in the comparator group. On the other hand, the average SRA paid to Deputy Leaders in other unitary councils is £17,513, which is more in line with the SRA paid to the Deputy Leader of Northumberland.
48. However, taking into account the greatly expanded responsibilities of the Deputy Leader (now holding the portfolio for Corporate Responsibilities) the Panel is content that the current SRA for the Deputy Leader is not excessive, particularly taking into account that this SRA has been frozen since 2009. Indeed, there may a case to increase it slightly but, in lieu of actual experience and the need to ensure the current spend on allowances is maintained, the Panel has decided to revisit the Deputy Leader with Corporate Responsibility (as it will with particular reference to all executive SRAs) in a future review.

49. The Panel recommends that the SRA (2013/14) for the Deputy Leader (including being Portfolio Holder with Corporate Responsibility) remains unaltered at £18,090, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

Other Portfolio Holders on the Policy Board (Executive)

50. The remaining former seven portfolios have been reconfigured and reassigned to five Portfolio Holders on the Policy Board, namely

- Planning, Housing and Regeneration
- Streetcare and Environment
- Adult Care & Public Health
- Children’s Services
- Community Infrastructure & Culture

51. Each of the new portfolios have been enlarged and there may be a prima facia case to increase the current SRA (£14,850) correspondingly; again in a context that has seen their SRAs frozen since 2009.

52. Benchmarking shows that the average SRA for Cabinet Members is £12,641, with the lowest being North Tyneside (£3,003) and highest being £20,716 (Sunderland). On average, other executive SRAs are paid at 42% of Leaders/elected mayors average SRA in the benchmarking group. Whereas in Northumberland County Council Policy Board (Executive) Portfolio Holders receive an SRA at a ratio set at 55% of the Leaders SRA.

53. However, if North Tyneside is removed from the benchmarking group, as it is an anomaly due to its elected mayor governance model, then the average cabinet member’s SRA is £13,712, which is more in line with the level paid in Northumberland County Council. What is more, considering the Portfolio Holders are being required to do more while, in effect, taking a pay cut since 2009 the Panel feels that there is not a strong case to revisit current SRA paid to the other portfolio holders on the Policy Board.

54. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for the five Portfolio Holders on the Policy Board remains unaltered at £14,850, subject to any indexation that may be applied.
Non-Portfolio Holders/Opposition Group Leaders on the Policy Board

55. The other major change in the executive model is the inclusion of the three Opposition Group Leaders on the Policy Board. They are full voting members but do not hold a portfolio. Moreover, it is the Opposition Group Leaders, as opposed to an Opposition Group member, who are allocated positions on the Policy Board. In effect, the Opposition Group Leaders now have a dual role.

56. Clearly the Opposition Group Leaders/non-portfolio holders on the Policy Board, while formerly on and part of the executive, will have a lesser executive responsibility than the portfolio holders and, due to the nature of collective executive decision making for most executive functions, the majority view will normally prevail. The possibility of the non-portfolio holders being assigned discrete tasks on behalf of the Policy Board was raised with the Panel but that was not a firm proposal at the time of review.

57. Nonetheless, the presence as full voting members of the three Opposition Group Leaders on the Policy Board will not only alter the dynamics of the executive in how and the kind of decisions made but also the dynamics of how the Opposition operates. In particular, the Opposition Group Leaders now have the opportunity to exert influence and shape decisions before they are made rather than relying on post-decision making scrutiny. In one sense it enhances pre-scrutiny of the executive (which also is an intended aim of the changes to scrutiny arrangements) and, if undertaken constructively (on all sides), should lead to more robust decision making and being on the Policy Board provides the platform to do so.

58. The issue for the Panel is whether there is a case to differentiate between the three non-portfolio holders based on the size of their group, as is presently the case for Opposition Group Leaders. However, the Panel has not enough information and experience of how the three Opposition Group Leaders will operate and whether the size of group they represent makes any difference to their role on the Policy Board. In effect, the Panel is making recommendations primarily for the post of non-portfolio holder on the Policy Board and in this particular setting feels that size of group is not as important as in a traditional Oppositional context. Constitutionally at least, there is no distinction between the three Opposition Group Leaders/non-portfolio holders on the Policy Board.

59. In arriving at the appropriate SRA for the Opposition Group Leaders/non-portfolio holders benchmarking provides no guidance, as there are no equivalent posts in the comparator councils. Consequently, the Panel has decided to place the SRAs for the three Opposition Group Leaders on a par with that currently paid to Scrutiny Chairs, which is £12,150 or 45% of the Leaders SRA.
60. **The recommended SRAs for the three Opposition Group Leaders/Non-Portfolio Holders on the Policy Board are £12,150 (2013/14), subject to any indexation that may apply.**

**The Business Chair of Council**

61. The Business Chair of the Council is a new role. The post holder has taken on nearly all the functions previously undertaken by the now abolished post of Cabinet Secretary. These include lead responsibility for Member Development and working "closely with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council" to "participate in the formulation and implementation of Council policy as allocated by the Leader, including taking the lead on and proposing new policy, strategy, programming, budget and service standards."\(^{10}\) The Business Chair will also be responsible for liaison and communication to all party groups.

62. Additionally, the Business Chair of Council, as the name implies, now has responsibility for Chairing of the Council, which was previously the role of the Civic Head/Chair of Council, and acting as spokesperson and representative of the Council when required by the Leader. Like the previous role of Civic Head/Chair of Council, the Business Chair of the Council will be elected by the full Council annually for the ensuing year.

63. The aim is to put the chairing of the Council on a more 'professional' basis, which has become a more important consideration in a minority administration context. Also with an increased emphasis of the full Council to promote public involvement and as a “forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community and the place at which members who are not on the Policy Board are able to hold the Policy Board to account”\(^{11}\) the Council forum has become more important.

64. As well as the typical range of duties that can be expected from any Council Chair, such as acting as Council spokesperson when appropriate, the Business Chair has responsibility for functions not usually associated with a Council Chair such as “liaison with the Chief Executive and members (senior Officers) of the Strategic Management Team (SMT) as required by the Leader.”\(^{12}\)

65. As a result of the central and varied roles carried out by the Business Chair the post holder is also required to chair the following:

- Petitions Committee
- Chairman’s Working Group

---

\(^{9}\) The Panel has also provided for a scenario whereby if an Opposition Group Leader declines to take up the post of Non-Portfolio Holder on the Policy Board, which is their right, – see paragraphs 129-30 below.

\(^{10}\) Role profile for new post of Council Business Chair supplied to the Panel

\(^{11}\) See Constitution of the Council – Adopted on 4 September 2013, 5.01 (8), page 16.

\(^{12}\) Ibid, 5.01 (4), page 16.
- Policy Board and SMT Joint meetings
- Council Risk Appraisal Panel
- Members Services Working Group

66. As the role of Business Chair is so unusual, the only broadly analogous role in the benchmarking group is the Group secretary in Sunderland who receives an SRA of £25,111. However, this post in Sunderland is formally part of the executive and has a specific portfolio responsibility. The Sunderland Cabinet Secretary also provides “support and assistance to the Leader with responsibility for all matters relating to the ‘People’ theme within the Council’s outcomes framework and have specific strategic leadership responsibility for the Children and Learning City, Health and Well-Being and Responsive Local Services and Customer Care Portfolios.” It also entails a co-ordinating role regarding the management and use of all the Council’s financial resources and assets. The broad executive responsibilities associated with the post explain why it is remunerated on a par with the Deputy Leader of Sunderland City Council.¹³

67. The SRA for the Council Business Chair should not simply be the sum of the SRAs paid to the former Cabinet Secretary (£12,150) and former Chair of the Council (£5,400); it is hoped that there will be synergies by the two posts being held by one Member. Moreover, it would leave the Business Chair being remunerated more than a Portfolio Holder on the Policy Board, which does not meet the ‘feel fair fit test.’ On this basis, and in lieu of experience of how the role will pan out, the Panel has decided to set the recommended SRA of the Business Chair on a par with Portfolio Holders on the Policy Board, which is the same as the SRA paid previously to the Secretary to the Executive, and is 55% of the Leader’s SRA.

68. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for the Business Chair of the Council is £14,850, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

The Scrutiny Committee Chairs

69. The Council has maintained four scrutiny committees, namely

- Economic Prosperity & Strategic Services
- Family & Children’s Services
- Care & Wellbeing
- Communities & Place

70. However, the intention is that there will now be a greater emphasis on pre-
scrutiny with it being used less as a platform for the Opposition to challenge
decisions of the Policy Board. In particular, the intention is for the scrutiny
committees to contribute to the forward plan, which sets out the key decisions
the Policy Board is intending to make, thus enabling call in. The intention is
that scrutiny will lead to decision-making that not only involves more members
but to do at an earlier, i.e., development, stage, thus leading to more effective
and robustness decision making. Scrutiny will also have a policy review role
specifically in relation to the corporate plan.

71. It is too early to assess the degree to which intentions will match reality but
the Scrutiny Committees will continue to meet 11-12 times per year and to
ensure co-ordination of policy development and review role of scrutiny all
Scrutiny Chairs sit on a Scrutiny Chairman’s group, which is also scheduled to
meet 11-12 times per year.

72. The current SRA (£12,150) for the Scrutiny Chairs was set at 45% of the
Leader’s SRA. Benchmarking shows that the average SRA paid in the
comparator group is £7,442; ranging from £2,100 (North Tyneside) to £15,185
(Gateshead). While the SRAs for the Chairs of Scrutiny in Northumberland
County Council is by no means the highest, it is noticeably above the
average. However, this is an un-weighted average (as is the average for
executive SRAs), in that it takes no account of numbers of scrutiny
committees in each authority. For instance, Durham pays its scrutiny chairs
£2,660 but if Durham had the same number of scrutiny chairs (4) as in
Northumberland but maintained its current total spend their SRAs, the
weighted SRA for Chairs of Scrutiny is £7,225. Wiltshire has a £10,000
general fund for chair of scrutiny task and finish group, which is not shown up
in the un-weighted benchmarking average SRAs for Scrutiny Chairs. As there
is no legislative limit, unlike for executive members, there is great variation in
the number of scrutiny committees and, therefore, the total spend on the
scrutiny function, across councils.

73. Nonetheless, the Panel feels that if Scrutiny does develop as intended,
particularly pre-scrutiny, then the current SRA paid to the Chairs, which is at
the higher end of the comparative spectrum, is still appropriate, but will
specifically review the workload and responsibility of Scrutiny Chairs in its
next review.

74. It is recommended that the SRA (2013/14) for the Chairs of Scrutiny
remains unaltered at £12,150, subject to any indexation that may be
applied.

The Vice Chairs of Scrutiny

75. Currently, the Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees are the only Committee
Vice Chairs in receipt of an SRA (£4,758). Historically, the Panel has abided
by the principle laid out in the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 73),
known as the test of “significant responsibility.” Although a member may have a position the guidance cautions that councils and IRPs

…… will need to consider such particular responsibilities very carefully. Whilst such responsibilities may be unique to a particular member it may be that all or most members have some such responsibility to varying degrees. Such duties may not lead to a significant extra workload for any one particular member above another. These sorts of responsibilities should be recognised as a time commitment to council work which is acknowledged within the basic allowance and not responsibilities for which a special responsibility allowance should be recommended.

76. Since its inception, the Panel has taken the view that the traditional role of Vice Chairs, such as attending briefings and standing in for their respective Chair when required does not meet the test of additional significant responsibility.

77. However, the Panel has always recommended SRAs for the Scrutiny Vice Chairs as it was informed in the past that the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny would be given discrete tasks to undertake, such as chairing task and finish groups and be given responsibility for specific leads. The SRAs currently stand at £4,758, set at 40% of their Chair’s SRAs. Yet, the model has never developed as originally envisaged and the Scrutiny Vice Chairs were not given specific responsibility for discrete tasks on a regular basis.

78. Nonetheless, the Panel is content to recommend the continuation of these SRAs to reflect the new model of inclusiveness. The Panel has decided for the time being that the standard ratio for Vice Chairs’ SRAs is 25% of their respective Chairs’ SRA (see below). However, on the basis that in the new governance model Scrutiny Vice Chairs are expected to lead on scrutiny themes assigned to them, the Panel has decided that their SRA should be set at 30% of the SRA for Scrutiny Chairs, which equates to £3,645.

79. Benchmarking shows that out of 6 of 10 authorities in the benchmarking group that remunerate their Scrutiny Vice Chair, the average SRA payable is £3,580, ranging from £1,042 (Cornwall) to £7,226 (Sunderland).

80. The recommended SRA for the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny (2013/14) is £3,645, subject to any indexation that may apply.

81. The Panel points out that it will revisit all Vice Chairs’ SRAs in its next review. If the model of all Vice Chairs being required to ‘step up’ then the standard ratio for Vice Chairs’ SRAs may be raised to 30% or even 33% of their Chairs’ SRAs, if not, then the Panel will consider all Vice Chairs’ SRAs should be set at 25% of their respective Chairs’ SRAs.
Area Committee Chairs

82. In the 2008 review, the Panel gave an increase to Area Chairs, on the basis that the number of Area Committees decreased from six to three and each of the remaining area committees had twice as much work to do. In addition, there was a perception at the time that the Area Committees would have an enhanced resonance in the unitary context and maybe develop as a vehicle for a degree of devolved decision-making.

83. Area Committees do have powers to determine applications to grant aid from their “Community Chest,” approximately £80,000 per year and make certain appointments to outside bodies within their area as agreed by Council. Area Committees remain the main vehicle by which the council engages, through the Area Partnership with all key stakeholders from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to facilitate area priorities. They also inform, consult, and engage local communities in accordance with Council policy, mostly through the network of Community Forums, with the feedback being provided by monthly meetings of the Executive/Area Chairs Working Groups.

84. Nevertheless, devolved decision-making has not developed and certain remaining remits, such as duty to undertake regular liaison with the parish and councils may be diluted by the setting up of the new Parish Liaison Working Group (which has a somewhat broader remit than the name suggests). The Panel was informed that it is intended to roll out devolved powers to the Area Committees, but as of the time of writing this rolling out has not yet been implemented.

85. Benchmarking shows that the current SRA (£12,150), which was set at 45% of the Leaders SRA, for Area Chairs (admittedly out of a small group – only four comparator authorities remunerate their area chairs) is one of the two SRAs that are the highest in the comparator group, with the average being £8,338, with the lowest being £5,034 (Wiltshire).

86. Taking into account the benchmarking and the fact that Area Committees have not developed as originally envisaged as of yet, the Panel has re-evaluated role of Area Chairs and assessed it at 40% of the Leaders SRA.

87. The recommended SRA for the Chairs of the Area Committees for 2013/14 is £10,800, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

The Vice Chairs of the Area Committees

88. In keeping with the new governance model and the Panel’s acceptance that there is (at this stage) a case for the allowances scheme to be reformed to support it by having all Vice Chairs receive an SRA the Panel accepts that the Area Vice Chairs should be paid an SRA at the standard ratio, i.e., 25% of their Chair’s SRA.
89. The recommended SRA for the Vice Chairs of the Area Committees (2013/14) is £2,700, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

Chair of Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee

90. The Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee has been created out of the merger of the Central Planning & Environment and Rights of Way Committees. The current SRA (£12,150) was set at 45% of the Leader’s SRA. Benchmarking shows that the average SRA for Planning Chairs is £6,505, with the lowest being, as always, North Tyneside (£3,003) and highest Gateshead (£12,649). The Panel set the SRA for the Chair of Planning & Environment Committee relatively high in 2008, as it was dual function committee. It is responsible for strategic planning function, such as planning applications that represent a significant departure from the Development Plan, as well as high profile and Northumberland-specific areas such as wind farms and minerals planning. It now has overall responsibility to undertake the regulatory role as a highway and traffic authority and exercise the Council’s functions in relation to the survey, definition, maintenance, diversion, stopping up and creation of public rights of way, most of which is undertaken via a Rights of Way Sub-Committee (see below).

91. Consequently, despite the fact that the Chair of the Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee has required an extra (Highways) function the Panel feels that due to how the extra function is discharged that the SRA paid to the post when it was a Planning & Environment Committee is not in need of revision.

92. The Panel recommends that the SRA (2013/14) for the Chair of the Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee is £12,150, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

Vice Chair of Planning, Environment & Rights of Way/Chair of Rights of Way Sub-Committee

93. As noted above the Rights of Way function is now discharged by a sub-committee of the principal committee, with the Vice Chair of the Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee being the Chair of the Rights of Way Sub-Committee. Historically, the only other Vice Chair apart from the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny that received an SRA was the Vice Chair of Planning & Environment.

94. This SRA (£3,807) was set at 30% of the Central Planning Chairs SRA on the basis that there is a greater expectation for the Vice Chair to stand-in due to the regulations surrounding planning, mostly regarding declarations of interest; this has proved to be the case.
95. However, the Vice Chair now has the additional remit through chairing the Rights of Way Sub-Committee that merits recognition beyond the standard assessment of the Vice Chair’s roles at 25% of their respective Chair. Benchmarking provides little guidance as Northumberland County Council has very authority-specific arrangements to discharge its strategic planning, environment and rights of ways functions. The latter function is also much more high profile than in most of the comparator authorities due to the geographic nature of the county.

96. Previously the Chair of the Rights of Way Committee received an SRA of £5,400 but, by definition, the SRA for being Vice Chair of Rights of Way cannot be that high as it is now a sub-committee rather than a full committee in its own right. However, the post holder still has responsibilities as Vice Chair of Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee which needs to be recognised. On the basis that that will be a synergy by holding a dual role, the Panel has assessed the role of the Vice Chair of the Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee/Chair of the Rights of Way Sub-Committee at 45% (£5,468) of the recommended SRA (£12,150) of the Chair of the principal committee.

97. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for Vice Chair of Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee/Chair of Rights of Way Sub-Committee is £5,467.50, subject to any indexation that may apply.

Chairs of the Area Planning Committees

98. As a unitary authority, the County Council is also responsible for planning applications and the vast majority of the development control function is delegated to the three Area Planning Committees. The current SRA (£3,713) was set by reference to the average SRA paid to planning control chairs nationally (IDeA 2007 survey of allowances). Not all the comparator councils have area planning committees, but in the five that do, the average SRA is £4,766, with the lowest being Northumberland and the highest Cornwall (£6,000).

99. The Panel received representation suggesting that the role of Chairs of Area Planning Committees was on a par with the Chair of the Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee on the basis that they are all stand-alone committees. The Panel has not accepted this argument. Although the Area Planning Committees do not report to Central Planning, Environment & Rights of Way Committee the latter is regarded as the ‘senior’ committee. Moreover, it can determine matters that cannot be dealt with at the area planning committees due to such matters as conflicts of interest or where matters cut across the areas of two or more area planning committees.

100. Nevertheless, a great deal of evidence was received to indicate that the current SRA for the Area Planning Chairs was too low, particularly considering that at least two of the three areas (North and West) are larger
than most district councils and consider more applications than many district
councils. Moreover, whereas prior to the County becoming an unitary
authority there were six district councils handling development control there
are now only three area committees. The Panel accepted the logic and the
evidence presented and reassessed the SRA for the three Chairs of the Area
Planning Committees at 35% of the Leader’s SRA, placing them on a par with
the Chairs of the Area Committees.

101. **The recommended SRA (2013/14) for three Chairs of the Area Planning
Committees is £9,450, subject to any indexation that may apply.**

**The Vice Chairs of the Area Planning Committees**

102. In keeping with the new more inclusive governance model the Panel accepts
at this stage that the Vice Chairs of the Area Planning Committees should be
paid an SRA.

103. However, rather than assess their role at the standard ratio, i.e., 25% of their
Chairs’ SRA, the Panel assessed their SRA on a par with the recommended
SRA (£3,038) for the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny on the basis that they will have
to stand in for their Chair on regular basis. This is a ratio of 35% of the SRA
for the Chairs of the Area Planning Committees,

104. **The recommended SRA for the Vice Chairs of the Area Planning
Committees (2013/14) is £3,037.50, subject to any indexation that may be
applied.**

**Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees**

105. In constitutional terms the Council, as do many councils, maintains two
separate licensing committees, the Licensing Committee, which exercises the
powers and duties of the Council under the Licensing Act 2003 and the
Gambling Act 2005, except for those functions reserved for the Council. There
are also Licensing Hearings panels, four members drawn from the
membership of the Licensing Committee to deal objections to licensing
applications, such as variation in opening hours of public houses. The
licensing panels meet on an ad hoc basis, with 15 meetings last year. There
is no set chair, although the Chair of the Licensing Committee is invited to
chair the Licensing Hearing Panels the usual practice is that the role is
allocated across the membership of the full committee.

106. There is also a Licensing and Regulatory Committee to deal with other
licensing and regulatory matters such as taxis, general entertainment and
street trading licences, as well as make recommendations to Council on
licensing policy. It also has a Licensing Sub-Committee, which meets six
times per year to deal with different types of licensing applications, such as
taxi, amusements, lotteries, etc. The chairing and membership arrangements
107. Despite the existence of two formal separate licensing committees the membership, Chair and Vice of both full committees are the same, and they both meet consecutively on the same day six times per year, the only difference being having different agendas.

108. The current SRA (£5,400) paid to the Chair of Licensing & Regulatory/Licensing Committee was set at 20% of the Leader's SRA when the role was to Chair the Licensing Committee only. Under the co-joined model, this SRA is now too low. Benchmarking is of limited value as the variation in how licensing is organised and, therefore, remunerated is so varied, with most of the comparator authorities remunerating both a separate general and/or regulatory committee chair and a licensing act committee chair. Durham also remunerates its Chairs and Vice Chairs of Licensing Sub-Committees, £3,325 and £1,662 respectively. While Newcastle pays an SRA of £414 to all Members on its Licensing Act Committee.

109. The Panel has decided, in lieu of meaningful comparisons to guide it, that the SRA for the Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees should be on a par with the recommended SRA (£9,450) for the Chairs of the Area Committees, which is 35% of the Leader's SRA.

110. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for the Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees is £9,450, subject to any indexation that may apply.

Vice Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees

111. In keeping with the new governance model that aims to be more inclusive and the Panel's acceptance that there is (at this stage) a case for the allowances scheme to be reformed to support this new model, the Panel accepts that the Vice Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees should be paid an SRA at the standard ratio, i.e., 25% of their Chairs SRA.

112. The recommended SRA for the Vice Chair of the Licensing & Regulatory and Licensing Committees Area Committees (2013/14) is £2,362.50, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

Chair of the Audit Committee

113. The current SRA (£4,005), set at 15% of the Leader's SRA, for the Chair of the Audit Committee was recommended by the seventh review (December 2010). Benchmarking shows that the average SRA for Chairs of Audit Committees is £3,830, with the lowest being Wiltshire (£2,517) and highest Shropshire (£5,757), whereas three councils have co-opted chairs of their
Audit Committee, Newcastle (£4,138), North Tyneside (£1,001) and Sunderland (£6,277). The Panel received no evidence that this SRA needed revisiting.

114. It is recommended that the SRA (2013/14) for the Chair of the Audit Committee remains unaltered at £4,005, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

Chair of the Pension Fund Panel

115. Similarly, the current SRA (£4,005) for the Chair of the Pension Fund Panel was recommended by the seventh review (December 2010). It was also set at 15% of the Leader’s SRA. Benchmarking shows that the average SRA for Chairs of Pension Funds is £3,974, with the lowest being Cornwall (£2,147) and highest South Tyneside (£9,635), whereas four councils either do not remunerate their chairs of pensions panels or do no have responsibility for pensions. The Panel received no evidence that this SRA needed revisiting.

116. It is recommended that the SRA (2013/14) for the Chair of the Pension Fund Panel remains unaltered at £4,005, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

The Vice Chairs of the Audit Committee and Pensions Fund Panel

117. The Panel received no evidence that the Vice Chairs of the Audit Committee and Pension Fund Panel merited an SRA. Therefore, the Panel is not making any recommendations for these posts.

Working Groups

118. The Council has set up a number of Working Groups (WGs) and the Panel has been asked to consider whether an SRA should be paid to the Chairs of seven of them, two of which report to the Council and five that report to the Policy Board as follows:

A. Council Constitution WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Council on the constitution and will meet as required

B. Council Parish Liaison WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Council on the working arrangements with town and parish councils, including the Parish Charter and meets quarterly
C. Policy Board Housing WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Policy Board on emerging Housing Strategy and meets bi-monthly

D. Policy Board Streetcare, Infrastructure and Culture (Urban) WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Policy Board on policy and strategy relating to streetcare, infrastructure and cultural services in the urban areas and meets bi-monthly

E. Policy Board Streetcare, Infrastructure and Culture (Rural) WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Policy Board on policy and strategy relating to streetcare, infrastructure and cultural services in the rural areas and meets bi-monthly

F. Policy Board Capital Works Programme WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Policy Board on the capital programme in respect of slippage, over/under spending, new approvals and any proposed deletions and meets bi-monthly

G. Policy Board Regeneration WG
   • To consider and make recommendations to the Policy Board on the opportunities for promoting economic growth in the County and meets bi-monthly

119. The problem for the Panel is that the success or otherwise of the Working Groups has not yet been demonstrated by experience, their Chairs, and terms of reference only just having been agreed during the review process. In particular, the Panel struggled initially to understand the role of the Policy Working Groups vis-à-vis the decision-making cycle in relation to the Policy Board and Scrutiny Committees.

120. The Council Working Groups are relatively straightforward in that they comprise of Members from across the Council and are charged with considering and making recommendations to Council on matters within the scheme of delegation. These Groups only report to full Council

121. Clear distinctions have been drawn between the roles of Policy Board Working Groups and Scrutiny Committees. The Policy Board Working Groups will create an opportunity for Members to discuss issues and opportunities with key Officers in relation to emerging strategy and to highlight areas for review. Whereas the Scrutiny Committees call policy and performance to account and form a governance framework as a metric to assess degree to which the Policy Board has met performance targets and meeting policy objectives.

122. In the past Scrutiny Committees have set up their own working groups on an ad hoc basis (and it is expected they will do so when appropriate) but can now refer matters to the new Working Groups, with agreed terms of reference and membership, and associated administrative arrangements and, therefore,
have a more structured means of delivering their work programme. In this sense, the Policy Board Working Groups are intended to provide support for the in-depth policy review work of scrutiny.

123. Furthermore, it is intended that the Policy Board Working Groups will complement the more formal decision-making carried out by the Policy Board but will have less formal administrative arrangements. They will also be a channel for ideas to come though into the formal decision making process including ‘QEDs’, ‘Lean’ processes, employee suggestions, invest to save ideas and to act as a "safe space" to explore innovation.

124. The lead officer to support each Working Group will be the relevant Corporate Director, with other senior officers and service specialists being asked to attend as appropriate. As they are intended to be more informal meetings Working Group agendas will be set in advance and, where appropriate, supporting papers circulated in advance to help members plan and prepare for discussion. The focus of the meetings will be on questions and discussion. Unlike Scrutiny, action notes rather than formal minutes will be the manner of recording these meetings.

125. The Panel accepts that the Chairs of the Working Groups specified in the terms of reference on balance merit an SRA. As they are new structures there is limited means to judge with any degree of certainty what the level of workload and responsibility held by the Chairs will be. On scheduled meetings alone, the Policy Board Working Groups are the more active in that they have monthly meetings and the Council Working Groups meet quarterly. Moreover, the Policy Board Working Groups are ‘less new’ than at first they appear. Much of the work the Policy Board’s Working Groups undertake was previously undertaken by the old Portfolio Development Members. In particular, the setting up of the Policy Board Working Groups, to a large degree, is the formalisation whereby Project Development Members would chair executive working groups albeit on an ad hoc and informal basis.

126. The Project Development Members received an SRA of £4,005, and the Panel has taken this figure as a guide to determine an appropriate SRA for Policy Board Working Group Chairs, which is 15% of the Leader’s SRA.

127. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for the Chairs of the five Policy Board Working Groups is £4,005, subject to any indexation that may be applied.

128. The Council Working Groups are completely new and, in lieu of experience of how the Council Working Groups will operate, the Panel has taken a cautious view by assessing the SRA for the Chairs of the Council Working Groups at 5% of the Leader’s SRA.

129. The recommended SRA (2013/14) for the two Council Working Groups Chairs is £1,350, subject to any indexation that may be applied.
130. There are other Working Groups in place (which have not been included in the Panel’s terms of reference because their workload will be more ad hoc) and it is feasible that the Council may set up further Working Groups as issues of concern to the Council and Policy Board arise.

131. The Panel recommends that, until it undertakes a further review (in about 12 months time) to assess the applicability of recommended SRAs in this review that regardless of other Working Groups set up or those outside the current terms of reference, that the only SRAs paid to the Chairs of Working Groups are those specified in this review.

Opposition Group SRAs – Qualifying Criteria

132. As the recommendations stand they will change the SRA model, which largely as a consequence of having more SRAs payable at the area level, will mean that more Opposition Group members will receive an SRA. Consequently, the Panel has decided to apply a qualifying criteria for Opposition SRAs to be payable. This is a common restriction utilised in a number of authorities. For instance, North Tyneside requires that a group attains 10% of the total membership of Council before a Group Leader’s SRA is payable.

133. The Panel is proposing a similar approach in that, before any Opposition Group SRA is payable, an Opposition Group has to attain 10% (seven members) of total council membership.

134. It is recommended that before any Opposition Group SRA is payable an Opposition Group must have at least seven group members.

Opposition Group Leaders – if not on the Policy Board

135. Under the current governance model, it is assumed that all the Opposition Group Leaders will be on the Policy Board. However, there is no compulsion on the part of the Opposition Group Leaders to accept a position on the Policy Board. In attempt to future proof the scheme in this eventuality it is recommended that, if an Opposition Group Leader is not on the Policy Board, then the Opposition Group Leader’s SRA is payable as at present, namely:

- Main Opposition Group Leader: £12,150
- 1st Minor Opposition Group Leader: £8,100
- 2nd Minor Opposition Group Leader: £5,400

136. This recommendation is subject to the 10% rule, i.e., where an Opposition group does not have seven members then the SRA is not payable. However, if the largest Opposition Group has less than seven members, it is recommended they receive an Opposition Group Leader’s
SRA of £5,400 – only on the condition that the post holder is not on the Policy Board.

Opposition Group Deputy Leaders

137. Similarly, with the new model of SRAs being proposed in this review, the logic for remunerating all Opposition Group Deputy Leaders at the current levels is no longer applicable. Moreover, benchmarking shows that only one other authority (Sunderland) in the comparator group remunerates the Deputy Leader of the 1st minority group and none, other than Northumberland, remunerate the Deputy Leader of the 2nd Minority Opposition Group.

138. The Panel recommends that the current SRA (2013/14) paid to the Deputy Leader of the Main Opposition Group remains unaltered at £4,860.

139. However, the Panel recommends that all Minor Opposition Group Deputy Leaders subject to the 10% rule receive a flat SRA at the same level currently paid to the Deputy Leader of the 2nd Minor Opposition Group Leader, which is £2,430.

140. Currently this SRA is only applicable to the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Opposition Group (assuming post holder is not otherwise subject to 1-SRA rule by holding another SRA).

The Group Secretaries’ SRA

141. Currently, the Northumberland County Council Members’ Allowances scheme provides a Group Secretaries’ SRA at £15 per group member, which could potentially be £1,005 (67 members X £15), if all Members were in a party group registered under the 1989 Local Government & Housing Act. In effect it is a small SRA to assist the Group Secretaries with the extra costs involved not otherwise remunerated, such as telecommunications and stationery costs.

142. A similar type of allowance is available in some of the larger authorities, e.g., Wiltshire makes available £100 per group member to remunerate the group secretary, or chair, treasurer, etc to be determined by each group on council.

143. The Panel confirms the current SRA of £15 per group member for Group Secretaries. However, a qualifier should be added; namely, it should only be payable to Group Secretaries for those Groups that reach the qualifying threshold of 10% of total membership, or seven members.

144. Under the current configuration the following Group Secretaries SRA are payable:
• Labour Group Secretary (31 members): £465
• Conservative Group Secretary (20 members): £300
• Liberal Democrat Group Secretary (7 members): £105

The Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head of the Council – Civic Allowance

145. The Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head of the Council used to receive an SRA of £5,400 to recognise their dual role, namely also being Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council. Under the new Constitution, the Chair of the Council is now the Business Chair. There is no dedicated Vice Chair of the Council. In the absence of the Business Chair, the constitution requires an election for temporary Council Chair from those Members present at the meeting. These new arrangements now make the SRAs for the Chair (£5,400) and Vice Chair (£1,620) of Council redundant. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the SRAs for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council be discontinued from the date the new scheme is implemented.

146. Under the relevant provisions of the 1972 Local Government Act, the Council is required to retain a Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head. As the posts are no longer combined with the posts of Chair and Vice Chair of Council respectively the payment of an SRA is not only redundant but also anomalous. The Local Government Act 1972\textsuperscript{14} also provides for payment of the Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head for the purposes of meeting the expenses of those offices, at a level a Council feels is reasonable. This is typically known as the ‘Civic Allowance.’ However, this allowance is outside the remit of the Panel as it is not part of the Members’ Allowances Scheme.

147. Nonetheless, the Panel recommends that the Council pay the Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head each a Civic Allowance that reflects the costs of holding office. Moreover, as the Civic Allowance is outside the Members’ Allowances Scheme it is pointed out that they are exempt from the 1-SRA only rule (see below).

Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board

148. The Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board was raised with the Panel. This is a statutory board with the overall aim to “transform the way health and social care services are commissioned and provided to improve the Health and Well Being of the population of Northumberland and reduce health inequalities.”\textsuperscript{15}

149. It is a joint board in that it consists of elected Members, relevant Council Officers, including Corporate Directors of Adult Services & Housing and Children’s Services, and other stakeholders including representatives from

\textsuperscript{14} See Local Government Act 1972, S3(5) and S5(4)
NHS Commissioning Board, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust, etc. It is scheduled to meet bi-monthly.

150. The Panel has not received enough information to make a definitive judgement on the merits of recommending an SRA for the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board. It could well be chaired by a non-councillor, whose professional remuneration takes into account such duties, moreover most of the Northumberland County Council Members on the Health & Wellbeing Board are senior Members and their SRA takes into account the chairing of such roles as chairing relevant external bodies.

Members of the Police & Crime Panel

151. Another issue raised with the Panel was the payment of the Council’s statutory appointments to the new Northumbria Police & Crime Panel (PCP), which are statutory appointments under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. All the nominating authorities (the T&W metropolitan councils and Northumberland County Council) each send two elected members to sit on the Northumbria PCP, in addition to two independent (co-opted) members appointed at large. The role of the PCP is to scrutinise the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner, (currently Vera Baird QC) and promote openness in the delivery of police services throughout Northumbria.

152. Each of the nominating authorities has the discretion to pay its representatives on the Panel an SRA and to reimburse reasonable expenses incurred. The government has provided the host authority (Gateshead), as it has all host authorities, a sum of just under £1,000 per year to pay for expenses, mostly travel, for members to attend the Northumbria PCP. However, at the time of the review, the Panel has not been able to find any of the other nominating authorities that provide an SRA for their appointees on the Northumbria PCP, with the exception of Wiltshire, which pays an SRA of £7,750 when one of its Members is chair of their PCP. Also Wiltshire pays a Co-optees’ Allowance of £1,926 for any co-opted Member on the Wiltshire PCP.

153. As the Northumbria PCP has only been operational for a year, it is too early to ascertain the extent of extra significant responsibility that the Northumberland County Council members on the Northumbria PCP are undertaking. It is noted however, that previously the Northumbria Police Authority had a great deal more powers than the PCP and remunerated its members accordingly from its own budget. Moreover, it is noted that the advertisement (July 2012) seeking to appoint the two statutory independent co-opted members on the Northumbria PCP it was specifically mentioned that there was no allowance for this role.16

16See http://www.burradon-camperdown.co.uk/BCForum/AdvertNorthumbria.pdf
154. Consequently, the Panel does not recommend that the two Northumberland County Council appointees to the Northumbria PCP be paid an SRA.

Confirming 1-SRA Only Rule

155. The 2003 Members’ Allowances Regulations does not prohibit the number of SRAs an individual Member may receive. But it is common for authorities to have a ‘1-SRA only’ rule set out in their allowances scheme. In other words, regardless of the number of remunerated posts a Member may hold they can only receive one SRA. The prime reason for this rule is if a Member can be paid more than one SRA it leads to a lack of transparency. Members of the public are unable to ascertain the true level of remuneration for a Member from the Members’ Allowances scheme if a Member is able to receive more than one SRA. A consequence of this rule is that it prevents Members taking on more than one remunerated post simply to increase their remuneration and, therefore, acts as a check against the concentration of power, which is discernibly greater where the 1-SRA only rule is not in place.

156. The 1-SRA only rule has always been accepted by Northumberland County Council and inserted in its Members’ Allowances scheme since this Panel has been advising the Council since 1999. It is common for most other councils as well.

157. It is recommended that the 1-SRA be maintained, with the exception of Group Secretaries who are able to receive the relevant SRA for being Group Secretary (subject to 10% qualifying criteria for their group) and one other SRA, where applicable.

The Co-optees’ Allowances – Members of Audit Committee

158. Arising out of the recommendations of the Supplementary Report (November 2012) the two co-opted members of the Audit Committee receive a Co-optees’ Allowance of £1,000 per year, paid for their specialist financial-related knowledge and expertise. Benchmarking shows that in five of the 10 councils in the comparator group the average ordinary Co-optees’ Allowance on Audit is £1,278.

159. The Panel received no evidence that the current Co-optees’ Allowance paid to the two co-opted Members on the Audit Committee needed revisiting.

160. The Panel recommends that the Co-optees’ Allowance of £1,000 per year paid to the two co-opted Members of the Audit Committee remains unaltered, subject to any future indexation that may be applied.
Standards – Ordinary Co-optees

161. Under the relevant provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Council is no longer required to maintain a Standards Committee. However, it has chosen to establish a non-statutory Standards Committee to discharge the residual Standards functions not otherwise assigned to the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person (IP). The committee’s main functions are to monitor the effectiveness of Code of Conduct, which is applicable to all elected and co-opted Members, including Town and Parish Councils and, where appropriate, to make recommendations on any required amendments, including any ethical issues affecting the Council as a whole. It will also carry out local investigations of allegations of a breach of the Code of Conduct by a Member, to make a determination and recommend any sanctions, if necessary. It continues to meet four times per year and has three Parish Council Co-optees, one from each area.

162. Currently the Parish Council Co-optees receive an annual allowance of £500. The Panel received no evidence to indicate that this Co-optees’ Allowance was no longer appropriate.

163. The Panel recommends that the Co-optees’ Allowance of £500 per year paid to the 3 co-opted Members of the Standards Committee remains unaltered subject to any future indexation that may be applied.

The new Co-opted Chair of the Standards Committee

164. As a statutory committee, with more sanctions than the non-statutory committee, the Standards Committee was chaired by an elected Member who received an SRA of £4,005, the highest SRA paid to a Chair of Standards in the comparator group, including both elected and co-opted Chairs. The intention is to appoint a non-elected, i.e., co-opted, independent person to chair the non-statutory Standards Committee at the next full meeting of the Council on 4th September, 2013.

165. Historically there have not been many complaints against Members that has gone forward to a full investigation by the Standards Committee (only three in the past two years), with most of them being resolved before that stage. The new Standards regime is designed so that where there are complaints against a Member then much of the early work of an investigation would be carried out by the Monitoring Officer and Independent Person. The presumption behind the Localism Act 2011 is that there will be fewer formal complaints for a Standards Committee to investigate. Even then, the range of sanctions available to the Standards Committee is more limited than when it was a statutory committee, most notably it can no longer suspend a member from council for up to six months.

166. Consequently, the SRA paid to the Chair of Standards when it was a statutory committee with substantial powers to penalise members is no longer
appropriate. Benchmarking shows that only three other comparator councils remunerate a Co-opted Chair of Standards; ranging from £3,003 in North Tyneside to £4,817 in South Tyneside. When SRAs paid to those chairs of standards who are still elected members is included it shows the average remuneration is £3,480, an average that does not fully reflect the new Standards regime, implemented by August 2013, as not all councils have had an allowances review since the new standards regime came into being nationally.

167. While it is impossible to anticipate, the future workload and responsibility of the Co-opted Chair of the Standards Committee will not be as great as previously and as an interim measure the Panel has chosen to set the Co-optees’ Allowance for the Chair of the Standards Committee at 10% of the Leader’s SRA.

168. **It is recommended that the Chair of the Standards Committee is paid a Co-optees’ Allowance (2013/14 – pro rata from date of appointment) of £2,700, subject to any future indexation applicable.**

The Independent Person

169. The Council is required, since August 2011, under Section 28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 to appoint an ‘Independent Person’ (or IP). The statutory role of the IP arises where the Council has received an allegation against a Member (including Town and Parish Councils) for breach of the relevant council’s Code of Conduct.

170. In those circumstances:

   (a) If the Council decides to investigate the allegation, the Council **must** consult the IP, and take their views into account, before making a decision on that allegation; and

   (b) The Council **may** seek the views of the IP about any other aspect of the allegation, whether or not it decides to investigate; and

   (c) The member of the Council (or Parish/Town Council) who is the subject of the allegation **may** also seek the views of the IP at any time.

171. In practice, when a written allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct is received the Monitoring Officer decides whether the complaint merits a formal investigation or should be dealt with in some other way. If the Monitoring Officer considers there is merit to the allegation, they may (and it is certainly the implicit intent of the legislation) consult the IP at this stage, and will take into account any view the IP may have before deciding how to proceed.

172. In addition, the IP will normally attend full meetings of the Standards Committee and is expected to attend any hearings held by the Standards Committee, normally where it decides whether there has been a breach of the
Code of Conduct. If the Standards Committee determines there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct, the IP will be asked for their views as to what action, if any, should be taken as a result.

173. The IP was appointed on the basis that they had a degree of legal expertise, particularly in the field of arbitration and mediation resolution. The IP is paid an annual retainer of £1,000 per year on the basis that it was the same level paid to Co-optees appointed to the Audit Committee, who also are appointed on basis of knowledge and expertise.

174. The remuneration of the IP is outside the formal remit of the Panel but the Council has asked for the Panel’s guidance as, in practice, the current annual retainer does not reflect the workload that has been required from the IP. Much of this workload has been in an informal context, such as advice provided to the Monitoring Officer, Standards Committee, particularly the Chair, and individual members who have been subject to allegations of breach of the Code of Conduct.

175. Benchmarking provides no guidance as the remuneration of the IP is not normally set out in allowances schemes, and besides the workloads of IPs varies greatly, normally being less so in the metropolitan authorities as they have fewer parish and town councils. The only authority has sets out its remuneration to its IP is Wiltshire which pays an annual sum of £2,240.

176. Bearing the Wiltshire figure in mind the Panel has decided that a remuneration that is set at 10% of the Leader’s SRA is appropriate and suggests to the Council that the remuneration for the IP be £2,700 per year.

Travel and Subsistence Allowances

177. The Panel received no evidence that the approved duties for which travel and subsistence allowances may be claimed, at the rates at which they are paid need revising – with one exception (see below). The Panel notes that the main travel allowance, i.e., the mileage allowance, which is paid at HMRC AMAP rates, and the subsistence rates are based on the same rates that apply to Officers.

178. However, an issue that emerged during the review and which the Panel was asked to provide advice was whether Members should have the opportunity to join a car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice on the same basis that it was being offered to Officers, subject to clarification that Members are able to join on the same basis as Officers.

179. A strict interpretation of the 2003 Regulations would suggest that whether Members should be offered access to a car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice is not within the Panel’s remit. Yet, if Members are in such a scheme then the mileage rates that apply to Members using a leased car to undertake
approved duties in a car-leasing scheme via salary sacrifice are within the Panel’s remit.

180. The Panel understands that if Members are given access to the car-leasing scheme via salary sacrifice then there should be savings on the mileage rates that can be claimed as well as concomitant lower National Insurance contributions by the Council, when Members used their leased cars to attend approved duties.

181. Consequently, the Panel supports the principle of offering Members access to the car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice that is also being made available to Officers and on the same terms and conditions, subject to the Council being satisfied that it will lead to savings vis-à-vis the current spend on mileage allowances.

182. For information purposes and to assist the Council in clearing the scheme with the local tax office, the Panel points out that the principle of elected Members being able to access a salary sacrifice scheme vis-à-vis their remuneration has been established elsewhere. In particular the “Councillors’ Remuneration: Remuneration, Allowances and Expenses – Guidance – (Revised) April 2010” (paragraph 9), published by the Scottish Government states that: “HMRC’s view is that the same tax rules would apply to elected members who hold office as a local councillor as for employees.” It goes on to say that, provided various qualifying conditions are satisfied then it is “for local authorities, on advice from their own legal and finance advisers, to consider whether they would wish to offer this benefit to their elected members.”

183. Although the guidance was specifically referring to Councillor access to the employer childcare voucher scheme via salary sacrifice, the principle of applying the same tax rules that apply to employees has been established in Scotland. Similarly, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, which has statutory powers to determine Members’ Allowances for all unitary councils in Wales has in its “Moving Forward: Proposals Beyond 2010” (paragraph 6.7 i) report, enunciated a similar principle:

That councils bring the ‘salary sacrifice scheme’ to the attention of councillors as an alternative means of assisting with childcare costs.\(^\text{18}\)

184. Furthermore, Devon County Council has stated that:

While Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) accepts it is possible for elected members to enter into salary sacrifice arrangements it can only happen where (a) the Member foregoes his/her right to part of his/her allowances and (b)

\(^{17}\) [Link to Scotland.gov.uk]
\(^{18}\) [Link to Wales.gov.uk]
there is an enforceable agreement that Members are entitled to lower cash remuneration and a benefit. While the Members Allowances Scheme (Part 7) already permits members to forego any or all of their allowance, it does not provide that those allowances may comprise direct payments and/or approved benefits. HMRC advise that a Council's Constitution must specifically provide for Members to ‘re-negotiate’ their remuneration package to receive a reduced direct payment or remuneration and benefits.  

185. If the Council does decide to offer Members access to a car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice then HMRC advises that from 1 June 2013 that the following mileage rates should be applied for “company cars” which in effect is what a leased car is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lease &amp; SMART car mileage rates</th>
<th>Up to 1400cc (up to 1600cc for diesel)</th>
<th>1401cc and above (1601cc and above for diesel)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Petrol Cars</td>
<td>15p per mile</td>
<td>17p per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diesel Cars</td>
<td>12p per mile</td>
<td>14p per mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPG Cars</td>
<td>10p per mile</td>
<td>12p per mile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

186. The Panel recommends that where a Member chooses to join the Council’s car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice that the mileage rates as outlined above in Table 2 are applicable and not the HMRC AMAP rates, which is currently 45p per mile.

187. There were no other issues raised regarding the County’s Travel and Subsistence scheme.

188. Thus, the Panel recommends that the approved duties for which Members claim travel and subsistence allowances and the rates at which they are payable remain unchanged for 2013/14, except where a Member does lease a car through the Council’s salary sacrifice scheme, in which case the Company Car Advisory rates should be applicable.

The Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance (DCA)

189. The DCA is rarely claimed, nonetheless, the Panel takes the view that the continuation of this allowance is a matter of principle. Councils were specifically given express legal powers to pay this allowance to reduce a

---

20 http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/cars/advisory_fuel_current.htm
financial barrier for Members (current or potential) who have caring responsibilities and may otherwise be unable to stand for or remain on Council. The Panel received no evidence that the current maximum rates (including indices), terms and conditions and approved duties for which the DCA may be claimed needed revision.

190. The Panel recommends that the current maximum rates (including indices), terms and conditions and approved duties for which the DCA may be claimed remain unchanged for 2013/14.

Membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

191. Under the current legislation, the single decision making power that the Panel possesses is in regards to eligibility for Members to join the LGPS. Even then it is a negative decision making power, if the Panel says no or only defined members are eligible for access to the LGPS the Council cannot ignore any restrictions decided by the Panel, but the Council does not have to accept the recommendations if they are positive.

192. Historically, the Panel has decided that all Members, including both their Basic Allowance and any SRAs payable, should be eligible to join the LGPS. This leaves the door open for the Council to decide whether to accept the recommendation, which historically it has done – although not all Members have chosen or are able (though age restrictions) to join the LGPS. The Panel received no evidence to alter its view that all Members should be able to join the LGPS if they wish and meet the age restrictions, applied to both their Basic Allowance and, if applicable, their SRAs. It helps to reduce a financial barrier to under represented groups on Council, most notably younger people who are in employment.

193. The Panel recommends that the Council should continue to enable all Members to join the LGPS, subject to the outcome of the government’s consultation on councillor access to the LGPS, for implementation from April 2014.

Indexation

194. The 2003 Regulations provide express powers for councils to index their allowances. If indexation is not in place then periodic large increases are required simply to keep pace with inflation. The 2003 Regulations provide that where a council has indexed any or all of its allowances then the relevant indices can only run for 4 years (known as the ‘4-year rule’) before it is required to seek further advice from its IRP to provide fresh authority for another four years.

21 See Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations, 2003, 10 (4), in Section 3 of the Regulations
195. Historically, the Panel has recommended relevant indices to be applied to allowances and the Council has, apart from SRAs since 2009, accepted and implemented the recommended indices. Indeed, a secondary driver of this review is the requirement for the council to seek fresh authority for the indexation of members’ allowances under the 4-year rule. Without considering a recommendation from the Panel, the Council cannot index any of its members’ allowances for the future. As it goes this has been a ‘non-issue’ for the past 3 years, as far as the Basic Allowance and SRAs are concerned. The index applicable to these allowances has been the cost of living annual percentage salary increase for local government staff that is agreed each year by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services staff. This has been zero percent for the past three years, and in the last year – 2009 – the Council decided to apply this index (at 1%) it only did so for the Basic Allowance, and not the SRAs.

196. For 2013/14, this will change, the cost of living increase on offer to local government staff is 1%, and even though the employees’ representatives have yet to accept the offer, it will not be significantly higher than 1%. Regardless of what the cost of living increase actually is, if employees receive a cost of living increase then it is equitable that Members receive likewise.

197. The Panel reiterates that the Basic Allowances and SRAs for 2013/14 should be indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 49), implemented from the start of the municipal year. Thus, if Officers receive a cost of living increase from 1 April 2013 then Members should receive the same from the start of municipal year 2013, even if it has to be backdated, which often happens for Officers, as the final settlement is not typically agreed until the summer of the year that the increase applies. It treats Members and Officers equally. If there was a time lag for Members, i.e., apply the 2013/14 Officer percentage pay increase to their allowances in 2014/15 it could lead to different percentage increases being applied in the same year to Officers and Members.

198. The Panel points out that if allowances are not indexed then the Council is not able to apply an annual cost of living increase without coming back for advice to the Panel. However, where a Council has adopted indices they are under no obligation to apply them each year. Councils retain the right not to apply an index to their allowances.

199. The Panel recommends that the Northumberland County Council members allowances are indexed as follows:

- Basic Allowance, SRAs, Co-optees’ Allowances and IP remuneration:
  - Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 49), to applied from the same date and for the same period that applies to staff.
• **Travel Allowance – Mileage Rates:**
  - Indexed to HMRC approved mileage rates for motor vehicles, motor cycles and bicycles
  - Where a Member has joined the Council’s car leasing scheme via salary sacrifice then the HMRC company car advisory mileage rates should apply

• **Subsistence Allowance – Maximum Rates:**
  - Indexed to the same rates that apply to Officers

• **Dependants’ Carers’ Allowance – Maximum Rates:**
  - Indexed to the hourly rate payable for Northumberland County Council Home Carers, including both the weekday and weekend rates depending when care is being claimed for

**Implementation of Recommendations**

200. As permitted by the 2003 Members’ Allowances Regulations (paragraph 10. (6)) it is recommended that the new Members’ Allowances scheme as recommended in this report be implemented from the date of the 2013 Annual Meeting on 22nd May 2013, or at any date thereafter as agreed by the Authority, with the following provisos:

• Where remunerated appointments have been made since the date of the 2013 Annual Meeting then their recommended SRAs should be only be payable from the date of appointment.

• Where the Panel has recommended a decrease in an SRA currently paid to a post holder then the lower SRA should only take affect from the date the Council formally adopts the new Members’ Allowances scheme.
Appendix One: Members and Officers who met with the Panel

**Elected Members:**

**Cllr R. Arkless**  
Policy Board Portfolio Holder – Children’s Services (Labour)

**Cllr H. Cairns**  
Vice-Chair Area Committee North and Deputy Leader of Liberal Democrat Group

**Cllr W. Daley**  
Former Vice-Chair of Economic Prosperity & Strategic Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Conservative)

**Cllr G. Davey**  
Leader of Council, Chair of Policy Board and Portfolio Holder – Branding and Communications (Labour)

**Cllr S. Dickinson**  
Council Business Chairman (Labour)

**Cllr B. Gallacher**  
Vice Chair: Communities & Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Vice Chair Audit Committee (Labour)

**Cllr L. Grimshaw**  
Vice Chair Area Planning Committee South East (Labour)

**Cllr C. Horncastle**  
Chair Area Planning Committee West and Vice Chair of LDF Working Group (Conservative)

**Cllr I. Hutchinson**  
Vice Chair Area Planning Committee West (Conservative)

**Cllr P. Jackson**  
Leader of Conservative Group and Member of Policy Board – Non-Portfolio Holder

**Cllr T. Johnstone**  
Chair of Policy Board Regeneration Working Group (Labour)

**Cllr V. Jones**  
Vice Chair Area Committee West (Conservative)

**Cllr P. Kelly**  
Leader of Independent Group, Member of Policy Board – Non-Portfolio Holder, Chair of Central Planning & Rights of Way Committee and Chair Local Development Framework Council Working Group

**Cllr D. Ledger**  
Deputy Leader of Council and Portfolio Holder – Corporate Resources (Labour Group)

**Cllr K. Parry**  
Chair Licensing & Regulatory Committee (Labour Group)

**Cllr J. Reid**  
Liberal Democrat Group Leader and Member of Policy Board – Non-Portfolio Holder

---

22 The representation received from Cllr Cairns was received via a telephone interview
Cllr A. Sambrook  Vice Chair Economic Prosperity & Strategic Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Labour)

Cllr I. Swithenbank  Chair Area Committee South East & Chair Area Chairs’ Briefing (Labour)

Cllr J. Taylor  Chair Area Planning Committee North (Independent Group)

Cllr D. Watkin  Vice Chair Area Planning Committee North (Liberal Democrat Group)

Cllr G. Webb  Chair Policy Board Working Group – Housing (Labour)

**Written Submissions:**

Cllr R. Dodd  Chair Area Committee – West (Conservative Group)

**Officers:**

Steve Stewart  Chief Executive

Andy Thom  Acting Head of Legal & Democratic Services and statutory Monitoring Officer

Karen Ledger  Head of Development Services

Jackie Roll  Scrutiny Manager

Mike Bird  Team Leader (Scrutiny & Regulation)

In addition, the Panel received further written evidence, clarifications and other information requested via email from the following Officers:

Lesley Bennett  Team Leader (Governance/People) Democratic Services

Derek Brown  Transactions Manager, Financial Services

Alison Elsdon  Head of Business Support

Colin Logan  Head of Financial Services
Appendix 2: Papers and other Written Material Received by the Panel

1. The Panel’s Terms of Reference
2. Northumberland County Council Members’ Allowances Schemes 2012/13
3. Statutory Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances 2006
4. Statutory Instruments:
   - 2003 No. 1021 – The Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations
   - 2003 No. 1022 – The Local Government Pension Scheme and Discretionary Compensation (Local Authority Members in England) Regulations 2003
5. Previous Reports by the Panel, namely
   - Sixth Report, December 2008
   - Seventh Report, December 2010
   - Supplementary Report, November 2012
6. Benchmarking information, namely the current (2012/13) allowances schemes for other unitary county councils in England
   - Cornwall
   - Durham
   - Shropshire
   - Wiltshire
   In addition, the 2012/13 Members Allowances schemes for the unitary metropolitan councils in Tyne & Wear, namely
   - Gateshead
   - Newcastle
   - North Tyneside
   - South Tyneside
   - Sunderland
   Also where relevant the national framework of allowances applicable to the unitary councils in Scotland and Wales (2012/13)
7. Annual publication of all allowances and expenses received by Members 2012/13
8. Northumberland County Council Constitution – adopted on 4 September 2013
9. Working Groups – Template, including remits, frequency of meetings and reporting mechanism

10. Northumberland Council schedule of meetings and membership of boards committees and where available working groups

11. Diagram outlining the new decision making cycle of the Council

12. Role Descriptions for
   - Business Chair of Council
   - Policy Board Working Group Chairs
   - Area Committee Chairs
   - Overview and Scrutiny Vice Chairs
   - Independent Person – Standards
   - Independent Chair of Standards

13. “Taxpayer-funded pensions for councillors and other elected local office holders”, consultation paper issue by Department for Communities and Local Government, April 2013


### APPENDIX THREE: Allowances Paid Benchmarking Group of Councils (2012/13)

| Northumberland County Council Benchmarking Group: Basic Allowances, Executive, Scrutiny & Area SRAs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T&W Mets/County Unitary Councils | Basic Allowance | Leader or Elected Mayor | Total Leader or Mayor | Deputy Mayor or Leader | Cabinet SRAs | Deputy Cabinet Members | Main O&S Chair | Main O&S Vice Chairs | Scrutiny Chairs or Lead Members | Scrutiny Vice Chairs | Area Chairs | Area Vice Chairs |
| Cornwall | £12,128 | £20,000 | £32,128 | £15,000 | £1,042 | £6,000 | £13,300 | £7,980 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £12,150 | £12,150 |
| Durham | £13,300 | £30,369 | £40,489 | £20,242 | £15,185 | £15,101 | £8,000 | £7,980 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £4,758 | £5,663 |
| Gateshead | £10,120 | £26,000 | £36,120 | £20,242 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £15,185 | £7,980 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £7,226 | £7,226 |
| Newcastle* | £8,775 | £16,550 | £25,325 | £8,275 | £4,138 | £4,138 | £6,000 | £7,980 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £2,069 | £2,069 |
| N. Tyneside | £7,896 | £53,388 | £61,284 | £6,792 | £3,003 | £3,003 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 |
| Shropshire | £11,514 | £23,028 | £34,542 | £14,393 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 | £11,514 |
| S. Tyneside | £7,226 | £26,496 | £33,722 | £16,860 | £11,535 | £9,635 | £7,226 | £5,817 | £10,350 | £6,277 | £6,277 | £6,277 |
| Sunderland | £8,369 | £37,667 | £46,036 | £25,111 | £12,556 | £12,556 | £6,277 | £5,179 | £10,350 | £6,277 | £6,277 | £6,277 |
| Wiltshire** | £12,167 | £31,178 | £43,345 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 | £20,131 |
| Northumberland | £12,625 | £27,000 | £39,625 | £18,090 | £14,850 | £12,150 | £4,758 | £12,150 | £12,150 | £12,150 | £12,150 | £12,150 |
| Highest | £13,300 | £53,388 | £61,734 | £25,111 | £20,716 | £12,556 | £7,980 | £15,185 | £7,226 | £12,150 | £12,150 | £12,150 |
| Lowest | £7,226 | £16,550 | £25,325 | £6,792 | £3,003 | £3,003 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 | £2,100 |
| Mean | £10,412 | £30,270 | £40,682 | £16,485 | £12,556 | £7,029 | £8,734 | £4,612 | £7,422 | £3,580 | £8,338 |
| Median | £10,817 | £28,685 | £26,496 | £17,475 | £14,075 | £8,809 | £5,663 | £5,663 | £5,663 | £5,663 | £5,663 | £5,663 |

<p>| Welsh Unitaries | £13,175 | &quot;Newcastle: where applicable post holders can receive 50% of 2nd SRA&quot; |
| Scottish Unitaries | £16,234 | &quot;Leader receives Leaders SRA (£25,168) + £500 &amp; £50 per Member as Group Leader. Leaders SRA payable listed includes these totals for 2011/12, which are latest figures published. Also Members can receive 30% of 2nd SRA&quot; |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northumberland County Council Benchmarking Group: Main Quasi-Judicial SRAs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>T&amp;W Mets/County Unitary Councils</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Tyneside**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Tyneside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North’land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes**

*In Newcastle Vice Chair of Standards is a joint Vice Chair, shared with a Co-optee*

**N. Tyneside lists all "other" i.e., non-specified committee chairs & vice chairs SRAs as £2,100 & £1,473. Figures inserted are derived from committees listed on website as full committees not otherwise receiving specified SRA*

***In Shropshire Chair of Licensing Sub is combined with V/Chair of General Licensing Committee*
Northumberland County Council Benchmarking Group: Miscellaneous SRAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T&amp;W Mets/County Unitary Councils</th>
<th>Rights of Way or Highways Chair</th>
<th>HR or Staff Chair</th>
<th>HR Vice Chair</th>
<th>Pensions Panel</th>
<th>Pensions V/Chair</th>
<th>Constitution &amp;/or Governance Chair</th>
<th>Constitution &amp;/or Governance V/Chair</th>
<th>Council Chair</th>
<th>Council Vice Chair</th>
<th>Appeals Chair</th>
<th>Appeals V/Chair</th>
<th>Adoption Panel or Member</th>
<th>Joint Committees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>£2,260</td>
<td>£2,660</td>
<td>£1,330</td>
<td>£2,660</td>
<td>£1,330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£6,650</td>
<td>£3,325</td>
<td>£2,660</td>
<td>£1,330</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£10,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Tyneside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,100</td>
<td>£1,473</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£11,007</td>
<td>£3,996</td>
<td>£2,100</td>
<td>£1,473</td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,879</td>
<td>£1,439</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£8,636</td>
<td>£8,636</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Tyneside</td>
<td>£4,817</td>
<td>£2,409</td>
<td>£9,635</td>
<td>£7,226</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£7,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>£2,517</td>
<td>£2,517</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£10,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Northumberland</strong></td>
<td><strong>£5,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>£4,005</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>£5,400</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest</strong></td>
<td><strong>£5,400</strong></td>
<td><strong>£4,817</strong></td>
<td>£9,635</td>
<td>£7,226</td>
<td>£4,138</td>
<td>£2,069</td>
<td>£15,000</td>
<td>£8,636</td>
<td>£10,120</td>
<td>£5,057</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lowest</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,660</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,517</strong></td>
<td>£2,100</td>
<td>£539</td>
<td>£2,100</td>
<td>£539</td>
<td>£5,400</td>
<td>£1,620</td>
<td>£2,100</td>
<td>£1,330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>£4,030</strong></td>
<td><strong>£3,331</strong></td>
<td><strong>£3,706</strong></td>
<td><strong>£2,401</strong></td>
<td><strong>£3,153</strong></td>
<td><strong>£1,360</strong></td>
<td><strong>£9,460</strong></td>
<td><strong>£4,395</strong></td>
<td><strong>£5,527</strong></td>
<td><strong>£3,169</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* In Shropshire Chair of Council is also Deputy Speaker and Vice Chair of Council is Speaker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T&amp;W Mets/County Unitary Councils</td>
<td>Leader Main Opposition Group</td>
<td>Dep Leader Main Opposition Group</td>
<td>Shadow Cab Members or Spokespersons</td>
<td>Leader Minority Opposition Group</td>
<td>Dep Leader Minority Opposition Group</td>
<td>Leader Other Minor Opposition Group[s]</td>
<td>Dep Leader Other Minor Opposition Group[s]</td>
<td>Other Group SRAs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>£3,325</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>£15,185</td>
<td>£6,251</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>£6,207</td>
<td>£3,104</td>
<td>£2,069</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Tyneside</td>
<td>£3,003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td>£5,757</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Tyneside</td>
<td>£2,409</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>£12,556</td>
<td>£8,369</td>
<td></td>
<td>£6,277</td>
<td>£4,184</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>£500 + £50 per Mbr</td>
<td>£500 + £50 per Mbr</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>£12,150</td>
<td>£4,860</td>
<td></td>
<td>£8,100</td>
<td>£2,430</td>
<td>£5,400</td>
<td>£1,080</td>
<td>£15 per member for group secretaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>£15,185</td>
<td>£8,369</td>
<td></td>
<td>£8,100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>£2,409</td>
<td>£3,104</td>
<td></td>
<td>£3,003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>£7,990</td>
<td>£5,646</td>
<td></td>
<td>£5,292</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T&amp;W Mets/County Unitary Councils</td>
<td>Standards Co-opted Chair</td>
<td>Standards Co-opted V/Chair</td>
<td>Standards Co-optees</td>
<td>Audit Co-opted Chair</td>
<td>Audit Co-optees</td>
<td>Other/Non-Specified Co-optees</td>
<td>Other SRAs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornwall</td>
<td>£3,221</td>
<td>£1,288</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Portfolio Advisory Committee Chairs £6,000 Chair Harbours Board £1,350</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>£2,660</td>
<td>Not Paid</td>
<td>Not Paid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chairs &amp; V/Chairs Licensing Subs £3,325 &amp; £1,662 Highway &amp; Corporate Parenting Committees V/Chairs £1,330</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£335</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>£4,138</td>
<td>£2,069*</td>
<td>£828</td>
<td>£4,138</td>
<td>£828</td>
<td>£414</td>
<td>Members on Planning £828 Members on Licensing Act &amp; Appeals Committees £414</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N. Tyneside</td>
<td>£3,003</td>
<td>£789</td>
<td>£1,001</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chair Outside Bodies Committee £2,100 V/Chairs Outside Bodies &amp; Joint Committees £1,473</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shropshire</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£75/£143 per meeting</td>
<td>Performance Panel Chairs £4,817 &amp; V/Chairs £2,409</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Tyneside</td>
<td>£4,817</td>
<td>£2,409</td>
<td>£723</td>
<td>£723</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£15,000 (Port Board) Cabinet Secretary £25,111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£6,277</td>
<td></td>
<td>£896</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltshire</td>
<td>£2,517</td>
<td>£1,120</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>O&amp;S Fund: £10,000 per year for chairing T&amp;F Groups, etc Lead Representative on SW Councils £2,162 Chair of PCP £7,750 &amp; PCP Co-optees £1,926</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumberland</td>
<td>£4,005</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>£4,817</td>
<td>£1,288</td>
<td>£6,277</td>
<td>£3,139</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,817</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>£2,517</td>
<td>£500</td>
<td>£1,001</td>
<td>£700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£2,517</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>£3,480</td>
<td>£875</td>
<td>£3,805</td>
<td>£1,278</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>£3,480</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * In Newcastle there is a joint co-optee/elected vice chair of Standards
APPENDIX FOUR: Declarations of Interest

Norman Dunn:  Vice President of Northumberland Association of Local Councils

Craig Moore:  Chair of Governors, Wark Church of England First School, Wark, Hexham