



**WMFRA**  
West Midlands Fire and  
Rescue Authority

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND  
RESCUE AUTHORITY**  
**24 November 2025**

**WMFRA Review of Members Allowances**  
**For DECISION**

**Report of the Interim Clerk to the Authority, Tom Embury**  
**Author of the report: Governance and Performance Support Officer,**  
**Stephen Timmington**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1. This report is submitted to the Authority to seek Member approval for the commissioning of an independent review of Members' allowances in line with good governance principles.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. THAT Members approve the commissioning of an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Members' Allowance Scheme, utilising a joint IRP established in conjunction with the West Midlands Combined Authority
- 2.2. THAT Members approve the independent remuneration panel to conduct a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme for the current municipal year of 2025/26
- 2.3. THAT Members approve the independent remuneration panel to conduct a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme for the next municipal year of 2026/27, and to reflect any changes that may arise from the Authority's governance improvement journey.
- 2.4. THAT Members approve the Terms of Reference of the Independent Remuneration Panel (**Appendix A**)
- 2.5. THAT Members note that in accordance with the Constitution, the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme is to be co-ordinated

by the (interim) Clerk to the Authority (as per Article 5 – Roles and Functions of Officers)

**3. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- 3.1. An independent review of the Authority’s Members’ Allowances Scheme to be undertaken using an independent remuneration panel (IRP), applying the principles as set out under the Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 3.2. An independent review of the Authority’s Members Allowances Scheme to be undertaken within this municipal year, allowing any agreed changes to be processed and implemented within an appropriate timeframe.
- 3.3. The review is to be undertaken by an independent remuneration panel (IRP), with the scope of the review confirmed through the panel’s terms of reference (as approved by the Authority).
- 3.4. The review of the Members’ Allowances Scheme is to include the current arrangements for the current municipal year, 2025/26, and undertake a review of future arrangements for the municipal year 2025/26 that may arise from the Authority’s governance improvement journey, i.e. recommendations of the Corporate Governance Improvement Board (CGIB), reflected in revisions to the Constitution, committee structures, and Member roles and functions.
- 3.5. Review to be co-ordinated by the (interim) Clerk of the Authority in line within Constitutional delegations.
- 3.6. Indicative timescales:
  - 24 November 2025: Member deliberation and approval to proceed, including IRP terms of reference
  - IRP to be convened early 2026
  - IRP to report findings and recommendations to the Fire Authority for Member consideration April 2026 culminating in the implementation or otherwise of those recommendations

- 3.7 Members and Officers will be provided the opportunity to make representations to the IRP in relation to the review.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require that an authority shall make a scheme in respect of the successful financial year on or before 31 March each year. The scheme may be amended at any time but may only be revoked with effect from the beginning of the year. Under these regulations Councils are required to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to provide the local authority with advice on its scheme and the amounts to be paid. Local authorities must have regard to this advice.
- 4.2. It should be noted that although these regulations apply to a fire authority, the requirements for establishing an IRP only apply to district, county and London borough councils. Other authorities including fire authorities must have regard to the recommendations of the IRPs of the authorities that their members are nominated to (in short, a Fire Authority is required to have regard for the allowances paid in its constituent authorities).
- 4.3. Establishing an IRP is in accordance with best practice, and the principles of good governance, and will be a familiar process for Members who will have experience of such within their own respective authorities.
- 4.4. Establishing a joint IRP with West Midlands Combined Authority supports efficient and effective ways of working, benefiting from additional knowledge and insight, and reducing administrative burden. However, it is important to note that although members of the IRP will be asked to review various aspects of the respective allowance schemes of both organisations, the WMCA and WMFRA hold very specific and individual requirements and demands, reflecting both the different nature of each organisation, but also the different governance models and frameworks that they operate within. Guidance and information provided to the IRP will reflect the differing demands and challenges of organisation. It should be

noted that, in accordance with the regulations, a joint IRP must make separate recommendations to the appointing authorities.

- 4.5. It should be noted that the last independent review of the Authority's Members' Allowances Scheme was conducted following the introduction in June 2018 of new arrangements under the reformed Fire Authority. Members' allowances have not been reviewed since then, due to a combination of factors including the move to business continuity arrangements during the Covid pandemic. As a result, a review of allowances is overdue, and would be particularly timely considering the potential for changes to be introduced in the coming municipal year as a result of the Authority's governance improvement journey.
- 4.6. In the event of receiving Member approval to proceed, a joint advert of the WMCA and WMFRA will be published, requesting expressions of interest from interested parties. The appointment process will follow the standard guidelines, terms and conditions as laid out within the regulations. Membership of the IRP is a voluntary role with appointments to be for a 4-year period.

## 5. **STRATEGY ALIGNMENT**

- 5.1 The proposals within this report support the effective delivery of responsibilities as outlined within the Authority's Constitution and aligned with the principle of good governance.

## 6. **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

- 6.1. An equality impact assessment has not been completed as it does not represent a policy change.

## 7. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 sets out the requirements for local authorities to establish a scheme for paying allowances to their members, including a basic allowance for all members and special responsibility allowances for those with specific roles.

- 7.2. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 sets out a more detailed framework for what schemes must include and how they should operate, and details specific allowances that can be included in a scheme and also the requirements for how such allowances should be determined i.e. via an IRP.
- 7.3. It should be noted that there is no statutory requirement for a fire and rescue authority to establish an IRP and to have regard for the allowances paid within its constituent authorities.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. Members of the IRP will be reimbursed for any reasonable travel expenses incurred in connection with their approved activities or time. Amounts will be accordance with WMFS policy. Members of the IRP will not be entitled to an honorarium allowance.
- 8.2. No further direct costs during the work of the IRP are envisaged other than Officer time (workstreams falls within existing roles and responsibilities of existing postholders – no additional resource has been required).
- 8.3. The establishment of a joint IRP by the Authority and West Midlands Combined Authority will realise efficiencies, by optimising Officer time and reducing the administrative burden associated with convening such a panel.
- 8.4. By its very nature, a review of the Members's Allowances Scheme will result in financial implications. At the time of writing these are unknown, however as the IRP conclude the review, the panel's findings and resulting recommendations will be set out in a report which will include financial details. This report and the financial implications will be considered by the Authority.

## 9. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. There are no environmental implications arising from the content of this report.

## 10. **CONSULTATION**

10.1. The proposals set out within this report do not require consultation.

## 11. **BACKGROUND PAPERS & APPENDICES**

- [Appendix A – IRP Terms of Reference](#)
- [Local Government and Housing Act 1989 \(section 18\)](#)
- [Local Authorities \(Members’ Allowances\) \(England\) Regulation 2003](#)
- [Local Government Councillors and civic dignitaries in England: ODPM guidance: Part One: members’ allowances](#)

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