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**The report of the Parish Remuneration Panel appointed to  
review the allowances paid to members of parish councils  
within the Borough of Guildford**

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November 2015

## INTRODUCTION

1. Part 5 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations") as amended by The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2004, make provision for the establishment by Guildford Borough Council, as the responsible authority, of a Parish Remuneration Panel whose function is to produce a report in relation to the members of the authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations as to:
  - (a) the amount of parish basic allowance payable to elected members of such authorities;
  - (b) the amount of travelling and subsistence allowance payable to members of such authorities, elected or otherwise;
  - (c) whether parish basic allowance should be payable only to the chairman of any such authority or to all of its members;
  - (d) whether, if parish basic allowance should be payable to both the chairman and the other members of any such authority, the allowance payable to the chairman should be set at a level higher than that payable to the other members and, if so, the higher amount so payable; and
  - (e) the responsibilities or duties in respect of which members should receive parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

Note: The 2003 Regulations make no provision for a parish council to pay any of its members a dependants' carers' allowance.

2. In July 2015, Guildford Borough Council ratified the appointment of the following members in respect of its Independent Remuneration Panel and who, by virtue of the 2003 Regulations, were also appointed as members of the Parish Remuneration Panel:

Michael Burke  
Vivienne Cameron<sup>1</sup>  
Susan Tresman

## BACKGROUND

3. At present, parish councils may pay their chairman an allowance which it thinks reasonable for the purpose of meeting the expenses of that office under Section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (a "Section 15 Allowance"). The 2003 Regulations do *not* supersede these provisions. The 2003 Regulations removed the option of parish councils paying their councillors a financial loss allowance under Section 173 of the Local Government Act 1972. Other than the Section 15 Allowance for the chairman, parish councils may only pay a parish basic

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<sup>1</sup> The Panel subsequently elected Vivienne Cameron as its Chairman.

allowance or parish travel and subsistence allowance having had regard to the recommendations of the Parish Remuneration Panel contained in this report.

4. We surveyed each of the 23 parish councils in Guildford Borough. Two separate questionnaires were sent to each parish clerk, copies of which are attached as **Appendix 1**.

## **RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

5. Overall, 17 parish councils (74 per cent) responded to the questionnaire. We found that 7 parish councils currently paid their respective chairmen a Section 15 Allowance. The value of that allowance ranged from £50 up to £700 per annum. A summary of the responses received is attached as **Appendix 2**.
6. Of the parish councils which responded to the questionnaire only two (West Horsley Parish Council and Seale and Sands Parish Council) expressed a wish for the Panel to make a recommendation in respect of a parish basic allowance, as envisaged by the 2003 Regulations. We considered a questionnaire response from Mr Nick Portet (West Horsley) for the purpose of establishing the time he currently spends on preparing for and attending the various parish meetings, constituency work and the associated costs.
7. Eight councils expressed a wish that consideration be given by the Panel to recommending appropriate rates of parish travelling and subsistence allowance, or that such an allowance might be appropriate.

## **CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Parish Basic Allowance**

8. From the evidence obtained in the single response to the questionnaire from Mr Portet of West Horsley Parish Council, we do not believe that the workload or time commitments of either a parish councillor or a parish chairman are sufficiently onerous to warrant payment of a parish basic allowance. We consider that this view reflects the general opinion and feeling of the local parish councils that their councillors' role is primarily and essentially voluntary.
9. Moreover, any parish council wishing to remunerate its chairman by way of meeting the expenses of the office of chairman may legitimately do this via the Section 15 Allowance.
10. **WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that no parish basic allowance be payable by any of the parish councils in the Borough of Guildford to their members.**

### **Parish Travelling and Subsistence Allowance**

11. The 2003 Regulations provide that a parish council may pay to its members a parish travelling and subsistence allowance (which may include provision for the payment of an allowance for those members who travel by bicycle or other non-motorised transport); and whilst undertaking one or more of the following:

- (i) attending a meeting:
- of the authority or a committee or sub-committee of the authority
  - of some other body (including a committee or sub-committee of such body) to which the authority makes appointments or nominations
  - of a local authority association of which the authority is a member

or

- (ii) duties undertaken on behalf of the authority:
- in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened
  - in connection with the discharge of any function of the authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises

or

- (iii) any other duty approved by the authority in connection with discharging the duties of the authority or its committees or sub-committees.

12. We consider that parish councils should be given the opportunity to offer to their councillors a parish travelling and subsistence allowance to recompense them for their expenses incurred in the course of their duties as parish councillors.
13. In our recommendations to Guildford Borough Council in relation to travelling and subsistence allowances for Borough Councillors, we suggested that the amounts payable to councillors in respect of travelling and subsistence allowance should be the same amounts which are payable to officers of the Council for travelling and subsistence undertaken in the course of their duties. These amounts are unchanged from the IRP's previous report and recommendations (in October 2011).
14. **On this basis WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND that the parish travel and subsistence allowances set out below, which are based on those currently recommended for adoption by Guildford Borough Council, be payable by the parish councils within the Guildford Borough area to their respective parish councillors, whether they be elected or otherwise, in respect of the duties referred to in paragraph 11 above.**

**Public Transport** – In respect of any approved duties, Councillors and co-opted members are reimbursed the cost of second class or any available cheap rate travel using public transport on production of a valid ticket.

**Motor Mileage Allowance:**

Cars: 45p per mile

Motor cycles: 24p per mile

**Cycle Allowance:** 22p per mile

**Day Subsistence Allowance**

- |       |                         |        |
|-------|-------------------------|--------|
| (i)   | Breakfast allowance:    | £6.88  |
| (ii)  | Lunch allowance:        | £9.50  |
| (iii) | Tea allowance:          | £3.76  |
| (iv)  | Evening Meal allowance: | £11.76 |

**Overnight Subsistence Allowance**

- (i) In London: £102
- (ii) Elsewhere: £89

Signed:.....  
Vivienne Cameron (Chairman)

Signed:.....  
Michael Burke

Signed:.....  
Susan Tresman

**PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL  
PARISH COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE (1)**

**RETURN FOR .....PARISH COUNCIL**

1. Does the parish council currently pay an allowance to the Chairman in accordance with section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 (i.e, such reasonable allowance as the parish council thinks appropriate for the purpose of enabling the Chairman to meet the expenses of his office) and, if so, what is the level?

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2. Does the parish council wish to consider paying the Chairman a basic allowance for time spent on that office under an allowances scheme made in accordance with The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003?

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3. Does the parish council wish to consider paying *elected* parish councillors a basic allowance under an allowances scheme made in accordance with the 2003 regulations to cover (a) time spent as a councillor and (b) expenses incurred?

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4. Does the parish council wish to consider paying travelling and subsistence allowance to parish councillors (whether elected or otherwise) under a scheme made in accordance with the 2003 regulations?

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5. How often does the parish council and (if relevant) its committees and sub-committees meet?

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**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE BY NO LATER THAN - WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2015 TO:**

John Armstrong  
Committee Services  
Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead House, Millmead  
GUILDFORD  
Surrey GU2 4BB

email: [john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk)

**PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL  
PARISH COUNCIL QUESTIONNAIRE (2)**

RETURN FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR.....  
REPRESENTING.....PARISH COUNCIL

**1. MEETINGS**

Parish Council/ Committee	Capacity (e.g. Chairman)	Average time spent each month	
		Preparing for Meetings	Attending Meetings

**2. CONSTITUENCY WORK**

Please state the approximate amount of time spent each month dealing with constituents

**3. COSTS**

Please state the approximate monthly costs involved in being a Parish Councillor e.g. phone costs, travelling etc.

**4. ANY OTHER COMMENTS** (which you feel may be of assistance to the Panel)

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Guildford Borough Council  
Millmead House, Millmead  
GUILDFORD  
Surrey GU2 4BB email: [john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk](mailto:john.armstrong@guildford.gov.uk)

## Guildford Parish Councils – Questionnaire Response Summary

Parish Council	Present (s.15 LGA 1972) Chairman Allowance	Future chair basic allowance	Future basic allowance for all parish councillors	Future councillors Travel & Subsistence allowance	Frequency of meetings
Albury	No	No	No	No	Full Council once per month and Planning committee every 3 weeks, other committees bi-monthly, making at least 3 committee meetings each month
Artington	No response				
Ash	No	No	No	Travelling paid via the clerk when required	11 Council meetings pa, 23 Planning meetings pa, 11 amenities meetings pa, 10 Finance & Admin meetings pa
Compton	No	No	No	No	Full Council bi-monthly and cemetery committee quarterly
East Clandon	No	No	No	No	Ten times per year
East Horsley	No	No	No	No	Parish Council meets every 6 weeks. Planning & Environment meet 2 weekly . Finance & Risk meet quarterly
Effingham	No	No	No	only in exceptional circumstances	The parish council meets monthly, there are no formal sub-committee meeting, however informal task groups may meet as required

Appendix 2

<b>Normandy</b>	No	No	No	Yes, but only when travel is outside the Parish boundary	On average three times per month
<b>Ockham</b>	No response				
<b>Pirbright</b>	Yes (up to £700, but not always claimed)	No	No	No	10 full meetings + 10-15 committee/other meetings
<b>Puttenham</b>	£450.00 p.a	No	No	No	Bi-monthly
<b>Ripley</b>	Yes - £50 annual budget.	No	No	Mileage is paid	Parish Council – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month except August & December, Planning & Environment Committee – Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday, Christmas Event Committee – as and when required, Finance Working Group – quarterly meetings April/July/October/January plus others if required, Other Committees and Working Groups – as and when required
<b>St Martha</b>	No	No	No	Yes, if travelling to training sessions offered by SSALC (Sussex and Surrey Association of Local Councils). This is to ensure that no Member is excluded from attending training by not being able to afford it. (The Parish Council pays the fee).	Six Ordinary Meetings per annum. There are no committees.

Appendix 2

<b>Seale &amp; Sands</b>	£500 per annum- covers internal and external to the parish activities	figure currently set	no	mileage out of the parish is given, if councillor requests	9 official public meetings plus other as required
<b>Send</b>	The allowance for the Chairman is £50 per annum to cover costs of refreshments /gifts etc..	No	No - there is £50 in the budget for Parish Councillors for training/expenses	No - There is £50 in the budget for Parish Councillors for training/expenses	3rd Monday of the month (not August or December) 10 meetings per annum. Extraordinary Council Meetings. Planning Committee meets twice a month during the year (24 meetings)
<b>Shackleford</b>	No	Not at present	Not at present	Not at present	Bi-monthly parish council meetings
<b>Shalford</b>	No response				
<b>Shere</b>	No response				
<b>Tongham</b>	No	No	No	Yes	3rd Monday of every month except August
<b>Wanborough</b>	No response				
<b>West Clandon</b>	No response				
<b>West Horsley</b>	Yes, the Parish Council pays £500pa to the Chairman	The Parish Council considered this answer to be Not Applicable as they already pay a fixed allowance	Yes, the Parish Council would like to consider doing this	Yes as Question 3	The Parish Council meets every month excluding August and has an additional meeting in April / May each year (Annual Parish Meeting). The Parish Council does not have any Committees and Sub Committees but does have Sub groups. The Planning Sub group meeting periodically, the Finance

Appendix 2

					sub group meet quarterly. The Buildings and Properties group occasionally meet.
<b>Worplesdon</b>	£400 pa	No	No	No	Every fortnight