



**Wednesday,  
27 January 2021  
10.00 am**

**Meeting of  
Governance and  
Constitution Committee  
Sadler Road  
Winsford**

Contact Officer:  
Donna Linton  
Democratic Services

Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service, Sadler Road, Winsford, Cheshire, CW7 2FQ

Tel: 01606 868804  
E-mail: [donna.linton@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:donna.linton@cheshirefire.gov.uk)

## **Cheshire Fire Authority**

### **Notes for Members of the Public**

---

#### **Attendance at Meetings**

The Cheshire Fire Authority welcomes and encourages members of the public to be at its meetings and Committees.

This meeting of the Fire Authority will be held by remote means, i.e. the meeting will not be taking place in person at Sadler Road, but will be hosted over the Internet, using Skype for Business, with participants located in a variety of places.

The Government introduced legislation, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, that enables remote meetings to take place and the Fire Authority has adopted rules that allow and govern the way that remote meetings will work. The rules can be accessed [here](#).

The meeting must be open to the public and press. However, as the public and press cannot attend in person the Fire Authority is arranging for the meeting to be broadcast. Final details about how to access the broadcast will be published on the website prior to the meeting.

---

#### **Questions by Electors**

Given the current situation, questions for the Chair of the Fire Authority can be submitted by email to [DemocraticServices@Cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@Cheshirefire.gov.uk). Questions must be received at least five clear working days before the meeting takes place.

---

#### **Access to Information**

Copies of the Agenda are available on the Service's website ([www.cheshirefire.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk)). A copy can also be obtained from Democratic Services via [DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk).

The Agenda is usually divided into two parts. Members of the public are allowed to stay for the first part. When the Authority is ready to deal with the second part you will be asked to leave the remote meeting, because the business to be discussed will be of a confidential nature, for example, dealing with individual people and contracts.

**This agenda is available in large print, Braille, audio CD or in community languages upon request by contacting; Telephone: 01606868414 or email: [equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@cheshirefire.gov.uk)**

#### **Recording of Meetings**

The Authority audio records its meetings. Please contact Democratic Services for a copy of the recording via [DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@cheshirefire.gov.uk).

---



**MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, 27 JANUARY 2021**

**Time : 10.00 am**

**Lecture Theatre - Sadler Road, Cheshire**

**AGENDA**

**Part 1 - Business to be discussed in public**

**1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

**1A Recording of Meeting**

Members are reminded that this meeting will be audio-recorded.

**1B Apologies for Absence**

**1C Declarations of Members' Interests**

Members are reminded that the Members' Code of Conduct requires the disclosure of Statutory Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Non-Statutory Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests.

**1D Minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee**

(Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Governance and Constitution Committee held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

**ITEMS REQUIRING DISCUSSION / DECISION**

**2 Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22**

(Pages 7 - 20)

**3 Review into the way that seats on Cheshire Fire Authority are allocated to the Constituent Authorities**

(Pages 21 - 24)

**4 Annual Governance Statement 2019-20 Action Plan Update**

(Pages 25 - 28)

This page is intentionally left blank



## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE held on Wednesday, 29 July 2020 - Remote Meeting - Via Skype at 10.00 am**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Steve Wright (Chair), Michael Beanland, Mike Biggin, David Brown, Martyn Delaney, Nick Mannion, Rob Polhill and independent (non-elected) member Derek Barnett

### **1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

#### **A Recording of Meeting**

Members were reminded that the meeting would be audio-recorded and broadcasted live to enable public viewing.

#### **B Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rachel Bailey and independent (non-elected) member Lesley Thomson. Councillor Michael Beanland attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Rachel Bailey.

#### **C Membership of Committee**

Members noted the membership of the Governance and Constitution Committee for 2020-21, as agreed by the Fire Authority on 1st July 2020.

Councillors: S Wright – Chair  
R Polhill – Deputy Chair  
R Bailey  
M Biggin  
D Brown  
M Delaney  
N Mannion

Substitutes: M Beanland  
D Edwardes  
P Wheeler

Independent (non-elected) Members: D Barnett  
L Thomson

#### **D Declarations of Members' Interests**

There were no declarations of Members' interest.

#### **E Minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee**

**RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.**

**2 DISPENSATIONS**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which asked Members to extend the benefit of the existing dispensations to a new Member of the Fire Authority. This would allow them to take part in debates and votes on the setting of the council tax precept and approval of the Members' Allowance Scheme (and any changes and/or additions to it).

Appendix 1 to the report contained a copy of the legislation and Appendix 2 to the report contained an extract which explained the rationale for the granting of the original dispensations.

The Director of Governance and Commissioning informed the Committee that Cllr Jill Houlbrook had requested that the dispensations be extended so that she could benefit from them.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the dispensations granted to Fire Authority Members on 29th January 2020 be extended to benefit Councillor Jill Houlbrook, thereby allowing her to take part in debates and votes on the setting of the Council Tax precept and the approval of the Members' Allowance Scheme (and any changes and/or additions to it).**

**3 WHISTLEBLOWING ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which provided information about whistleblowing for 2019-20.

The Director of Governance and Commissioning informed Members that the Authority had not been contacted by Safecall during 2019-20. He suggested to Members that this was likely to be a result of staff being comfortable raising their concerns with managers informally, with Safecall being considered a last resort.

A Member queried how regularly the Service reminded staff of the whistleblowing process, particularly as more staff were working from home. The Director of Governance and Commissioning assured Members that the Safecall arrangements was publicised around the Service's property. However, he agreed to review the prominence of recent publicity.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the Whistleblowing Annual Report 2019-20 be noted.**

#### **4 COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which provided information regarding compliments and complaints received about the Service during the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

The Director provided an overview of the figures for the past five reporting periods which were presented within a table in the report. He explained that although the figures had fluctuated, there was no obvious trend, or pattern. Compared to the previous year, the Service had seen an increase in the number of informal complaints received. The number of formal complaints was the same.

Members acknowledged the work staff had done since the implementation of the lockdown period due to Covid-19 and praised staff for their continued work. It was noted that praise had been given to staff by a variety of external bodies that would not normally be recorded on the compliments register.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the information regarding compliments and complaints made during the period 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020 be noted.**

#### **5 SUMMARY OF MEMBER ATTENDANCE 2019-20**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which provided information about Member attendance for the last municipal year. Appendix 1 to the report summarised Member attendance at meetings of the Fire Authority and its three main committees: Estates and Property Committee, Governance and Constitution Committee and Performance and Overview Committee. Appendix 2 to the report contained details of the planning days and additional meetings attended, as well as conferences and events attended.

The Director highlighted that substitutes were recorded this year as they were used more frequently than previous years. Members discussed the figures and emphasised the need for Members to arrange a substitute if they know in advance that they are unable to attend a meeting. Members agreed that no action was necessary.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the summary of Member attendance at meetings of the Authority and its three main committees for 2019-20 be noted.**

#### **6 DRAFT STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE 2019-20**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced the report which allowed Members the opportunity to review the draft Statement of Assurance 2019-20.

He reminded Members that the Fire and Rescue National Framework for England required the publication of the Statement of Assurance to provide assurance on

financial, governance and operational matters. The final version of the document was due to be submitted to the next Fire Authority meeting for approval.

Members' attentions was drawn to sections 6 and 7 concerned with compliance with the National Framework and the outcomes from the inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, respectively.

The Director informed Members that the Inspectorate visit that should have taken place in March had been postponed to March/April 2021.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the draft Statement of Assurance 2019-20 be approved and presented to the Fire Authority for approval in due course.**

## **7 ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced a report which required Members to consider how to deal with requests from Warrington Borough Council concerned with the allocation of seats on the Fire Authority. He explained the current process for the allocation of seats and requirements contained in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Cheshire Fire Service's (Combination Scheme). He advised that changing the approach to seat allocation could require secondary legislation. The Director gave an example of how different total seat numbers impacted upon seat allocations.

A Member queried why the current total number of seats was 23. The Director of Governance and Commissioning advised that the Fire Authority had been made up of 23 seats since local government reorganisation in 2009. The Combination Scheme did not state a specific total number of seats. However, it was drafted in such a way that suggested that having more than 25 seats would be exceptional.

Members were reminded that a few fire authorities had reduced their total seat numbers and that the current model for fire governance involving Police and Crime Commissioners was being reviewed.

Members agreed that the Director of Governance and Commissioning should take into account the requests by Warrington Borough Council during the review. They stated that it was important to consult all of the constituent authorities at the appropriate time.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the Director of Governance and Commissioning proceed with the review and report back in due course.**

## **8 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CONSULTATION ON MODEL MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced a report which allowed

Members to consider their response to the Model Member Code of Conduct Consultation from the Local Government Association (LGA).

Members considered the questions to the consultation as attached at Appendix 2 to the report and decided that all Members should consider sending individual responses to the Consultation.

**RESOLVED: That**

**[1] the Model Member Code of Conduct Consultation questions be circulated to all Members to allow them to respond individually.**

This page is intentionally left blank

## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021  
**REPORT OF:** DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING  
**AUTHOR:** ANDREW LEADBETTER

---

**SUBJECT:** MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2021-22

---

### Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with information about the outcome of the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme. To allow Members to consider the report prepared by the Independent Reviewer and finalise the draft Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22. To enable Members to make a recommendation to the Fire Authority about the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22.

### Recommended: That Members

- [1] Consider the report of the Independent Reviewer; and
- [2] Finalise the draft Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22; and
- [3] Make a recommendation to the Fire Authority about the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22.

### Background

2. This Committee approved the process for the review of the Members' Allowances Scheme at its meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2020. The following paragraphs describe the process:

#### Personnel

- A member of one of the Independent Remuneration Panels of the constituent authorities to be engaged (referred to as the Independent Reviewer).

#### Information Gathering

- The Members' Allowances Schemes of the constituent authorities to be checked and all relevant information summarised.
- The Members' Allowances Schemes of a range of fire and rescue authorities to be checked and all relevant information summarised.

- All Members (and independent members) to be asked what their expectations are for the review, e.g. are there specific matters that they believe need to be covered and do they wish to speak directly to the Independent Reviewer.

#### Meetings

- Officers to present information to the Independent Reviewer.
- Independent Reviewer to meet with Members (and independent members), if necessary, or required.
- Officers and Independent Reviewer agree to draft of new Members' Allowances Scheme.

### Information

3. Mrs Mandy Ramsden was engaged to fulfil the role of Independent Reviewer. She facilitated the last review and continues to act as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel of Cheshire East Borough Council.
4. The following information was considered by the Independent Reviewer:
  - a) The Members' Allowances Schemes of the constituent authorities and recommendations of the respective Independent Remuneration Panels;
  - b) Comparative data relating to the Fire Authority's Audit Family Group and some other fire and rescue authorities;
  - c) Any responses received from Members (and independent members) stating their expectations about the review;
  - d) Information compiled relating to some of the issues raised by Members, e.g. the approach to the payment of special responsibility allowances and the index applied to schemes; and
  - e) Details about the Fire Authority's Member Champions.
5. The Independent Reviewer has prepared a report which summarises her findings. The Independent Reviewer's report is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. Members will see that there will be limited change from the current Members' Allowances Scheme if the conclusions in the Independent Reviewer's report are accepted. However, there is one issue that requires particular attention. At section 5.2 of the Independent Reviewer's report she provides context about the question of whether to allow the payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance to an individual Member. At paragraph 5.2.4 she encourages the Fire Authority to determine whether to allow this.
6. There is one other issue that could ultimately impact upon the Members' Allowance Scheme, but this will not have an immediate effect. At paragraph 5.3.3 of the Independent Reviewer's report she states that the Fire Authority

should carry out a further review of the Member Champions to satisfy itself that each is necessary and provides a meaningful benefit. Her rationale is explained in section 5.3.

7. In light of the Independent Reviewer's report and in anticipation of the discussion at this Committee a draft of the new Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22 has been prepared by officers and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. The introduction has been updated and a note has been added. The draft reflects the conclusions contained in the Independent Reviewer's report.

## **Financial Implications**

8. Annual increases based on an index like the NJC can be funded from the Authority's existing budget for Members' allowances.

## **Legal Implications**

9. The provisions governing members' allowances are contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 [the Regulations]. The Regulations do apply to the Fire Authority, but not all elements.
10. Part 2 of the Regulations prescribes the allowances that may be paid and rules relating to such allowances. Part 3 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for members' allowances schemes, e.g. the application of indexation for annual adjustments to schemes. Part 4 of the Regulations is concerned with the role of the independent remuneration panel [IRP]. Local authorities (e.g. district, county and London boroughs) must have regards to recommendations of an IRP before they make or amend their scheme. A combined fire authority has a different obligation: it must have regard to the recommendations made by the IRPs of local authorities that appoint its Members (i.e. the constituent authorities). The Fire Authority is not required to have its own IRP.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

11. There are no equality and diversity implications.

## **Environmental Implications**

12. There are no environmental implications.

**CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING  
MANAGER: TEL [01606] 868804**

This page is intentionally left blank

**REPORT SUMMARISING THE FINDINGS OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME OF CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

**REPORT CONTENTS**

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Members' Allowances Schemes of the Constituent Authorities
- 3 Structure of Cheshire Fire Authority's Members' Allowances Scheme
- 4 Level of Basic Allowance - including Comparison with Family Group, but not with local authorities
- 5 Special Responsibility Allowances - including Level, Payment of More than One SRA, Member Champions
- 6 Other Payments - including Regional Appointments, independent (non-elected) members, Independent Persons)
- 7 Travel, Subsistence and Other Allowances - Including Dependants' Carers' Allowance
- 8 Annual Increase - Index

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 I was engaged by the Monitoring Officer to carry out a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme of Cheshire Fire Authority. I have previously carried out a similar review for the Fire Authority. I sit on the Independent Remuneration Panel of Cheshire East Borough Council.
- 1.2 I have reviewed a number of documents and been provided with a range of comparative information by the Governance Officer and wish to thank her for the excellent support that she has provided to me.

**2 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEMES OF THE CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES**

- 2.1 I have checked the Members' Allowances Schemes of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, Halton and Warrington Borough Councils. I have also considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panels of these Councils. I did not find anything that directly impacts upon the outcome of the review. However, I did note certain aspects of the schemes operated by the Councils, e.g. the number of Special Responsibility Allowances payable and the Index used.

### **3 STRUCTURE OF CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY'S MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME**

3.1 The existing Members' Allowances Scheme of Cheshire Fire Authority is largely unremarkable, being typical of the schemes operated by other fire and rescue authorities and local authorities generally. Therefore, it appears to be an appropriate basis for the replacement scheme, with no requirement for significant change. Accordingly, the commentary below follows the format of the existing Scheme.

### **4 LEVEL OF BASIC ALLOWANCE**

4.1 I have considered various pieces of information. An example is attached as Annex 1 to this report. It shows the most relevant data relating to the Family Group fire and rescue authorities that have similar governance arrangements to those of Cheshire Fire Authority. This data shows that the existing basic allowance is within the range of basic allowances paid by the Family Group. There seems to be a loose correlation between the level of the basic allowance and the number of members of the fire and rescue authority, i.e. the smaller the number of members the higher the basic allowance. However, this is not a consistent situation.

4.2 I was encouraged to consider whether the allowances should be compared to those of local authorities. However, I felt that the roles of a fire authority Member and of a local authority councillor are sufficiently different to make such a comparison unproductive.

**4.3 *I concluded that the level of basic allowance was appropriate and need not change.***

### **5 SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES**

#### **5.1 Level**

5.1.1 Again, I have considered various pieces of information, the most relevant being the data on the Family Group. I found it difficult to find a clear correlation, or relationship between the various common Special Responsibility Allowances paid by the fire and rescue authorities. Of course, roles within different fire and rescue authorities may sound the same, but involve quite different levels of work. Hopefully, the following comments set the scene and help to illustrate the challenge of finding a meaningful comparison:

- The Chair's allowance is higher than the average paid across the Family Group.
- The Deputy Chair's allowance is 50% of the Chair's allowance when some Family Group fire and rescue authorities pay a higher percentage, with some paying as low as 25% of the Chair's allowance.

- The Group Leader's allowance varies significantly across the Family Group, with some not paying the allowance at all. Cheshire's is the lowest payable.
- Committee Chair's allowances vary significantly, with Cheshire's being fairly generous.

**5.1.2 *In relation to the above-mentioned Special Responsibility Allowances I concluded that they were appropriate and need not change.***

5.2 Payment of More than One SRA

5.2.1 I was also encouraged to consider whether it was appropriate to pay a Member for more than one special responsibility: the current Scheme only allows for one Special Responsibility Allowance to be paid, i.e. the higher, or highest. I know that this was raised by some Members in response to an initial questionnaire circulated by the Governance Officer. However, I am aware that a number of Members have said that they do not support the payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

5.2.2 I did comment on this when I was involved in the last review. I personally cannot see a problem in paying two Special Responsibility Allowances, when it can safely be argued that this reflects the work being undertaken. Unfortunately, this can be difficult to explain/justify and most public bodies only allow the payment of one Special Responsibility Allowance. This is, in fact, the case for all of the Family Group fire and rescue authorities and the constituent authorities. The payment of more than one Special Responsibility Allowance appears to be the exception.

5.2.3 I understand that the financial impact of paying more than one Special Responsibility Allowance is relatively small.

**5.2.4 *In the circumstances I will leave the Fire Authority to determine whether a Member is able to receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.***

5.3 Member Champions

5.3.1 This is probably the only aspect of the Scheme that is remarkable. Cheshire is one of only two fire and rescue authorities in the Family Group that have clearly defined Member Champion roles that attract an allowance. Lancashire is the other. Cheshire has 18 Member Champions, with Lancashire having 4. Lancashire pays nearly double that of Cheshire by way of a Special Responsibility Allowance. However, Lancashire's Member Champions are subject to formalities that do not exist in Cheshire, e.g. they are required to submit a quarterly report to the fire and rescue authority upon the activities associated with their roles.

5.3.2 I did question why Cheshire had so many Member Champions when I carried out the last review. I understand that a review has taken place since then, but note that there are now more Member Champions than before.

**5.3.3 *I believe that the Fire Authority should carry out a further review of the Member Champion roles. It should consider whether each of the Member***

***Champion roles is necessary and satisfy itself that each provides a meaningful benefit. This should be concluded within the first 12 months of the introduction of the new scheme.***

## **6 OTHER PAYMENTS**

6.1 I note that the payments for attending the North West Fire Forum (£35 per meeting) and to Independent Persons for dealing with complaints about Member conduct (£35 per meeting) have not changed since the last review.

**6.2 *I recommend that these figures are increased so that they reflect the level of NJC pay increases during the period of the current scheme. The figures should be rounded up, or down.***

6.3 I note that the payments to the independent (non-elected) members have been increased in the same way as payments to the other Members, i.e. in line with the NJC pay increases and need not consider these further.

## **7 TRAVEL, SUBSISTENCE AND OTHER ALLOWANCES**

7.1 Travel (the mileage rate) continues to be aligned to the nationally set figure. Subsistence rates are aligned to officer rates. This approach remains appropriate and is consistent with the way other public bodies deal with such payments. Whilst the rates have not increased for some time I do not recommend an increase.

7.2 I note that the maximum amount of Dependants' Carers' Allowance that can be claimed has not changed since the last review. However, other public bodies have not increased their figures.

**7.3 *I recommend that these figures remain the same.***

## **8 ANNUAL INCREASE - INDEX**

8.1 I have not spent much time considering this. It is clear that the majority of public bodies have adopted an index that aligns increases with the NJC pay awards – so that increases for members' allowances mirror the increases in pay of the majority of staff. However, some bodies do use other indices, e.g. CPI. Three of the constituent authorities use the NJC and one uses CPI.

**8.2 *I recommend that the index should continue to refer to increases that are aligned to NJC pay awards. It should apply for the duration of the new scheme, i.e. four years.***

Mandy Ramsden  
Independent Remuneration Panel Member, Cheshire East Borough Council  
6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Fire Authority	Year of Scheme	Total Number of Members	Basic Allowance	Chair	Deputy/Vice Chair	Group Lead Members (or equivalent)	Committee Chair	Member Champions
Hampshire	2019-20	10	£6,243.00	£12,486.00	£3,122.00	£3,122 - £781	£1,530 - £781	N/A
Humberside	2020-21	22	£4,457.00	£11,137.00	£8,356.00	N/A	£561.00	N/A
Cheshire	2020-21	23	£4,274.68	£14,062.86	£7,032.51	£1,081.93	£2,813.01 - £1,622.88	£540.96
Nottinghamshire	2020-21	18	£3,895.60	£23,231.32	£16,592.93	£2,597.31	£2,597.31	N/A
Leicestershire	2020-21	17	£3,309.00	£9,965.00	£3,350.00	£1,919.00	£1,919.00	N/A
Derbyshire	2019-20	16	£3,187.50	£14,000.00	£8,400.00	£3,000.00	£3,000 - £800	N/A
Lancashire	2020-21	25	£2,918.77	£16,949.80	£8,476.03	£4,238.01 - £3,390.41	£2,118.45 - £1,059.22	£1,059.22
Cleveland	2020-21	16	£2,238.00	£8,952.00	£4,476.00	N/A	£2,797.00	N/A
Avon	2019-20	20	£1,542.00	£9,127.00	£2,107.00	£2,107.00	£1,054.00	N/A
Kent	2020-21	25	£1,511.66	£19,823.93	£7,929.57	£5,947.17	N/A	N/A
Hereford and Worcester	2020-21	25	£1,165.00	£9,049.68	£5,429.76	£1,357.44	£1,357.44	N/A
Hertfordshire	2020-21	25	£1,165.00	£9,049.68	£5,429.76	£1,357.44	£1,357.44	N/A
Above data sorted by level of Basic Allowance								
South Wales*	2020-21	24	£2,005.00	£10,705.00	£5,705.00	N/A	£5,705.00	N/A

\* Allowances for Chair, Deputy Chair and Committee Chairs are inclusive of the basic allowance

This page is intentionally left blank

## **Introduction**

- 9.1 In making a Members' Allowances Scheme the Fire Authority is required to comply with certain parts of and regulations within the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
- 9.2 A Members' Allowances Scheme must make provision for the payment of a Basic Allowance which is a sum payable to every Member. It may make provision for various other payments, e.g. Special Responsibility Allowance, Dependants' Carers' Allowance and Travelling and Subsistence Allowance
- 9.3 A Members' Allowances Scheme must be made before the beginning of each year that it applies to. It can contain a provision for an annual adjustment of Members' Allowances by reference to an index. Such an index can be relied upon for a period of four years.
- 9.4 When making its Members' Allowances Scheme the Fire Authority is required to have regard to the recommendations of the independent remuneration panels of the local authorities that appoint its Members.
- 9.5 The Fire Authority undertakes a review of the Members' Allowances Scheme every four years. The review is supported by an individual that provides an independent view.
- 9.6 Each Member of the Fire Authority is paid a Basic Allowance which is the same amount for each Member. Special Responsibility Allowances are also payable for certain roles, e.g. Chair and Deputy Chair of the Fire Authority.
- 9.7 The Authority has made provision in its Members' Allowances Scheme for reimbursing Members for the cost of travel and subsistence in performing their duties. Such claims must relate to meetings and duties that are considered to be 'Approved Duties'. These are prescribed in the Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 9.8 Further information about the Scheme can be obtained from the Governance and Corporate Planning Manager, Fire Service HQ, Winsford, Cheshire.

## **Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22**

Note:

A Member cannot receive an allowance from the Fire Authority if another authority is paying that Member for the same duties.

### **Basic Allowance**

- 1 Each Member of the Fire Authority shall receive a sum of **£4,274.68** per annum in the form of a Basic Allowance from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. Payment of this Allowance shall be monthly in arrears.

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

- 2 The following roles shall attract a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) in the sums specified:

Office	2021/22 Entitlement £
Chair of the CFA	14,062.86
Deputy Chair of the CFA	7,032.51
Chair of Performance and Overview Committee	2,813.01
Chair of Governance and Constitution Committee	1,622.88
Chair of Estates and Property Committee	1,622.88
Business Continuity Leads (Group Spokespersons and Lead Members of Constituent Authorities)	1,081.93
Member Champions (includes Chair of Member Training & Development Group; and Risk Management Board Members)	540.96

- 3 [Only one SRA shall be paid to an individual Member. Where a Member holds two, or more positions which attract an SRA only the higher, or highest amount will be paid. This excludes regional appointments.]

### **Regional Appointments**

- 4 Members appointed to the North West Fire Forum will receive a payment of £36.50 per meeting attended.

### **Independent (non-elected) members**

- 5 Independent (non-elected) members will receive an annual allowance of **£1252.25**.

### **Independent Persons**

- 6 Independent Persons will receive a payment of £36.50 per meeting attended and re-imbursment of expenses incurred (travel/subsistence).

## **Travel, Subsistence and Other Allowances**

### **Travel**

- 7 Members may claim travel expenses for mileage to and from meetings/ events associated with the Fire Authority at the prevailing HMRC rate (currently 45p per mile).

### **Subsistence**

- 8 As a general rule lunch and other refreshments for meetings held at Fire Service HQ and other Service establishments are provided free of charge and, therefore, no claim for any allowance or reimbursement can be made. This may also include meals/refreshments provided at conferences/ seminars/meetings free of charge at other non Service venues.

- 9 For meetings where refreshments are not provided and Members are required to pay for meals, the actual expenditure will be reimbursed up to a maximum rate. At present these rates are as follows:-

Breakfast	£7
Lunch	£9
Dinner	£15
Dinner (London)	£20

If it is unavoidable and Members need to book their own accommodation the following rates are the maximum that will be paid:

Hotel	£100
Hotel (London)	£120

### **Dependents' Carers' Allowance**

- 10 A Dependents' Carers' allowance is payable to Members where actual costs are incurred for the care of dependent relatives whilst discharging their approved duties for the Fire Authority.

The Dependents' Carers' Allowance will be paid up to a maximum of [£3000] per annum and in reimbursement of incurred expenditure upon submission of receipts.

### **Annual Increase - Index**

- 11 The Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and allowance payable to the independent non-elected members shall be increased by the same percentage increase as the NJC pay award for Local Government employees (Green Book staff).

The increases shall apply from the same date as the pay increases take effect and will be backdated, if necessary.

This index shall apply for four years (up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) unless the Scheme is amended.

## **CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY: LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES**

Attendance at:

- Meetings of the Fire Authority, Committees, Sub-Committees, Special Committees, Panels, Boards, Forums and Working/Task Groups
- Authorised briefings for Committees/Sub-Committees including all meetings which are called by officers e.g. Members Planning Days and pre-meeting briefings
- All approved conferences and seminars
- Regional Bodies - North West Fire Forum, NW Fire Control Ltd Board of Directors and associated working groups
- National Bodies – LGA Fire Commission and associated working groups
- Member Learning and Development Events (including e.g. induction and cluster exercises)

In addition to the above, Members attend other functions to represent the Fire Authority and in these circumstances these will normally be regarded as approved duties for the purpose of the Members' Allowances Scheme. If there is any doubt about this the Monitoring Officer will provide a ruling.

## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2021  
**REPORT OF:** DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING  
**AUTHOR:** ANDREW LEADBETTER

---

**SUBJECT:** REVIEW INTO THE WAY THAT SEATS ON  
CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY ARE ALLOCATED  
TO THE CONSTITUENT AUTHORITIES

---

### Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with information about the review.

### Recommended: That Members

[1] note the report.

### Background

2. This Committee received an initial report about this matter on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The Minute appears below:

*The Director of Governance and Commissioning introduced a report which required Members to consider how to deal with requests from Warrington Borough Council concerned with the allocation of seats on the Fire Authority. He explained the current process for the allocation of seats and requirements contained in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Cheshire Fire Service's (Combination Scheme). He advised that changing the approach to seat allocation could require secondary legislation. The Director gave an example of how different total seat numbers impacted upon seat allocations.*

*A Member queried why the current total number of seats was 23. The Director of Governance and Commissioning advised that the Fire Authority had been made up of 23 seats since local government reorganisation in 2009. The Combination Scheme did not state a specific total number of seats. However, it was drafted in such a way that suggested that having more than 25 seats would be exceptional.*

*Members were reminded that a few fire authorities had reduced their total seat numbers and that the current model for fire governance involving Police and Crime Commissioners was being reviewed.*

*Members agreed that the Director of Governance and Commissioning should take into account the requests by Warrington Borough Council during the*

*review. They stated that it was important to consult all of the constituent authorities at the appropriate time.*

**RESOLVED:** *That*

*[1] the Director of Governance and Commissioning proceed with the review and report back in due course.*

## **Information**

3. Since July, there has been further engagement with all of the constituent authorities, which has allowed the terms of reference of the review to be finalised.
4. The terms of reference are set out below:
  - The independent reviewer will consider the existing method for allocating seats on Cheshire Fire Authority taking into account the relevant paragraphs of the [Combination] Scheme.
  - The independent reviewer is encouraged to indicate if there is an alternative method which could deliver a better result, bearing in mind the representations made on behalf of the constituent authorities.
  - The independent reviewer is asked to provide guidance on the process.

The review is not concerned with a change to the [Combination] Scheme.

5. Members will note the reference to an independent reviewer. A Monitoring Officer from a fire and rescue service has agreed to carry out the review.
6. The outcome of the review will be available in good time for the next meeting of this Committee. This will allow Members to decide whether to make recommendations to the Fire Authority which is due to consider this matter on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

## **Financial Implications**

7. There could be financial implications if a decision were to lead to an increase in the number of members of the Fire Authority. However, the sum involved will be small.

## **Legal Implications**

8. The Fire Authority's Combination Scheme describes the method for allocating seats on the Fire Authority. Paragraph 12 of the Scheme states:

*Each constituent authority shall, so far as is practicable, appoint such number of representatives to be members of the Authority as is proportionate to the number of local government electors in its area in relation to the number of such electors in each of the other constituent authorities' areas.*

9. The Scheme is the same as the schemes of other combined authorities. The Scheme could only be changed through secondary legislation.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

10. There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

### **Environmental Implications**

11. There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

**CONTACT: DONNA LINTON, GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING  
MANAGER**

**TEL [01606] 868804**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

The Cheshire Fire Services (Combination Scheme) Order 1997 [as amended on  
Local Government Reorganisation in 2008]

This page is intentionally left blank

## CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

**MEETING OF:** GOVERNANCE AND CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE  
**DATE:** 27<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2021  
**REPORT OF:** HEAD OF FINANCE  
**AUTHOR:** WENDY BEBBINGTON

---

**SUBJECT:** ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2019-20  
ACTION PLAN UPDATE

---

### **Purpose of Report**

1. To present a progress update on the Annual Governance Statement (AGS) 2019-20 Action Plan.

### **Recommended: that**

- [1] Members note the attached progress update.

### **Background**

2. Production of an AGS is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015 and helps to ensure that a reliable system of internal controls can be demonstrated.
3. The areas for action were identified and subsequently contained in the AGS 2019-20. Officers prepared an Action Plan and the document which is attached to this report as Appendix 1 provides information about progress in each of the areas for action.

### **Financial Implications**

4. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Legal Implications**

5. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### **Equality and Diversity and Environmental Implications**

6. There are no differential impacts on any particular section of the community arising from this report.

## **Environmental Implications**

7. There are no specific impacts on the environment arising from this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE**

## Annual Governance Statement – Action Plan 2019/20

Areas for Action	Action	Action Owner	Action Progress Update – January 2021
<p><b>Coronavirus</b> The Service has, like all organisations, been significantly impacted by the pandemic. Whilst it has had very low sickness levels and seen no impact on its front-line operational capabilities, a range of its other core activities, e.g. prevention and protection, have been curtailed.</p>	<p>A robust recovery plan is being created, which will be communicated and delivered as appropriate.</p>	<p>Service Management Team (SMT)</p>	<p>The ingredients of a recovery plan exist. The plan will be finalised taking into account the most up-to-date information when the time is right to begin the recovery phase. For example, an Interim Debrief Document will be updated and used to inform how recovery is effected, as will relevant risk assessments. Alongside the recovery plan work has been carried out to inform the Service’s approach to agile/flexible working.</p>
	<p>The Medium Term Financial Plan will need to be updated regularly as the financial scenario becomes clearer.</p>	<p>Treasurer and Head of Finance</p>	<p>The MTFP has been updated to reflect the impact of the pandemic on national and local funding. This remains a fluid situation and is closely monitored – further updated will be undertaken as and when further significant changes occur.</p>
<p><b>Nationally-led Change</b> The fire and rescue sector is anticipating significant change in the near future. HMICFRS inspections and events like the Grenfell Tower tragedy have created an interest in fire and rescue services and an impetus for change.</p>	<p>The Service Management Team will monitor developments and allocate responsibility to appropriate officers. The teams that are impacted will be suitably resourced in order to respond effectively</p>	<p>Service Management Team (SMT)</p>	<p>The service has appointed additional staff to manage the operational and policy implications of Grenfell and a protection specialist to complete the Building Risk Review exercise required by MHCLG. A cross department working group manages actions derived from a gap analysis of the Grenfell phase 1 report and other associated aspects.</p>

			<p>Other fires of national significance receive similar scrutiny and any gaps in provision are then identified and actions taken to deliver improvements. The Cube fire is one such incident.</p> <p>The Organisational Performance team manage an action plan drawn up to address the 'areas for improvement' identified by HMICFRS in the Service's round 1 report. Best practice from other services is considered wherever this is relevant.</p> <p>Additionally the service continues to monitor the wider implementation of the fire reform program contributing to, and informing change where possible and otherwise adapting to new requirements as necessary.</p>
<p><b>Collaborations</b>                  Whilst an action plan was created to respond to the area for improvement, not all aspects have been completed at this point, e.g. not all key collaborations have been assessed</p>	<p>To complete the actions contained in the action plan and embed the practices that are required in order to support the effective delivery of activities carried out through collaboration.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Director of                  Governance                  and                  Commissioning</p>	<p>There has been steady progress with the work associated with this area for improvement. All key collaborations are subject to some kind of monitoring, evaluation and review. The kind and extent of the monitoring etc. will depend upon the type of collaborative activity. A summary of the monitoring etc. is considered at regular intervals by Service Management Team and/or Members. This will ensure that the monitoring etc. is happening and it will provide a chance for there to be challenge and improvement. Ultimately, all collaborative activity will be subject to this regime.</p>