

---

## **ALLOWANCES PAID TO MEMBERS DURING 2014/15**

**Report by Chief Executive**

---

**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**25 June 2015**

---

### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the information on allowances paid to Members during 2014/15 to be published on the Council's website to meet the publicity requirements of the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses)(Scotland) Regulations 2007.**
- 1.2 The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Regulations 2007, as amended, and the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses)(Scotland) Regulations 2007, as amended, specify the levels of salary, allowances and reimbursement of expenses which may be paid to local authority Elected Members. Councillors' salaries were increased by 1% from 1 April 2014 in accordance with The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2013 and therefore the annual amount payable to each Councillor increased from £16,396 to £16,560 per annum, unless he or she was entitled to one of the higher amounts payable to the Leader of the Council, the Convener or to Senior Councillors. It should be noted that where a higher payment is made that is instead of the £16,560 and not in addition to this amount.
- 1.3 The number and designation of Senior Councillors was agreed in the Scheme of Remuneration at the meeting of Scottish Borders Council held on 24 May 2012, and then amended at the meeting of Council on 30 August 2012 to take account of changes to the Scheme of Administration. Detailed in Appendix 1 to this report is the remuneration and expenses paid to all Councillors from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. Detailed in Appendix 2 is Members' attendance at training events, conferences and seminars in 2014/15.
- 1.4 Total remuneration and expenses paid to Members in 2014/15 amounted to £757,172.75 compared with a total of £752,385.43 in 2013/14. Travel expenses total £54,835.65 in 2014/15, compared to the 2013/14 figure of £62,370.70. The cost of Telephone and ICT Expenses in 2014/15 amounted to £37,067.17 compared to £35,885.77 in 2013/14.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend that the Council notes that the information in the Appendices to this report has been published on the Council's website, in order to meet the publicity requirements of the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses)(Scotland) Regulations 2007.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Regulations 2007, as amended, and the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses)(Scotland) Regulations 2007, as amended, specify the levels of salary, allowances and reimbursement of expenses which may be paid to local authority Elected Members.
- 3.2 Members' salaries were increased by 1% from 1 April 2014 in accordance with The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2013 and therefore the annual amount payable to each Councillor increased from £16,396 to £16,560 per annum, unless he or she was entitled to one of the higher amounts payable to the Leader of the Council, the Convener or to Senior Councillors. It should be noted that where a higher payment is made that is instead of the £16,560 and not in addition to this amount.
- 3.3 The number and designation of Senior Councillors was agreed in the Scheme of Remuneration at the meeting of Scottish Borders Council held on 24 May 2012 with the rates agreed subsequently increased in accordance with details in paragraph 3.2 above as well as a 1% increase effective from 1 April 2013. During 2014/15 the Convener received £24,842 per annum and the Leader received £33,123.00 per annum (as per the Regulations). The Depute Leader (Finance) received £24,842 per annum; the Vice Convener (Community Planning) received £22,442 per annum, as did the following Senior Councillors designated Executive Members for Social Work & Housing; Education; HR and Corporate Improvement; Roads and Infrastructure; Planning and Environment; Environmental Services; Economic Development; Culture, Sport, Youth and Communities; and Community Safety. A further 2 Senior Councillor posts were also designated – Convener of the Licensing Board, and Leader of the Opposition – and received £20,146 per annum. The Executive Member for Health Services (the additional funding for which is made by NHS Borders) is appointed as an additional Depute Leader with no further remuneration allocated to this role.

### **4 ALLOWANCES PAID DURING 2014/15**

- 4.1 Detailed in Appendix 1 to this report is the remuneration and expenses paid to all Councillors from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The format of the Appendix is prescribed in the Local Government (Allowances and Expenses) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2010 and the total amounts to £757,172.75. In 2013/14, this amount was £752,385.43.
- 4.2 The total amount of remuneration paid to Councillors in 2014/15 increased to £659,844.56 compared to £648,566.29 in 2013/14. This increase was due to the 1% rise from 1 April 2014 and also because two positions were vacant for short periods during 2013/14 due to the resignation of Councillor Buckingham and the sad death of Councillor Elliot.
- 4.3 Travel expenses totalled £54,835.65 in 2014/15, compared to the 2013/14 figure of £62,370.70. This is a reduction on last year but this figure is expected to fluctuate year on year as claims are based on actual journeys made as well as the timing of claims. The amount any one Councillor claims also varies depending on whether they hold a Senior Councillor role and the distance they live from Council Headquarters.

- 4.4 The cost of Telephone and ICT Expenses in 2014/15 amounted to £37,067.17 compared to £35,885.77 in 2013/14. These costs include blackberries, mobile phones, telephone and broadband connections, and any electronic tablets, which this financial year has included the ipad trial and then the further distribution of ipads to Members at the end of the year.

## **5 TRAINING EVENTS AND CONFERENCES**

- 5.1 Detailed in Appendix 2 is Members' attendance at training events, conferences and seminars in 2014/15, in the format recommended by the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee. Fees, accommodation and travel (other than by car/van or public transport) for attendance are generally paid directly by the Council. Mileage and public transport costs to attend these events is claimed by the individual Member and included in Appendix 1 to this report. There is a decrease in the amount spent in 2014/15 (£5,133.65) compared to 2013/14 (£7,441.25). Again, this figure is expected to fluctuate year on year. As part of their CPD, Councillors undertake refresher training related to specific committees e.g. Audit, Planning and Building Standards, etc. on an ongoing basis and this tends to be carried out in-house so there is no direct cost. Some of this training also takes place as part of the business of committee, and is not recorded separately and not therefore included in the appendix. Training was also carried out with Members on using ipads and also the new committee software package (Modern.gov) which replaced the previous system (CoInS).
- 5.2 Work on developing a more structured training programme for Members is underway. All Councillors have been given the opportunity to participate in a CPD assessment and programme supported by the Improvement Service. One of the political Groups is pursuing this on a pilot basis and it is intended to roll this out to others during 2014/15. The results of the assessments and individual interviews with Members will be used to put together a structured development programme for Members in the current financial year.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to the recommendation in this report as it details the actual expenditure made in the last financial year which were contained within the budget.

### **6.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The information contained in this report, together with the associated publication of the information on the Council's website, is intended to advise stakeholders of the allowances and expenses payments to Members, thus ensuring transparency and openness.

### **6.3 Equalities**

There is no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the recommendation in this report.

### **6.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no effects on the economy, community or environment arising from the recommendation in this report.

## 6.5 Carbon Management

While there will be an impact on the Borders' carbon footprint from Councillor travel, where possible Members share transport and keep travel to a minimum. Due to the geographic spread of the Borders, travel is a factor in the duties of Councillors

## 6.6 Rural Proofing

There is no adverse impact on the rural area from the recommendation in this report.

## 6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the recommendation in this report.

## 7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, and the Chief Officer HR have been consulted on this report. The Corporate Communications Unit has also been advised of the content.

### Approved by

Chief Executive

Signature .....

### Author(s)

Name	Designation and Contact Number
Jenny Wilkinson	Clerk to the Council 01835 825004
Gary Alexander	HRSS Business Partner 01835 826717

**Background Papers:** Members Travel Claims; Invoices

**Previous Minute Reference:** Scottish Borders Council, 26 June 2014

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Jenny Wilkinson can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at Jenny Wilkinson, Democratic Services, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose, TD6 0SA. Tel: 01835 825004 Email: [jjwilkinson@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:jjwilkinson@scotborders.gov.uk)