

Independent Member of the Member Remuneration Panel – Recruitment Pack

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Part 1 - Information regarding the Member Remuneration Panel

Overview

Kent County Council is seeking people to join its Member Remuneration Panel. The Panel will consist of three members and will be responsible for advising the Council on the Members' Allowances Scheme.

The Panel is established under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The main focus of the Panel's work is to provide a report with recommendations to the Council on:

- The amount of basic allowance payable to all 81 Members (Councillors).
- The roles and responsibilities for which a special responsibility allowance should be payable and the amount for each such allowance.
- Miscellaneous expenses such as travel allowances, subsistence allowances, dependent carers allowances.
- Allowances to co-opted members.

Some understanding of the roles and responsibilities of Members and knowledge or experience of finance or local government would be helpful. Political impartiality is essential. Applicants should not be affiliated to the Council, either by membership of a local political party or group or by close association with a Councillor or employee.

Please note that this is not a full-time job, but a position with a 4-year term for which an allowance will be paid. The pattern of work/workload will vary depending on whether the Panel is reviewing the scheme as a whole or part thereof.

Administrative support will be provided by the Council.

Background

Local Authority elected members are entitled to receive payments in the form of allowances and expenses to compensate for the work they do and the responsibilities they assume on behalf of the communities they serve.

All Members receive a payment termed “basic allowance” in addition to receiving reimbursements of travelling and subsistence allowances.

Members taking on specified roles also receive a “Special Responsibility Allowance” to reflect the additional time and responsibility involved.

The Members’ Allowances Scheme for the Council sets out all of these elements. The Scheme is agreed by Members at a meeting of full Council (when all 81 Members meet).

The core role of the Member Remuneration Panel is to prepare a report and recommendations to Council when there is a decision on the Scheme to be made. Members cannot make any decisions on the content of the Scheme without recommendations from the Panel having been presented to them. Members need not accept the recommendations but must consider them.

The intention is that the Member Remuneration Panel should be made up of completely independent persons who can consider the roles undertaken by Councillors and make recommendations as to the amount they should receive in both basic and special responsibility allowances.

The Panel will receive information from the Council to enable them to reach informed decisions and will be able to seek comparative information from other Councils, interview a number of Members and Officers and generally undertake what research they consider necessary to enable them to make recommendations.

The Role

The Terms of Appointment will be for four years. Members of the Panel may serve consecutive terms.

A Members Allowances Scheme cannot be in place longer than 4 years without a comprehensive review. Currently, the Council has a 4 year scheme which is aligned to the 4 year term of the Council. The current Scheme ends on 31 March 2025.

The Panel will be asked to undertake the following:

1. A report and recommendations for a 1 year Scheme to cover April 2025 to March 2026 inclusive.
2. A report and recommendations for a 4 year Scheme to be in place from April 2026 to March 2030 inclusive.

The reason for having a one-year scheme is to have future four-year schemes starting one year into a Council term. This will provide clarity for anyone standing for election as to what the allowances scheme will be for the first year.

This work is likely to be concluded in the first 12-18 months of the 4-year term. However, the Panel may be asked to carry out a review on a specific amendment to the Scheme, such as the introduction of a new Special Responsibility Allowance, at any time during the 4-years.

Each Panel member will receive an allowance of £1000 for reviewing the full scheme and producing a report and recommendations. They will receive an allowance of £600 for undertaking a smaller review.

In addition, the Chair of the Panel will receive an additional £200 for each review. The Panel is responsible for selecting one of its members as Chair.

Relevant travelling expenses will be reimbursed.

The most recent report from the Member Remuneration Panel was discussed at the meeting of County Council on 4 November 2021. The agenda and papers for this meeting, including the MRP report, can be viewed here: [Agenda for County Council on Thursday, 4th November, 2021, 9.30 am \(kent.gov.uk\)](https://www.kent.gov.uk/agenda-for-county-council-on-thursday-4th-november-2021-9.30-am)

The closing date for applications is 18 July 2024.

Interviews will be held on 5th and 6th August 2024 in Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent.

Part 2 – Job Description: Independent Member of the Member Remuneration Panel

Directorate:	Three separate posts.
Unit/Section:	N/A
Location:	Maidstone
Remuneration:	Panel members are paid £1,000 for completing a full review of the Members Allowances Scheme and £600 for completing a smaller review. The Chair of the Panel receives an additional £200 per review. Travel expenses are paid when required to undertake any duties.
Responsible to:	Kent County Council

Purpose of the Job:

The Member Remuneration Panel is responsible for considering and making recommendations to the County Council on the allowances that Members should be entitled to claim for the various roles that they perform.

Main duties and responsibilities:

1. To review the whole or any part of the existing Members' Allowances Scheme, using a number of suitable techniques.
2. To review information from other similar such schemes to enable an independent, informed, transparent, and fair review.
3. To develop, as necessary, a working knowledge of the following:

- a. The role of Members, the Members' Allowances Scheme, the structure and operation of Kent County Council, and its policies and practices;
 - b. statutory requirements, regulations and government guidance concerning Members' Allowances; and
 - c. Members' Allowances Schemes operating in other local authorities and public bodies.
4. To develop and maintain effective partnership working and communication between the Member Remuneration Panel and Council Officers.
5. To contribute to the development of a written report to the Council setting out the conclusions and recommendations of the Member Remuneration Panel as set out in the Panel's Terms of Reference.

Person specification:

The persons appointed as to the Panel must:

- Be committed to the need for high standards in public life.
- Have the ability to critically assess written and oral evidence to reach a balanced and objective decision.
- Be able to conduct interviews and meetings with Officers and Members to elicit relevant views and information
- Have an understanding of public service and/or commercial life and practice.
- Demonstrate tact, diplomacy and impartiality.
- Be able to attend meetings of the Panel and of the Council when required.
- Be able to demonstrate a good understanding of ethics and probity in public services.

Whilst some understanding of how local government works and approaches to how pay/remuneration and reward structures work and are agreed is important, the emphasis is on being able to represent the public interest and provide an objective and independent view.

Applicants should:

- Live or work in the Kent County Council area.

Applicants and serving Panel members **MUST NOT**:

- Be, or have been during the last 5 years, a member, co-opted member or officer of Kent County Council.
- Be a relative or a close friend of a member, co-opted member or officer of KCC or the Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA).

(A person is defined by the Localism Act 2011 as a relative if they are:

- *The spouse or civil partner or living as if they were a spouse or civil partner;*
- *A grandparent;*

- *A lineal descendant of a grandparent;*
- *A parent, sibling or child;*
- *The spouse or civil partner of a grandparent, lineal descendant of a grandparent, or a parent, sibling or child; or*
- *Living with a grandparent, lineal descendant of a grandparent, or a parent, sibling or child as if they were a spouse or civil partner.*

of a member, co-opted member or officer of KCC or KMFRA.)

- (a) Be an individual disqualified from being or becoming a Member of the Council.
- (b) Be in a contractual relationship with Kent County Council.
- (c) Have a publicly declared political affiliation, membership of a political party or be politically active locally or nationally.

Other information:

The Panel is not a Committee of the Council. No Member of the Council has a right to attend its meetings and its procedures are determined by the Panel itself.

The post is on a voluntary basis, for up to a four-year term. Consecutive appointments are allowed.

Enhanced Vetting Checks will be undertaken for successful applicants prior to confirmation of appointment.

The Monitoring Officer of the Council oversees the recruitment process, though may not be on the interview panel. The process is as follows:

- As a result of this application and interview process, the Monitoring Officer will recommend the successful applicants to the Selection and Member Services Committee of the Council for appointment to the Panel.
- Subject to the agreement of this Committee, the successful applicants will be recommended to County Council for appointment.
- Appointment will only be confirmed upon the agreement of County Council.
- The term of office of Panel members will begin on 1 November 2024, or from the date of the County Council meeting where the appointments are confirmed where this is later.

Part 3 – Terms of Reference of the Member Remuneration Panel

(The following is set out in the Constitution of Kent County Council, Sections 17.174 to 17.188. The Constitution can be viewed online here: [Constitution - Kent County Council](#)).

Member Remuneration Panel

- 1.1 The Member Remuneration Panel (MRP) is not a Committee of the Council and is established under The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
- 1.2 Membership: 3 independent members.
- 1.3 No Panel member may be any of the following:
 - (a) A Member or Co-opted Member of the Council or any of its Committees.
 - (b) An individual disqualified from being or becoming a Member of the Council.
 - (c) An employee of the Council.
- 1.4 Membership of the MRP will cease:
 - (a) Automatically when any of the disqualifications listed in 1.3 apply.
 - (b) Upon written notice of resignation sent by the Panel member and received by the Monitoring Officer.
 - (c) Immediately upon resolution of County Council following recommendation by the Selection and Member Services Committee.
 - (d) At the end of the term of appointment.
- 1.5 The Monitoring Officer shall be responsible for recruiting and recommending 3 individuals to the Selection and Member Services Committee for provisional appointment. The appointments are subject to confirmation by full Council.
- 1.6 Panel members are appointed for four years, or as determined by County Council at the time of appointment.
- 1.7 In the event of an interim vacancy in the Panel membership, the process in 1.5 will be followed with the Monitoring Officer recommending the same number of names as vacancies. The appointment is to run for the remainder of the original appointee's term unless otherwise determined by County Council.
- 1.8 On a four yearly basis, the MRP is responsible for reviewing the whole Members Allowances Scheme and making recommendations to the Council on the following:
 - (a) The amount of the basic allowance.
 - (b) The responsibilities and duties to allow the following to be received and the amount thereof:

- i. Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).
 - ii. Travel and subsistence expenses.
 - iii. Co-optees allowance.
 - (c) The amount of the dependants' carers' allowance.
 - (d) The implementation date for the new Members' Allowances Scheme and whether any payments should be backdated to the start of the municipal or financial year.
 - (e) Whether there are to be any annual changes to the amounts received for a-d above; and where the changes are to be related to an index, the details of such an index.
- 1.9 In addition to the four yearly review, the Selection and Member Services Committee can request the MRP to conduct a review of one or more of the areas set out in 1.8(a-e) and make recommendations to the Council.
- 1.10 The MRP shall select from its number a Chair.
- 1.11 No Member of the Council has a right to attend its meetings and its procedures are determined by the Panel itself, subject to the requirement of a quorum of 3 Panel members when agreeing recommendations to make to the Council.
- 1.12 Upon completion of the four-yearly review under section 1.8, each Panel member shall receive an allowance of £1,000. Reasonable travel and other expenses shall also be paid.
- 1.13 Upon completion of a review under 1.9, each Panel member shall receive an allowance of £600. Reasonable travel and other expenses shall also be paid.
- 1.14 The Chair of the Panel shall receive an additional allowance of £200 upon completion of each review under both 1.8 and 1.9.
- 1.15 The work and recommendations of the Panel must conform to the relevant legislation.

Part 4 – Members' Allowances Scheme 2024/25

(The following is set out in the Constitution of Kent County Council, Sections 21.14 to 21.31. The Constitution can be viewed online here: [Constitution - Kent County Council](#)).

Members' Allowances Scheme (2024/25 Scheme - Adopted by the Council on 19 February 2024)

- 1.1 Basic Allowance - £17,123.06 per annum (inclusive of an element for routine subsistence expenditure on KCC duties).

	%	£
Executive		
Leader	100	56,308.82
Cabinet Members (maximum 9)	65	36,600.73
Deputy Cabinet Members (maximum 11)	30	16,892.65
Cabinet Committee Chair (maximum 6)	17.5	9,854.04
Council		
Council Chairman	33	18,581.91
Council Vice-Chairman	17.5	9,854.04
Planning Applications Committee Chair	22	12,387.94
Regulation Committee Chair	22	12,387.94
Other Committee Chairs (a)	17.5	9,854.04
Scrutiny Committee Chair	17.5	9,854.04
Select Committee Chairs (for period of review)	17.5	9,854.04
Opposition		
Leader of each Opposition Group (of at least five members) (c)	33	18,581.91

1.2 Notes to Table in 21.14:

(a) Other Committee Chairs: Governance and Audit, Health Overview and Scrutiny, Selection and Member Services, and Pension Fund.

(b) No Member to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

(c) The Opposition Group must comprise a minimum of five Members, one of which will be the appointed Opposition Group Leader. The maximum total SRA funding available for Opposition Group Leaders shall be 3 times the SRA set out in the table for a single Opposition Group Leader. In the event of there being more than 3 qualifying Opposition Group Leaders, the total amount is shared equally amongst them.

(d) No other allowance to be payable.

Indexation

1.3 This is a four-year scheme commencing with municipal year 2021/22. The indexation method set out in 1.4 shall first apply to municipal year 2022/23 and each subsequent year until the end of the four years. Each indexation increase

is subject to annual approval by full Council and will apply to the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Dependent Carers' Allowance.

1.4 The indexation method shall be as follows:

- (a) The figure X shall be equal to the percentage awarded to staff awarded 'Successful' in the Total Contribution Pay scheme and will apply to the same year as the staff award.
- (b) The figure Y shall be calculated as the average of the percentage increase in the overall pay bill arising from each Minister's decision arising from the 8 Pay Review Bodies for the year preceding the one to which the indexation applies, or as many as are available at the time of calculation.
- (c) The percentage increase to apply annually will be the average of X and Y.
- (d) The Pay Review Bodies referred to in (b) are the following independent non-departmental public bodies: Armed Forces' Pay Review Body; Review Body on Doctors' and Dentists' Remuneration; NHS Pay Review Body; Prison Service Pay Review Body; School Teachers' Review Body; Senior Salaries Review Body; National Crime Agency Remuneration Review Body; and Police Remuneration Review Body.

Travel Expenses

- 1.5 Travel by private vehicles will be reimbursed at the rates set for tax allowance purposes by the HM Revenue and Customs for business travel. Currently, these are 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles and 25p a mile thereafter.
- 1.6 Parking fees, public transport fares and any hotel expenses will be reimbursed at cost, but only on production of a valid ticket or receipt - the cheapest available fare for the time of travel should normally be purchased.
- 1.7 Taxi fares will only be reimbursed on production of a valid receipt and if use of public transport or the Member's own car is impracticable.
- 1.8 Travel expenses will be reimbursed for any journey on Council duties between premises as agreed for tax purposes (normally excluding journeys to constituents' homes).
- 1.9 VAT receipts for fuel must always be provided to accompany Members' expense claims and any instructions issued by the General Counsel in relation to the submission of expense claims complied with.
- 1.10 Air travel and rail travel other than to/from London or within Kent should be booked through Officers to enable use of discounting arrangements.
- 1.11 Journeys undertaken in accordance with the following descriptions are allowed to be claimed for:

- (a) attendance at KCC premises to undertake KCC business, including attendance at Council, Cabinet and Committees, etc (including Group meetings) and to undertake general Member responsibilities,
- (b) representing KCC at external meetings, including Parish and Town Councils and those of voluntary organisations where the member is there on behalf of KCC,
- (c) attendance at events organised by KCC and/or where invitations have been issued by County Officers or Members (including Chair's events and other corporate events), and
- (d) attendance at meetings/events where the Member is an official KCC representative (as determined by the Selection and Member Services Committee) or requested by the Leader or the relevant Cabinet Member.

Subsistence Expenses

- 1.12 These are not normally reimbursed. Hotel accommodation should be booked through Officers. Any other reasonably unavoidable costs related to overnight stays, excluding normal subsistence, will be reimbursed on production of a receipt.

Dependents' Carers' Allowance

- 1.13 Members who incur expenses themselves in respect of care responsibilities for dependent children under 16 or dependent adults certified by a doctor or social worker as needing attendance will be reimbursed, on production of valid receipts, for actual payments to a carer while the Member is on Council duties, up to a maximum of £13.47 per hour for each dependent child or adult. Money paid to a member of the Members' household will not be reimbursed. In the case of an allowance for the care of a dependent relative, the relative must reside with the Councillor, be dependent on the Councillor and require constant care. Subject to the Childcare Voucher Scheme's standard terms and conditions*, any Member may, if they wish, sacrifice a portion of their Basic Allowance for Childcare Vouchers which are not subject to tax and national insurance deductions.

(a) * For reference these terms and conditions include (but are not limited to):

- i. The childcare provider must be OFSTED registered.
- ii. The children must be aged between 0 and 16.
- iii. A sacrifice agreement would need to be signed.
- iv. The amount that can be sacrificed varies depending on whether the applicant is a basic, higher, or additional rate taxpayer.

Pensions

- 1.14 Members are not eligible for admission to the pension scheme.

Co-Opted Members

- 1.15 An allowance is payable to the Independent Person of £500 per annum plus a daily rate of £100 (pro rata for part of a day).

Election to Forgo Allowances

- 1.16 In accordance with Regulation 13 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, any Member may elect to forgo all or any part of their entitlement to allowances, by notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer.

Submission of Claims

- 1.17 In accordance with Regulation 14 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the time limit for the submission of claims relating to travel, subsistence, co-optees and dependent carers allowances is four months from the date the expense was incurred.

No Other Allowances are Payable

- 1.18 Only allowances complying with the above scheme are payable.