

**A Review of  
Members' Allowances  
For  
Darlington  
Borough Council**

---

**A Report**

**By the**

**Independent  
Remuneration Panel**

**Dr Declan Hall (Chair)  
Paul McGee  
Rob Shotton**

**November 2023**

**Report  
Of the  
Independent Remuneration Panel:  
Review of Members' Allowances  
For  
Darlington Borough Council**

**November 2023**

**Introduction: The Regulatory Context**

1. This report is a synopsis of the deliberations and recommendations made by the statutory Independent Remuneration IRP (the IRP) appointed by Darlington Borough Council (Darlington BC) to provide advice on the Councils' Members' Allowances scheme.
2. The IRP was convened under *The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 1021)* (the 2003 Regulations). These regulations, arising out of the relevant provisions in the *Local Government Act 2000*, require all local authorities to maintain an independent remuneration panel (also known as an IRP) to review and provide advice to their respective councils on Members' allowances. This is in the context whereby the Council retains the right to determine Members allowances.
3. All Councils are required to convene their IRP and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their members' allowances scheme and they must 'pay regard' to their IRP's recommendations before setting a new or amended members' allowances scheme.
4. In particular, the IRP has been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations [10. (5), which states:

Where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the independent remuneration IRP established in respect of that authority on the application of an index to its scheme.

5. This mechanism is the means by which all councils are required to reconvene their IRP at least once every four years thus ensuring a degree of public scrutiny and accountability vis-à-vis their Members' Allowances schemes. It is under this requirement that the IRP has undertaken this review of Members' Allowances for Darlington Borough Council.

### **Terms of Reference**

6. The IRP was given the following terms of reference as agreed by Council on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 as contained in a report to Council,<sup>1</sup> namely to make recommendations on:
- I. The amount of Basic Allowance that should be payable to Members
  - II. The categories of Members who should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance and the amount of such an allowance;
  - III. The duties for which a Travel and Subsistence Allowance can be made and as to the amount of these allowances;
  - IV. The scope and amount of Co-optees' allowances, where applicable;
  - V. The expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants (the Dependants' Carers' Allowance) and the amount of these allowances and the means by which they are determined;
  - VI. Whether the annual adjustments of allowances should continue to be referred to employees annual pay awards (the National Joint Committee for Local Government Employees or NJC index) or another index if any;
  - VII. The Mayoral or the Civic Allowances;
  - VIII. On allowances to be paid to Independent Members appointed to the Education Appeals Panel;
  - IX. The implementation date for the new Scheme of Allowances;
  - X. Any other issues that are brought to the attention of the IRP.

### **The IRP**

7. Darlington Borough Council reconvened its IRP and the following Members were appointed to carry out the independent allowances review, namely:
- Dr Declan Hall: IRP Chair and a former academic at the Institute of Local Government, The University of Birmingham, now an independent consultant specialising in Members' allowances and support.
  - Paul McGee: Paul has a background that spans the private, public and social enterprise sectors. He currently retains an involvement in industry as Commercial Director of an engineering consultancy. He was formerly a member of the Chief Officer Management Team of Cleveland

---

<sup>1</sup> Ian Williams, Chief Executive of Council, (responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Stephen Harker, Leader of the Council), "Members' Allowances Review" 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

County Council and has been active in promoting social enterprises for over 30 years. He has contributed to a number of award and assessment IRPs and was previously a member of Stockton-On-Tees IRP.

- Rob Shotton: Former Chair of Business-Link, Tees Valley, now a businessman.

8. The IRP was supported by

- Shirley Wright: Democratic Manager, Democratic Services

### **Process and Methodology - Evidence Reviewed by the IRP**

9. The IRP met at the Town Hall, Darlington on 10<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> October 2023 to consider all the evidence and hear representations from Members and receive factual briefings on the Council by Officers. All Members were invited to make written submissions to the IRP (of which nine were received) and a number of Members met the IRP – see appendices one and two for details. The IRP also reviewed further written information pertinent to the review, such as meetings schedules, benchmarking data, statutory guidance, etc. See appendices three and four for further details. The IRP meetings were held in private session to enable the IRP to meet with Members and Officers and consider the evidence and undertake its deliberations in confidence.
10. For full details of whom the IRP met and full range of information reviewed see:
- Appendix 1: for Members who met with the IRP and Officers who provided a factual briefing to the IRP
  - Appendix 2: for a list of the full range of written evidence considered by the IRP
  - Appendix 3: summary the other allowances schemes referred to by the IRP for benchmarking purpose

### **Considering the Evidence – A Tiered Approach**

11. As per previous reviews, the IRP took a tiered approach in considering the evidence. It is required to operate within the broad statutory framework laid down by the 2003 Regulations and 2006 Members' Allowances Statutory Guidance. The 2003 Regulations sets out the legal framework within which the IRP is required to operate, i.e., providing discretionary authority for the payment of SRAs, and while mandating the payment of a Basic Allowance, paid equally to all Members. Within this legislative context, the IRP is obligated to pay regard to the 2006 Statutory Guidance, which for instance mandates IRPs to consider a number of variables in arriving at their recommendations.

12. The next level of evidence considered by the IRP was the representations made by the Members, both oral and written, which obtained the views of the groups and individual Members of the Council. The interviews were deliberative in nature and provided the IRP with a qualitative feel of the issues facing Members in relation to the topics under consideration. The meetings with Officers served to update the IRP on developments in the council since the last review in December 2019. Finally, all the evidence and representations have been reviewed and evaluated within the comparative context where meaningful comparisons can be made.

## Operating Principles for the IRP

### The Darlington BC model of remuneration: transparency, equity and simplicity

13. Benchmarking highlighted that the Darlington BC members' allowances scheme is based on a number of principles that are not always apparent in other schemes. In particular the scheme is underpinned by:
- A. Transparency:
    - largely a function of the '1-SRA only' rule and the fact that the Basic Allowance is inclusive of a range of expenses that Members may incur in carrying out their duties. The Darlington BC allowances scheme does not provide for a range of allowances and the reimbursement of expenses that are often available in other authorities. The stated Basic Allowance and SRAs are in the main the sole payments received by Members.
  - B. Equity:
    - Compared to other council Darlington pays relatively few SRAs. In accordance with the 2006 Statutory Guidance no more than 50% of Members can be paid an SRA. For those SRAs payable in Darlington BC, there is a limited number of SRA bands. Other schemes will differentiate across the whole range of SRAs payable.
  - C. Simplicity:
    - The Darlington BC Members' Allowances scheme is simple to administer in that Members are not required to make a plethora of claims and Officers are not required to devote scarce resources that would be required for instance if Members were able to claim for instance travel and subsistence for duties carried out within the Borough. The scheme is not administratively burdensome.
14. These principles, which continue to underpin the current Darlington BC allowances scheme, were understood by interviewees and recognised as being beneficial. There was a general view that these principles should continue to be adhered to unless there is a clear case to deviate from them.

## Key Messages - A low Basic Allowance and some SRAs

15. It became clear during the course of the review that the Basic Allowance and some SRAs (the Leader in particular) have fallen behind and have lost value over the years. This is a result of intermittent indexation since 2012. The IRP identified this issue in both its 2016 and 2019 review by recommending uplifting to the Basic Allowance, which the Council chose not to accept. The Council has every right not to apply all or part of the operative indices if it so chooses or accept the previous recommended increases. Yet, it is not without cost and not just in losing relative value – it slowly but surely increases the financial barrier to being an elected Member. Moreover, the IRP notes that indexation alone does not address this erosion in relative value of the Basic Allowance in particular.

### **Function of Members Allowances – an enabler**

16. It was mentioned during meetings with Members that the levels of remuneration payable under the current Darlington BC Members' Allowances scheme were not sufficient to 'attract' a wider range of people to put themselves forward to stand for Council. Moreover, they were insufficient to enable the role of a Member to be effectively a full time professional role. Indeed, this may well be the case, however, members' allowances schemes are not intended to 'attract' candidates for Council - they would have to be at a level so as not to be publically acceptable. Moreover, the IRP was not at ease with the argument on a conceptual level - if elected Members were standing for and remaining on the Council out of any financial appeal it would run contrary to the public service ethos and the desire to serve local communities and residents as the prime motive for being a Councillor. Members' allowances were never intended to be paid at full 'market rates' or support a body of full time professional local politicians.
17. The intention behind the requirement to establish a Members' Allowances scheme for all English councils is to enable and facilitate the Members' roles and responsibilities as far as practically possible while taking into account such factors as the nature of the council, local economic conditions and comparative and good practice. The current level of allowances, particularly the Basic Allowance, is in danger of not fulfilling the function of being an enabler.

### **Issue of Members in receipt of Benefits**

18. Another issue emerging during the course of the review was the impact of receiving allowances had on Members in receipt of benefits. In effect, for the Basic Allowance in particular the amount received more or less was deducted from a Members' Benefits with the concomitant issue of having to pay such things as Council tax and prescription charges that in effect left them worse off by serving as an elected Member. The IRP is sympathetic to any Member who finds themselves in this conundrum however it is not able to address it through a Members' allowances review. It is simply out of the hands of the IRP, national legislation governs rules for those in receipt of benefits and any other income they may receive and the IRP cannot change that.

### **The Key Message – Now is not the time to increase allowances**

19. Despite the case that can be made to increase the Basic Allowance and some of the SRAs the overwhelming message the IRP received in the representation received was now was not the time to make such recommendations. The IRP has taken this message on board; to do otherwise would simply be making recommendations in the abstract that would leave Members in the invidious position of having to reject the advice of the IRP.
20. Nonetheless, the IRP has thoroughly reviewed all the allowances to show how they would be arrived at in an ideal world and flag up where the IRP feels they might well be set at.

### **Recommending the Basic Allowance**

21. In considering the appropriateness of the current Basic Allowance, the IRP has adopted a ‘triangulation’ process. This has been done by arriving at a tentative Basic Allowance via three different approaches namely
  - I. Recalibration based on the 2006 Statutory Guidance
  - II. Benchmarking
  - III. The representation received from Members

### **The basis of the current Basic Allowance (2003)**

22. The methodology to arrive at the current Basic Allowance (£8,668) has not been revisited since 2003, when the IRP, in line with the advice laid out in the 2003 (since revised in 2006) Statutory Guidance, calculated the Basic Allowance for Members of Darlington Borough Council (2003) based on the following formula:
  - 104 days annual expected input – 45% (46.8 days) per year Public Service Discount = 57.2 remunerated days per year
  - 57.2 days per year x £122.10 per day (LGA day rate) = **£6,984**
23. In 2003, this recommended Basic Allowance was also deemed to be inclusive of incidental expenses such as in-borough travel and subsistence. Through intermittent indexation the Basic Allowance is now £8,668.

### **Recalibrating the Basic Allowance (2023)**

24. The IRP recalibrated the Basic Allowance based on the most recent and relevant data available for the three variables used in the formula as set out in paragraphs 67-69 of the 2006 Statutory Guidance to arrive at a recalibrated Basic Allowance as follows:

Increasing expected time input to 152.5 days per year

25. The latest (2022) LGA Census of Councillors (England) shows that Councillors in unitary authorities who hold no positions of responsibility put in an average of 22.8 hours per week on “Council business”. This includes dealing with constituent/ward issues, community related meetings and other associated work such as emails, reading and preparation. It excludes group and other party business.<sup>2</sup> This equates to 148.2 days per year on an 8 hour working day. The IRP has adopted 148.2 days per year as the time expectation to recalibrate the Basic Allowance.

The Public Service Discount (PSD): no change at 45%

26. When considering the Basic Allowance, the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 68) states that it “is important that some element of the work of members continues to be voluntary – that some hours are not remunerated.” This is often called the ‘Public Service Discount’ (PSD).
27. A PSD of 45% is slightly towards the higher end of the normal range (35-50%) used to recognise the principle of voluntary service within the Basic Allowance. However, the IRP has always conceptualized this as the element of work that relates to Members wards and local communities and in Darlington BC if anything this aspect has increased. The IRP is content that a PSD of 45% remains appropriate. This gives a voluntary contribution of 66.7 days per year and leaves a remunerated time of 81.5 days per year.

Rate of Remuneration at £116.44 per day

28. Historically the IRP utilised the Local Government (LGA) ‘day session’ rate as the relevant rate of remuneration. This was a daily rate published each year by the Local Government Association (LGA) as a service to councils and IRP chairs. However, the LGA since 2011 stopped providing such advice. By that date most IRPs had switched to a more locally based rate of remuneration. They were able to do this as the Office of National Statistics starting to publish average earnings on an authority by authority basis as set out each year in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). The most recent ASHE publication (November 2022) shows the median daily gross earnings for all full time employees within Darlington BC area is £116.44.<sup>3</sup>
29. By replicating the formula approach with up dated variables it produces a recalibrated Basic Allowance as follows:
- 148.2 days annual expected input – 45% PSD (66.7 days)  
= 81.5 remunerated days per year

---

<sup>2</sup> This information is derived from the 2022 Councillors Census and the breakdown by type of council and by whether there are any posts held has been supplied to the Chair in an email from the Stephen Richards, LGA, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

<sup>3</sup> ASHE shows the median gross weekly earnings for all full time jobs in the Borough of Darlington to be £582.20, Table 7.1a, ONS, November 2022. To arrive at a daily rate, the IRP divided this sum by 5 working days, which equates to £116.44. The ONS advises that the median, rather than mean, is a more accurate measure of average earnings due to a few high earners and a high number of employees on or just over the national living wage.



- 81.5 days per year x £116.4 per day  
= **£9,490**

30. The IRP was attracted to this recalibrated Basic Allowance of £9,490 as it replicates the original methodology with updated variables and at the same time restores its relative value.

### **Benchmarking the Basic Allowance**

31. Benchmarking against all other North East/Northern Unitary and Metropolitan Councils shows the following:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Basic Allowance   | £10,867 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Basic Allowance | £9,985  |
| • Darlington BC current Basic Allowance     | £8,668  |

32. Clearly, the current Darlington BC Basic Allowance is now markedly below that paid to regional peers, with a benchmarking group based on other North East/Northern Unitary and Metropolitan Councils. This in itself is not a reason to revise the Basic Allowance but it does show that the Darlington BC Basic Allowance may be in danger of not fulfilling the function of enabling most people to be a Councillor as it has started to drift below the average in peer councils.

### **The Representation received by the IRP**

33. In the main the representation received supported the view that the Basic Allowance no longer fulfilled the purpose of being an enabler. There was a general feeling that over the years the value of the Basic Allowance had been eroded. Part of this was due to the fact that the Basic Allowance had not been consistently indexed over the years. Another reason cited was due to the fact that as the Basic Allowance includes nearly all expenses Members incur. The cost of living crisis meant that these expenses, such as broadband, telephone calls, IT peripherals, in-Borough travel and subsistence and use of their home as an office had all dramatically increased recently. In addition, there was a strong view that as the value of the Basic Allowance had been eroded over the years the demands on Members have increased particularly with the widespread use of social media requiring immediate responses from Members.

34. However, while the majority representation supported the view that the current Basic Allowance was too low nearly all those who supported that view added that now was not the time to do so. Members felt that they could not be seen to have an above indexation increase in the Basic Allowance while many of their own constituents were facing difficult economic times.

35. Despite the evidence supporting an increase in the Basic Allowance the IRP has taken this message on board. There is no point in making a recommendation that the Council would not support. As such, the IRP is recommending no

change to the Basic Allowance at this juncture.

### **The recommended Basic Allowance (2023/24)**

36. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance for 2023/24 should remain at £8,668, subject to any index that may apply.**

### **The Basic Allowance and Expenses – ICT and a Paper-Light Policy**

37. On the recommendation of the IRP in 2011, the Council agreed that the Basic Allowance is deemed sufficient to include the costs of incidental expenses and ICT equipment, consumables and peripherals incurred on the part of Members. Members are also expected to meet any broadband and associated line rental and operational costs out of their Basic Allowance. However, since the onset of Covid Members are now supplied with a laptop by the Council. The IRP received no evidence to change this approach
38. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance continues to be deemed sufficient to include the costs of incidental expenses and ICT equipment (except the Council provided laptop), consumables and peripherals and in-Borough travel and subsistence costs incurred on the part of Members.**

### **Arriving at the Special Responsibility Allowances - the Leader's SRA**

39. Like all other SRAs, the Leaders' SRA was frozen between 2012 and 2021. This is in a context where the Leader and other executive Members are increasingly called upon to undertake a regional and sub-regional role, whether it is with the Darlington Partnership and the Teesside Combined Authority, an aspect of the Leader's work which has increased since the last review with the Leader now having the Combined Authority Portfolio for Local Services.
40. Historically the IRP arrived at the Leader's SRA by following the advice of the 2006 Statutory Guidance (paragraph 76) which states:
- One way of calculating special responsibility allowances may be to take the agreed level of basic allowance and recommend a multiple of this allowance as an appropriate special responsibility allowance for either the elected mayor or the leader.
41. This is known as the factor approach and is the most common approach utilised by IRPs to arrive at the recommended SRA for Leaders. Benchmarking shows that the mean SRA for Leaders is three times that of the mean Basic Allowance. This factor was originally utilised in arriving at the recommended SRA for the Leader of Darlington BC, but it is now 2.9 times the current Basic Allowance as SRAs have not been indexed to the extent that the Basic Allowance has. Simply to restore the original differential between the Basic Allowance and Leader's SRA the latter would have to be £26,004 (three times the current Basic Allowance). The current SRA for the Leader is £24,945.

42. Benchmarking also shows that the Leaders' SRA (£24,945) continues to drift markedly below that of peers:

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Leaders' SRA   | £32,680 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Leaders' SRA | £27,000 |
| • Darlington BC Leader's current SRA     | £24,945 |

43. In the representation received it was also generally accepted that the SRA for the Leader was low. However, as was the case across the board this view came with the codicil that despite the case to increase the Leader's SRA now was not the time to do so. The IRP has taken this on board and is not recommending any change to the Leader's SRA at this juncture.

44. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Leader should be maintained at £24,945 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### The Deputy Leader

45. Currently the Deputy Leader receives an SRA that has been set at 60 per cent of the Leader's SRA, in line with the pro rata approach as set out in paragraph 76 of the 2006 Statutory Guidance. Many of the observations regarding the role of Leader are also pertinent for the Deputy Leader, they are also required to take up a larger external role and their SRAs are generally lower than peers. Benchmarking shows the following:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Deputy Leaders' SRA   | £16,285 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Deputy Leaders' SRA | £16,528 |
| • Darlington BC Deputy Leader's current SRA     | £14,965 |
| •   |         |

46. Nonetheless, for the same reasons the IRP has recommended no change to the Leader's SRA the IRP is doing the same for the Deputy Leaders SRA.

47. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Deputy Leader of Darlington Borough Council remains at £14,965 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### Other Cabinet Members (6)

48. Currently the other Cabinet Members receive an SRA of £12,472 that has been set at 50 per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that this SRA is broadly on a par with peers:

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Other Cabinet Members SRA   | £12,062 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Other Cabinet Members SRA | £11,861 |
| • Darlington BC Other Cabinet Members current SRA     | £12,472 |

49. Moreover, there was limited representation received regarding this SRA, but such as it was it argued that it merited an increase. The IRP concluded that the

role of other Cabinet Members had not increased to the extent of that of the Leader and Deputy Leader, particularly with the latter's roles on the Teesside Combined Authority.

50. One issue raised with the IRP was the degree of difference between the Cabinet Members' SRA (£12,472) and chairs of the main committees SRA (£9,977) being too narrow to reflect the real differentials in workloads and responsibilities. There is not a strong case to increase the SRA for Other Cabinet Members, the IRP, as per the SRA for the Leader and Deputy Leader is not recommending any change at this stage.
51. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the other Cabinet Members (6) remains at £12,472 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees

52. All the chairs of the main committees receive the standard SRA (£9,977) for such posts and have been set at 40 per cent of the Leader's SRA. There was some representation that argued there is a case to differentiate between these committees but overall the principle of having flat rate SRAs for the Chairs of the main committees retained broad support. While differentiations can be made between the workloads of the main committees it is not overwhelming.
53. Benchmarking shows the following
- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Scrutiny Chairs SRA     | £6,998 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Scrutiny Chairs SRA   | £5,595 |
| • Darlington BC Other Scrutiny Chairs current SRA | £9,977 |
54. Clearly, the Scrutiny Chairs in Darlington BC receive an SRA above that paid to their peers. Indeed there was some representation arguing that the Chairs of Scrutiny should not be paid on a par with the Chairs of Planning and Licensing. However, the averages for the SRA for Scrutiny Chairs is skewed by Durham (£2,660) and Cumberland (£1,000 – which is an interim arrangement) paying their Scrutiny Chairs such a low SRA. Moreover, a number of councils in the benchmarking group also pay an SRA to a main Overview and Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair in addition to Vice Chairs of Scrutiny, e.g., Durham, Stockton, Newcastle and Sunderland. In this context, the SRA for the Scrutiny Chairs in Darlington BC is not so excessive.
55. In some of the representation received it was suggested that Scrutiny was not always working effectively. This is not an issue unique to Darlington BC; the same complaint is often made across English councils. It is not the role of the IRP to comment on the Council's governance arrangements except to say that when working effectively Scrutiny has a valuable contribution to make to the work of the Council. This is shown by having some of the work of scrutiny being done outside the formal scheduled meetings, through Review or Task and Finish Review Groups.
56. It was also suggested that there was a case to differentiate between the SRAs

for the Chairs of the five Scrutiny Committees as some have larger remits than others. Indeed, a case can be made that not all the Scrutiny Committees carry a similar range of responsibility and workload and some Scrutiny Committees may have a more extensive brief than others but that is partly due to issues rising up and falling down the local government agenda over time and there is an element of swings and roundabouts at play. Moreover, the Scrutiny Committees now have greater control of their own work programme since the demise of the Scrutiny Monitoring and Coordination & Group. The IRP further notes that Scrutiny are statutory committees and it was always the intent behind the 2000 Local Government Act that introduced statutory Scrutiny Committees that Scrutiny should be well supported. Finally, it is further noted that in the main the representation received supported the SRA for Scrutiny Chairs being on a par with the SRA for the Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees, it also meets the IRPs criteria of keeping the allowances scheme simple in not differentiating the SRA for the Chairs of the main committees. The IRP is not recommending any change to the SRA paid to the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.

57. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees (5) remains at £9,977 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### The Planning Committee

58. The Planning Committee does have more scheduled meetings (12 per year) than the Licensing and Scrutiny Committees, as the Planning Committee has to deal with planning applications within a statutorily defined timeframe. The Chair is also paid an SRA of £9,977, set at 40 per cent of the Leader's SRA.

- Benchmarking Group Mean Planning Chairs SRA £9,852
- Benchmarking Group Median Planning Chairs SRA £8,350
- Darlington BC Planning Chairs current SRA £9,977

59. Benchmarking shows that the SRA for the Chair of Planning is broadly on a par with that paid in peer authorities. No representation was received to suggest that this SRA required revision.

60. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for Chair of the Planning Committee remains at £9,977 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### The Chair of the Licensing Committee

61. As with the Chairs of other main Committees the Chair of the Licensing Committee receives an SRA of £9,977, set at 40 per cent of the Leader's SRA.

62. Benchmarking shows that this SRA is noticeably above that paid to peers:

- Benchmarking Group Mean Licensing Chairs SRA £7,002
- Benchmarking Group Median Licensing Chairs SRA £6,500
- Darlington BC Licensing Chairs current SRA £9,977

63. However, this has to be put in context, the Chair of the Licensing Committee actually chairs two committees:
- The General Licensing Committee which normally meets four times per year, although there were six meetings in 2022/23
  - The Licensing Act 2003 Committee which meets no more than a couple of times per year, although there were no meetings in 2022/23
64. The Chair of the Licensing Committee chairs both committees, although they are both held on the same day
65. Moreover, much of the of the work of the Licensing Committees is done through
- The General Licensing Sub Committee (mostly dealing with taxi/private hire applications/objections), which meets as and when required but met seven times during 2022/23, and
  - The Licensing Act 2003 Sub Committee (which deals mainly where there are objections to applications for obtaining an alcohol license or variation in hours of an already licensed premise), which also meetings as and when required but actually met twice during 2022/23
66. While the Chair of the Licensing Committee does not always chair the sub committees the expectation is they will be chaired by the Chair of the Licensing Committee and in the majority of cases actually does so. Where the Chair has not done so it is expected that the Vice Chair of Licensing will do so and when not chairing a Licensing Sub Committee is expected to sit on them.
67. As such, the workload and responsibility of the Chair of the Licensing Committee has unlike in many of the comparator councils a defined role in the Licensing Sub Committees, as does the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committees. Moreover, in the representation received there was only a very limited argument presented to alter the current SRA for the Chair of the Licensing Committees.
68. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for Chair of the Licensing Committee remains at £9,977 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply**

### **Vice Chairs of the Regulatory Committees (Planning and Licensing)**

69. Currently the Vice Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees each received an SRA of £2,494, set 25 per cent of their Chairs SRA. It was set on this level on the basis that all the Vice Chairs undertook a standard set of duties, including:
- I. Stand in for their respective Chairs when required
  - II. Attend relevant pre-meetings and briefings with Officers with their Chairs
  - III. Generally keep up to speed on their committees remit and support their Chair as required
  - IV. For the Vice Chair of Licensing taking a lead role in chairing Licensing

Sub Committees when Chair is unable to do so or otherwise sit on Licensing Sub Committees

- V. For the Vice Chair of Planning it's recognised they have to stand in on occasion due to the restrictions imposed by Planning law, such as conflict of interest where the Chair has to stand down; for instance there may be a particular application in their ward
70. The case remains that the Vice Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees have to stand-in regularly for the former and take an active part in the Sub Committees on the part of the latter. In particular, the animated nature of many Planning Committee meetings means the Chair has to regularly rely on the Vice Chair to keep things on track.
71. Benchmarking shows that the SRAs for these Vice Chairs is somewhat below that paid to peers:
- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Planning Vice Chairs SRA   | £3,935 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Planning Vice Chairs SRA | £3,450 |
| • Darlington BC Planning Vice Chairs current SRA     | £2,494 |
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Licensing Vice Chairs SRA  | £3,097 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Licensing Chairs SRA     | £2,494 |
| • Darlington BC Licensing Chairs current SRA         | £2,494 |
72. However, not all of the comparator council's pay this Vice Chairs SRA. It is noted that out of the 14 other Councils in the benchmarking group, ten pay Planning Vice-Chairs and nine pay Licensing Vice Chairs. So, while not always paid elsewhere they are somewhat above that paid in Darlington, more so for Planning. Nonetheless, the IRP received no further evidence that the SRAs for the Vice Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees warranted revision.
73. **The IRP recommends that that the SRA for the Vice Chairs of the Planning and Licensing Committees remains at £2,494 for 2023/24, subject to any indexation that may apply.**

### Chair of the Audit Committee

74. Currently, the Chair of the Audit Committee receives an SRA of £2,494, which was set in the 2019 review at 10 per cent of the Leader's SRA.
75. There was general agreement in the representation received that the Audit Committee is not a main committee, it only has four scheduled meetings per year. However, there was a further view that the post merited an increase in the SRA paid as it undertakes a number of regulatory functions including reviewing the Council's policies and procedures regarding:
- Governance, risk and control
  - Internal Audit
  - External Audit

- Financial Reporting
- Treasury Management
- Ethical Standards

76. Benchmarking shows that indeed the SRA for the Chair of the Audit Committee is noticeably below peers:

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| • Benchmarking Group Mean Audit Chairs SRA   | £5,448 |
| • Benchmarking Group Median Audit Chairs SRA | £5,044 |
| • Darlington BC Audit Chairs current SRA     | £2,494 |

77. While the IRP concluded that that there was a case to increase SRA for the Chair of the Audit Committee as backed up by the benchmarking it is not making such a recommendation in response to the key message arising out of the representation received, i.e., no increases in allowances, recommending an increase at this juncture.

78. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Chair of the Audit Committee remains at £2,494 for 2023/24, subject to any indexation that may apply.**

### The Leader of the Main Opposition Group

79. The SRA (£9,977) for the Leader of the Opposition has been linked to that paid the Chairs of the main committees and set at 40% of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows this is a comparatively high SRA:

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| • BM Group Mean Main Opposition Group Leaders SRA         | £6,892 |
| • BM Group Median Main Opposition Group Leaders SRA       | £5,200 |
| • Darlington BC Main Opposition Group Leaders current SRA | £9,977 |

80. One reason for this comparative divergence may be down to the size of the Opposition Group - often the smaller the Opposition Group the smaller the SRA. In Darlington BC the Opposition Group has consistently remained large, currently 14 Members. Nonetheless, the IRP is content with the current SRA. There is a duty on the Opposition Group Leader to provide challenge across the Council and for a healthy democracy to flourish the Opposition must be resourced. This view is underpinned by the 2003 Regulations (5. [2.] [b.]), which require an SRA to be paid to an Opposition Member where members divided into groups and a majority of Members form a ruling group.

81. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Leader of the Main Opposition Group remains at £9,977 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may be applied.**

### The Deputy Leader of the Main Opposition Group

82. Currently, the Deputy Leader of Main Opposition Group receives an SRA of £1,248, set at five per cent of the Leader's SRA. Benchmarking shows that this post is not typically paid with only three out of the other comparator councils



paying such a role.

83. The IRP received no evidence to alter this SRA and has decided to maintain this SRA at £1,248.
84. **The IRP recommends that the Main Opposition Group Deputy Leader's SRA remains at £1,248 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### **Leaders of the Minority Opposition Groups**

85. The IRP deliberated whether there was a case to set a qualifying criterion before the current SRA (£1,248) paid to the Leaders of the two Minority Opposition Groups became operable. This is type of qualification threshold is not uncommon. For instance, Middlesbrough pay Leaders of Minority Opposition Groups an SRA of £2,798 but only when such a Group attains 10 per cent of the Council membership. The IRP decided not to go down this route largely on the grounds that historically the political context (and currently with a minority administration) means that the Minority Opposition Groups will be integral to the operation of the Council.
86. **The IRP recommends that the SRA for the Leader[s] of Minority Opposition Group[s] remains at £1,248 for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**

### **SRAs not recommended – Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees**

87. The IRP received representation that it was inequitable that the Vice Chairs of Planning and Licensing received an SRA but the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny did not. It is noted that the IRP recommended the discontinuation of SRAs for the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny in 2019 and the Council accepted that recommendation.
88. The IRP took a long look at the role of the Vice-Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees. It remains the case that there is no standard brief for these Vice Chairs, their workloads and responsibilities being variable. For instance, the IRP was informed that there is no expectation that Scrutiny Vice Chairs will take a lead role in charring task and finish review groups, some may but it is not a discrete task specifically assigned to Scrutiny Vice Chairs across the board; in practice it is not consistent. The Vice Chairs of Planning and Licensing relate to regulatory committees and they each have discrete tasks to undertake. This does not apply to the Vice Chairs of Scrutiny.
89. One suggestion put to the IRP was to pay an SRA to the Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees when they have to stand-in for their Chair. However, the IRP rejected this approach as it cuts across the principle of simplicity.
90. Benchmarking shows that in eight of the 14 other comparator councils the Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny are paid an SRA (mean/median £3,486/£2,713). However, what the benchmarking does not show is the role(s) that may be undertaken such as charring sub-committees or task and finish review groups.

91. The IRP still feels that the role of Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees is not significant enough to merit an SRA. **As such, the IRP is not recommending that the Vice Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees are paid an SRA.**

### **Confirmation of the 1-SRA only rule**

92. The 2003 Regulations do not prohibit the payment of multiple SRAs to Members. The limit of 1-SRA only regardless of whether a Member holds more than one remunerated post is an internal rule agreed by the Council Members' Allowances going back to the recommendation of the IRP of 2003. The majority of Councils have a similar internal rule.
93. Moreover, this restriction on the payment of SRAs to Members means that posts are not simply sought out for financial reasons. Indeed, the pressure is that if anything, posts tend to be spread around more. It also makes for a more transparent allowances scheme and in practice it will also lead to a slight reduction in amounts paid out in SRAs, as there is often at least one Member who also holds more than one remunerated post, Due to the 1-SRA only rule such a Members is only paid the higher SRA.
94. **The IRP recommends that the Council retains the 1-SRA only rule within the Darlington Borough Council Members' Allowances scheme.**

### **The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council and the Civic Allowances**

95. The Civic Allowances are constitutionally outside the formal remit of IRPs. The Civic Allowances are paid under the Local Government Act 1972 (sections 3.5 and 5.4), not as remuneration (although in many authorities it has in effect become a substitute salary), but to meet the expenses of holding the office of Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head of the Council. However, many IRPs are often asked to provide advice on the Civic Allowances in lieu of a council being able to draw upon any external validation.
96. Meaningful benchmarking is difficult when it comes to the Civic Allowances as some authorities explicitly remunerate their equivalent of Mayor and Deputy Mayor through an SRA in addition to the provision of a civic allowance for meeting the cost of holding office. Moreover, not all councils publish the Civic Allowances in their allowances scheme.
97. The IRP recognises the Mayoral role is an important one with the post holder expected to attend functions in and out of the Borough on an almost daily basis. The Mayor is the public face of the Council for most of the Borough's residents. Nonetheless, no evidence was received that the current Civic Allowance for the Mayor is insufficient to meet the cost of holding civic office and associated out of pocket expenses. The IRP received no evidence that the current level of the Mayoral Allowance (£11,500) left the Mayor out of pocket by virtue of holding the office.

98. **The IRP does not recommend any change to the current Civic Allowance (£11,500) paid to the Mayor of Darlington Borough Council for 2023/24, subject to any index that may apply.**
99. The Deputy Mayor, who is always the Mayor in waiting in Darlington, receives a Civic Allowance of £929 to meet their operational out of pocket expenses. This much lower sum is appropriate as the Deputy Mayor's main role is to stand-in where the Mayor is unable to attend a function. No evidence was received to change this allowance.
100. **The IRP recommends that the Civic Allowance for the Deputy Mayor of Darlington Borough Council for 2023/24 remains at £929, subject to any index that may apply.**

### **The Co-optees' Allowances – Audit Committee Co-optee**

101. Currently the allowances scheme does not provide for a Co-optees' Allowance. This is an allowance that may be paid to independent non-voting Members co-opted onto committees under the Local Government Act 2000. In Darlington, these co-optees are currently restricted to the parent and religious governor representatives on the Children and Young Peoples' Scrutiny Committee. No evidence was received to indicate there was a case to pay these co-optees in Darlington Borough Council a Co-optees' Allowance.
102. However, the IRP was informed that in the near future there may be a requirement for Audit Committees to appoint a co-optee who would be suitably qualified by having the requisite financial experience and knowledge. On this basis the IRP concluded that if the Audit Committee is required to appoint a co-optee and to future proof the allowances scheme that it should recommend a Co-optees' Allowance for such a post for if and when it is appointed.
103. Without experience of what the role will entail the IRP has simply set the Audit Committees' Co-optees' Allowance at 10 per cent of the Basic Allowance. The IRP will revisit this level if and when experience of the role has been gained at its next review.
104. **The IRP recommends that if the Council is required to appoint a co-optee to the Audit Committee then they should be paid a Co-optees' Allowance of £867, subject to any indexation that may be applicable.**

### **Travel and Subsistence Allowances**

#### **The Subsistence Allowance – Within the Borough**

105. The right for Members to claim a Subsistence Allowance has been discontinued, it is deemed to be covered by the Basic Allowance. This is typical practice in the more geographically compact councils. The IRP received no evidence to revisit this provision; it is in line with the IRP's principle of simplicity.

106. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance continues to be deemed to inclusive of subsistence costs incurred by Members for undertaking Council-related duties within the Borough.**

### **The Subsistence Allowance – Outwith the Borough**

107. There were no issues brought to the IRP’s attention regarding the scope and levels payable under the Subsistence Allowance scheme which Members can claim for undertaking approved duties outwith the Borough. The rates and terms and conditions are the same that apply to Officers. **The IRP does not recommend any changes to the current rates and terms and conditions of the Subsistence Allowances scheme for Members undertaking approved duties outwith the Borough.**

### **The Travel Allowance – Within the Borough**

108. As with the Subsistence Allowance the Basic Allowance is currently deemed sufficient to cover Members’ travel costs while carrying out Council-related duties within the Borough. There was however one issue that was raised with the IRP in this regards, namely the extra mileage costs incurred by Members living in or representing the more rural wards, whether it be travelling to Council, Parish Council or local community meetings or visiting constituents.
109. The IRP acknowledges that there can be additional costs in the case of Members representing the more rural wards as there are 10 Parish Councils and 15 Parish Meetings within the Borough. Although attending Parish Councils/Meetings is not part of a Member’s formal duties it can be seen as part of their larger community role and advantageous for the Council to have an informal direct link to the Parishes.
110. Yet, the IRP is not making a recommendation regarding recognising additional travel costs associated with representing/living in a rural ward. To make an exception in this case would undermine the IRP’s principles of simplicity and transparency. In particular there would be a below the line administrative cost incurred through Officers having to check and process such claims. Also, this type of supplementary travel related costs will be incurred by nearly all Members from time to time. Finally, it is noted that even when (up until the end of 2003) Members had a statutory right to claim in-Borough travel allowances attending parish council meetings and other ward and constituent related duties was never an approved duty.
111. **The IRP recommends that the Basic Allowance continues to be inclusive of all travel related costs incurred by Members while carrying out Council-related duties within the Borough.**

### **The Travel Allowance – Outwith the Borough**

112. Currently, the mileage rates that Members can claim for undertaking approved

duties outwith the Borough are based on the HMRCs "Authorised Mileage Approved Mileage" (AMAP) rates. These rates are typically utilised by local authorities in determining Members' (and in some cases Officers') mileage rates; primarily because they are tax efficient in that they do not incur any tax liability for Members. The HMRC mileage rates are also the most prevalent mileage rates in the wider public sector. The IRP received no evidence to revise these rates.

113. **The IRP recommends that the outwith current (HMRRRC) mileage rates, approved duties, terms and conditions that are applicable for which Members can claim travel mileage allowances and the reimbursement of public transport (where used) remain unchanged.**

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

114. The Local Government Act 2000 explicitly clarifies the right of local authorities to pay a Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA), which Members can claim to assist in meeting costs for care for their dependants while on approved Council duties. It is an allowance explicitly designed to enable a wider range of candidates to stand for and remain on Council. In the 2003 review, the IRP recommended that the Council make available the DCA to those Members who have dependants living with them. It has been further refined to recognise two categories of care:

- Childcare – reimbursement of actual expenditure up to a maximum of 35 hours per week regardless of the number of dependants a Member may have and paid on a self-monitoring basis in that a Member self-registers with the Monitoring Officer that they have dependent children under 16 living with them and the allowance can be claimed either on production of receipts or signed statement that the care has been provided
- Social/Medical care – paid at a similar rate chargeable by Darlington Borough Council for provision of a Home Care Assistant. Again, such dependents much be registered with the Monitoring Officer and as such care will have to be provided by professional carers a formal receipt has to be provided. There are no limits on the claims for Social/Medical care.

115. While it is not often claimed there was almost universal support for maintaining the DCA as it helped reduce barriers to public service. It is also noted that the DCA is now made available by almost all English councils.

116. The only issue raised regarding the DCA was that it was felt it was not particularly accessible and over restrictive in how it can be claimed. The IRP has had this issue raised in the past and made amendments over the years to increase the accessibility of the DCA. It has also set out above the broad terms and conditions by which the DCA may be claimed to show that the DCA is readily accessible and not over restrictive, particularly when compared to how the DCA is set out in some of the comparator councils allowances schemes. The IRP concluded that there may be an issue that where a Member has dependents that they may not be fully aware of how the DCA operates. The IRP urges that any Member with dependents to discuss the DCA with the Democratic Services Manager to help them claim the DCA. Otherwise the IRP

concluded that no changes were needed to the DCA.

117. **Consequently, the IRP recommends no change to the current conditions and scope for which the DCA may be claimed for 2023/24 subject to any index that may be applied to the care for dependants on social/medical grounds.**

### Independent Members on School Appeals IRPs

118. The School Admission (Appeals Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2012 (paragraph 6.1) provide for the payment of a Financial Loss Allowance (FLA) to independent members appointed to school appeals panels when attending "a meeting of an appeal panel or associated training." The Statutory Guidance 2012<sup>4</sup> provides further clarification in that in addition to a FLA such appointees are eligible to receive travel and subsistence allowances and to be compensated for any expenses, including child minding costs. The Statutory Guidance also states that the "rate of payment for community and voluntary controlled schools is set by the local authority which must have regard to the recommendations of its independent remuneration IRP."
119. Currently Darlington Borough Council pays independent appointees to its school appeals panels:
- FLA: £27.65 (meetings up to 4 hours)  
£55.31 (meetings over 4 hours)
  - Subsistence Allowance: at same rates that are applicable to Officers & elected Members although the conditions vary slightly
  - Mileage Allowance: at HMRC AMAP rates
  - DCA: at the same rates and conditions applicable to Members
120. No evidence was received to indicate the FLA or other allowances that may be claimed by the Independent Members on the Educations Appeals Panels required revisiting. **The IRP recommends that the FLA and allowances that may be claimed by the Independent Members appointed to the Council's School Appeals Panels are maintained at their current rates for 2023/24, subject to any indexation that may be applicable.**

### Confirmation of Indexing

121. Although the Council has not consistently implemented indexation over the years it has done since 2021. It is noted that the majority of English councils now have indexation of allowances in place. The principle of indexation was overwhelmingly supported in the representation received. The IRP continues to support the principle of the indexation of allowances as it helps to prevent the

---

<sup>4</sup> Department for Education, School Admission Appeals Code: Statutory Guidance for School Leaders, Governing Bodies, and Local Authorities, paragraph 1.15, February 2012

loss of relative value that necessitates periodic increases that go beyond any uplift for cost of living increases.

122. The IRP has always recommended that the Basic Allowance and SRAs are indexed to the annual percentage salary increase received by Officers, as agreed each year by the National Joint Council for Local Government Staff (known as the NJC index). It conforms to one of the IRP's principles, namely equity, if Officers receive no annual percentage increase (which has occurred in the past) then the applicable percentage increase for Members is 0 per cent. Moreover, non-indexation of the Basic Allowance and SRAs as a matter of course has led to an erosion in their value over the years, to continue not indexing the Basic Allowance and SRAs would only exacerbate that context.
123. **The IRP recommends and confirms the use of the following indices for allowances for the next four years:**
- **Basic Allowance, SRAs, Civic and Co-optees' Allowances and Education Appeals Panel Members FLA:**
    - Increased by same percentage applied annually to the pay of local government staff, implemented at the start of each municipal year (linked to spinal column point 43 of the NJC scheme) starting from annual meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.
  - **DCA: Social/Medical care element:**
    - Indexed to the hourly rate chargeable by the Council for provision of a Home Care Assistant.
  - **Travel (out of authority only):**
    - Mileage rates to be indexed to HMRC rates. Other travel will be reimbursement of actual costs taking into account the most cost effective means of transport available and the convenience of use.
  - **Subsistence (out of authority only):**
    - Indexed to the same rates that apply to Officers of Darlington Borough Council, for reimbursement of actual costs up to the maximum rate applicable.
124. **The IRP further recommends that as per regulations, the indices recommended by the IRP are to run for four years from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 up until the day before the annual meeting of the Council in May 2028 or until the Council requires a further review.**
125. The IRP notes that if the Council does not have provision for indexation in place it cannot apply any indices. Yet, if the provision is in place the Council can still decide not to apply all or any of the indices that may be applicable, e.g., the Council could decide to apply adopted index to the BA but not SRAs in any one year. It was only by adopting the principle of indexation in 2016 that enabled the Council to apply a one off uplift to the Basic Allowance in 2017.

## **Implementation**

126. **The IRP recommends that the recommendations within this report (with any amendments as agreed by Council) are implemented with effect from the date of Annual Meeting of the Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024 or any date beforehand that the Council may agree upon subsequent to the publication of report.**



## **Appendix One Members and Officers who met with the IRP**

### **Members who met with the IRP**

Cllr J. Coe	Vice Chair Scrutiny Committee – Communities & Local Services (Liberal Democrat)
Cllr J. Cossins	Mayor of Council (Labour)
Cllr A-M Curry	Leader of Liberal Democrat Group and Cabinet Member for Adults
Cllr J. Dulston	Leader of Main (Conservative) Opposition Group
Cllr S. Harker	Leader of the Council and Labour Group with responsibility for Corporate Strategy
Cllr J. Haszeldine	Chair of Planning Committee (Labour)
Cllr R. Henderson	Chair of Audit Committee (Green)
Cllr B. Holroyd	Backbench Member (Green)
Cllr S. Kane	Vice Chair of Licensing Committee (Labour)
Cllr D. Laing	Former Chair of Planning Committee (Conservative)
Cllr C. McEwan	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration (Labour)
Cllr J. McGill	Chair Scrutiny Committee - Communities & Local Services (Labour)
Cllr K. Nicholson	Chair of Licensing Committee (Independent)
Cllr Dr A. Riley	Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities (Labour)
Cllr M. Snedker	Leader Minority Opposition (Green) Group
Cllr L. Tostevin	Backbench Member (Conservative)

### **In addition there were 9 Written Submissions:**

### **Officers who provided factual briefings to the IRP**

Ian Williams:	Chief Executive, Darlington Borough Council
Luke Swinhoe:	Assistant Director Law & Governance
Shirley Wright:	Democratic Services Manager

## **Appendix Two Information Received by the IRP**

1. Darlington Borough Council, Members Allowances Review - Council report dated 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 (including Terms of Reference)
2. The local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
3. New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances May 2006 version (Extract of section on allowances)
4. Darlington Borough Council current Members' Allowances Scheme 2023/24
5. Darlington Borough Council statutory publication of allowances and expenses received by Members 2022/23
6. Darlington Borough Council Committee Information:-
  - Memberships of Cabinet/Committees and Joint Arrangements – 2023/24;
  - Calendar of Meetings 2023/24; and
  - Political Balance/Council
7. Number of meetings of Licensing Committees and Subs :-
  - General Licensing Committee met six times during the 2022/23 Municipal Year;
  - General Licensing Sub-Committee met seven times during the 2023/24 Municipal Year
  - Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committees met two times during the 2023/24 Municipal Year; and
  - Licensing Act 2003 Committee did not meet the 2023/24 Municipal Year
8. Darlington Borough Council remit or responsibility for functions for main committees and sub committees:-
  - Schedule 1 –Council Committees; their membership and powers :-  
Council :-  
    Planning Applications Committee;  
    General Licensing Committee;  
    General Licensing Sub-Committee;  
    Licensing Act 2003 Committee;  
    Licensing Act 2003 Sub-Committee;  
    Member Standards Hearing Committee  
    Audit Committee
  - Schedule 2 – The Executive :-  
    Executive Portfolios;  
    Delegation of Executive Functions;  
    Cabinet Sub Committee

Executive Members Scheme of Delegation

- Schedule 3 - Scrutiny Committees :-  
Efficiency and Resources;  
Adults;  
Housing, Health and Partnerships  
Children and Young People  
Place Scrutiny Committee  
General Role of the Council's Scrutiny Committees  
Monitoring and Co-ordination Group
9. Report of the IRP, A Review of Members' Allowances for Darlington Borough Council, December 2019
  10. Members' Allowance:
    - a. Council Report 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (including report of the IRP December 2019)
    - b. Council Minutes 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 that shows amendment to Report and subsequent approval
  11. Councillors' Census 2022 (LGA), breakdown of weekly hours worked (mean) by councillors by Council type and whether position is held, as set out in personal email to the IRP Chair from Stephen Richards (LGA) 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023
  12. Benchmarking information :-
    - Summary of Basic Allowances and SRAs paid in all 14 North East/Northern Unitary and Metropolitan Councils: BM1-3
  13. Education Appeals Panel :-
    - Department for Education, School Admissions Appeals Code, Statutory Guidance for school leaders, governing bodies and local authorities (with particular reference to paragraphs 1.4-1.5 – Costs), February 2012; and
    - Darlington Borough Council – Scale of Allowances currently paid to Education Appeals Panel Members
  14. Written submissions from members (X9)
  15. Office for Low Emission Vehicles, Tax Benefits for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018
  16. Short Briefing Paper for IRP by IRP Chair Dr Declan Hall
  17. Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Table 7.1a, weekly pay (Gross) - all full time employee jobs in area of Darlington Borough Council, Office of National Statistics (Work Geography), 2022

18. National Joint Council for Local Government Services, Local Government Pay Offer 2023-24, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023

## Appendix Three: Benchmarking – all North East/Northern Unitary and Metropolitan Councils

BM1 Darlington BM Group- Teesside & Adjacent Unitaries + NE/Northern Mets & Unitaries: BA + Leaders/Elected Mayors + Exec & Scrutiny SRAs 2023/24 (unless Indicated)										
Comparator Council	Basic Allowance	Leader or Elected Mayor	Leader or Elected Mayor Total	Deputy Leader or Mayor[s]	Exec Members	Mayoral or Exec Support	Chair Main O&S	V/Chair Main O&S	Chairs or Leads Scrutiny	V/Chairs Scrutiny
Durham	13,300	36,575	49,875	19,950	13,300		13,300	7,980	2,660	1,330
Hartlepool (22/23)	8,330	24,990	33,320		Committee Governance Model					
Middlesbrough (22/23)	7,608	55,952	63,560	19,518	11,190		11,190		5,595	
Redcar & C'land (22/23)	9,985	22,037	32,022	11,973	10,120				2,981	1,037
Stockton	9,300	25,000	34,300	13,750	11,250		6,250	3,125	6,250	3,125
North Yorks	15,500	39,654	55,154	21,165	19,554		11,052	1,842	5,526	1,842
Cumberland (22/23)	12,000	21,000	33,000	11,229	6,735				1,000	
Gateshead (22/23)	11,941	35,831	47,772	23,883	17,917				17,917	7,467
Newcastle (22/23)	9,200	18,400	27,600	9,200	6,900		4,600	2,300	4,600	2,300
Sunderland	8,369	37,667	46,036	25,111	20,716	12,556	12,556	6,277	5,179	
S. Tyneside (22/23)	8,497	29,257	37,754	18,617	12,736				10,638	5,319
N. Tyneside (22/23)	10,829	68,499	79,328	7,537	3,332		3,332	2,330		
Northumberland (22/23)	16,476	27,000	43,476	18,090	14,850				12,150	5,467
Westmoreland & Furness	13,000	23,400	36,400	13,000	7,800		6,500		6,500	
<b>Darlington</b>	<b>8,668</b>	<b>24,945</b>	<b>33,613</b>	<b>14,965</b>	<b>12,472</b>				<b>9,977</b>	
Mean	10,867	32,680	43,547	16,285	12,062		8,598	3,976	6,998	3,486
Median	9,985	27,000	37,754	16,528	11,861		8,776	2,728	5,595	2,713
Lowest	7,608	18,400	27,600	7,537	3,332		3,332	1,842	1,000	1,037
Highest	16,476	68,499	79,328	25,111	20,716		13,300	7,980	17,917	7,467
BMG Mean Ratios		3 X BA		50%	37%		26%	46%	21%	50%
DBC Ratios		2.9 X BA		60%	50%				40%	

BM2 Darlington BM Group- Teesside & Adjacent Unitaries + NE/Northern Mets & Unitaries: Main Regulatory SRAs 2023/24 (unless Indicated)										
Comparator Council	Chair Planning	V/Chair Planning	Chair Licensing (inc Regulatory)	V/Chair Licensing	Chairs Licensing Subs	Chair Audit & Risk/Other	V/Chair Audit	Chair Standards	Chair Appeals	V/Chair Appeals
Durham*	13,300	6,648	3,325	1,662	3,325	2,660	1,330	2,660	2,660	1,330
Hartlepool (22/23)	8,330		4,998			8,330				
Middlesbrough (22/23)	8,393		8,393			5,595		2,798	2,798	
Redcar & C'land (22/23)	5,055	2,074	Inc. in Planning			2,203	648			
Stockton	6,250	3,125	6,250	3,125		6,250	3,125			
North Yorks	6,971	2,141	3,931	1,842	250	4,769		4,421	5,526	921
Cumberland								500	500	
Gateshead (22/23)	14,926	7,467	14,926	7,467		14,926	7,467		14,926	7,467
Newcastle (22/23)	6,900	3,450	4,600	2,300	2,300	Co-optee	1,725	Co-optee	4,600	2,300
Sunderland	8,369	4,184	8,369	4,184				5,000		
S. Tyneside (22/23)	7,978	3,901	7,978	3,901		5,319	2,659	5,319		
N. Tyneside (22/23)	3,332	2,330	2,330	1,636		2,330	1,636	3,332	2,330	1,635
Northumberland (22/23)*	12,150	5,467	9,450	2,363		4,005	1,350	2,700		
Westmoreland & Furness**	26,000		6,500			6,500		5,200	5,200	
<b>Darlington</b>	<b>9,977</b>	<b>2,494</b>	<b>9,977</b>	<b>2,494</b>		<b>2,494</b>				
<b>Mean</b>	<b>9,852</b>	<b>3,935</b>	<b>7,002</b>	<b>3,097</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>5,448</b>	<b>2,493</b>	<b>3,548</b>	<b>4,818</b>	<b>2,731</b>
<b>Median</b>	<b>8,350</b>	<b>3,450</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>2,429</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>5,044</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>3,332</b>	<b>3,699</b>	<b>1,635</b>
<b>Lowest</b>	<b>3,332</b>	<b>2,074</b>	<b>2,330</b>	<b>1,636</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>2,203</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>921</b>
<b>Highest</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>7,467</b>	<b>14,926</b>	<b>7,467</b>	<b>3,325</b>	<b>14,926</b>	<b>7,467</b>	<b>5,319</b>	<b>14,926</b>	<b>7,467</b>
<b>BMG Mean Ratios</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>DBC Ratios</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>25%</b>		<b>10%</b>				
<b>* Durham Planning SRAs = 4 X Area Chairs £3,325 + V/Chairs £1,662</b>					<b>Westmoreland Planning SRA = 4 Planning Committees = £6,500 per Chair</b>					

BM3 Darlington BM Group- Teesside & Adjacent Unitaries + NE Mets & Unitaries: Group & Misc. SRAs 2023/24 (unless Indicated)						
Comparator Council	Main Opp Group Leader	Main Opp Deputy Leader	Minor Opp Group Leaders	Council Chair	Council Deputy Chair	Comments or Other
Durham	6,650		3,325	6,650	3,325	Chair + V/Chair General Licensing & Registration £3,325 & £1,662, Chairs + V/Chairs Highways + Corporate Parenting £2,660 + £1,330
Hartlepool (22/23)	4,998			8,330		
Middlesbrough (22/23)	2,798		2,798	5,595		
Redcar & C'land (22/23)	5,055		5,055	13,476	3,377	Chair + V/Chair Employment £2,974 & £1,037
Stockton	5,000			15,625	4,910	
North Yorks	6,821		3,527	12,142	4,027	Area Chairs +V/Chairs £3,815 + £1,456, Chairs Area Committees £5,526, Chair + V/Chair Statutory Licensing £3,500 + £1,842, Member Champions £1,842, Group Secretaries £2,763 + £1,842 + £921
Cumberland	4,500		1,128	4,887		
Gateshead (22/23)	17,917	7,378				
Newcastle (22/23)	6,900	3,450		9,200	3,450	Shadow Exec £2,300, Chairs Climate Change + HWB £3,450, V/Chair Climate Change £1,725, Chair + V/Chair Constitutional £2,300 & £1,150, V/Chair Standards £1,150, Members Planning + Licensing £1,380 + £460
Sunderland	9,417		4,708	12,000	6,000	Cabinet Secretary £25,111, Area Chairs + V/Chairs £10,30 + £6,277
S. Tyneside (22/23)	2,659			10,024	3,423	Area Chairs £6,298, Chairs + V/Chairs HR + Performance Panels £5,319 & £2,659, V/Chair Standards £2,659
N. Tyneside (22/23)	3,332		3,332	12,213	4,434	Chair + V/Chair HWB £3,332 & £2,330, V/Chair Standards £1,635
Northumberland (22/23)*	12,150	4,860	2,430	5,400	1,620	Council Business Chair + Dep Chair £14,850 & £9,900, Area Chairs + V/Chairs £10,800 & £3,645, Chair + V/Chair Rights of Way £9,450 & £5,467, Chair + V/Chairs Cabinet + Council WGs £4,005 & £1,350, Group Secretaries £15 p/Mbr
Westmoreland & Furness	5,200		2,600	6,500	2,600	Chairs Locality Boards + Lake Admin Committee £5,200
<b>Darlington</b>	<b>9,977</b>	<b>1,248</b>	<b>1,248</b>	<b>11,500</b>	<b>971</b>	
Mean	6,892	4,234	3,015	9,539	3,467	
Median	5,200	4,155	3,062	9,612	3,423	
Lowest	2,659	1,248	1,128	4,887	971	
Highest	17,917	7,378	5,055	15,625	6,000	
BMG Mean Ratios	21%	13%	9%	29%	36%	
DBC Ratios	40%	5%	5%	46%	8%	

