

	Full Council 23 February 2026
	Report from the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources
	Lead Member – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources (Councillor Mili Patel)
Members Allowance Scheme Annual Review 2026-27	

Wards Affected:	All Wards
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Council
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1 Member Allowances
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Amira Nassr Deputy Director - Democratic & Corporate Governance 020 8937 5436 amira.nassr@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 A Members' Allowance Scheme, which sets out the allowances Members are entitled to receive for carrying out their responsibilities has to be made for the 2026-27 Financial Year.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That Full Council:

2.1 Considers and approves the Members Allowance Scheme in the proposed terms set out within this report for the 2026-27 Financial Year.

2.2 Authorises the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources to comply with the statutory requirements to publicise the Council's Members' Allowance Scheme.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1.1 The Members' Allowance scheme contributes to the delivery of the Borough Plan priorities by reducing financial barriers to public service, so as to enable a wide range of people to become a councillor and be recompensed for the time they devote to their role and to the responsibilities they carry.

3.2 Background

- 3.2.1 Brent Council's Members' Allowance Scheme (which is included in the Council's Constitution at Part 6 and is published on the Council's website) was subject to full formal review at the Annual Council Meeting in 2018 and since then has been subject to ongoing annual review at each of the Council's budget setting meetings.
- 3.2.2 These reviews have been informed by the last available reports from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for London Councils. The latest review and report undertaken by the IRP (entitled "[The Remuneration of Councillors in London 2023 – Report of the Independent Panel](#)") was published in December 2023. (As the Panel usually meets every four years, the Panel is next due in 2027.) As noted in the report, the review aimed to seek wider consultation than previously, using qualitative and quantitative research to underpin its findings and recommendations.
- 3.2.3 The Borough Allowance Scheme for 2024-25 was published, but London Councils acknowledged their reports are published too late for some councils, and that some councils end up applying the previous year's pay increase.
- 3.2.4 It should be noted that whilst the Panel makes recommendations, each council determines its own remuneration scheme for its own councillors, having regard to the Panel's recommendations.
- 3.2.5 The 2023 IRP report recognised the importance of the role played by elected members not only in terms of their representational role but also given the increasing challenges and demands in managing the delivery of local services and on the allocation of financial resources. The report highlighted the increasingly difficult and complex nature of choices and work faced by local councillors in terms of managing these challenges and increasing level of demand on services. In addition, reference was made to the growth in other public sector activities, increasing expectations for closer working with partners such as the health services and the voluntary sector, as well the growing role of councillors acting as a point of information, advice and reassurance for local communities. The report also recognised the increasing expectations of the public in terms of access to their local councillors supported by the growth in digital connectivity, social media etc. as well as the resettlement of refugees and the ongoing housing crisis.
- 3.2.6 The report highlighted the importance of allowances being pitched at an appropriate level so that they make a major contribution in ensuring diverse and effective local representation.

- 3.2.7 Over the period of 01 May to 31 December 2025, councillors have logged over 6,388 Members Enquiries (of which, 1990 were for housing) on behalf of their constituents, organised in the region of 440 surgeries and cumulatively attended over 83 council meetings.
- 3.2.8 Whilst considering the above factors, the Council must remain conscious of the financial challenges faced by local authorities.
- 3.2.9 It is for Full Council to make a scheme for the payment of allowances to its members specifying the amount of entitlement by way of basic allowance (which is mandatory) and other allowances (which are discretionary). Such a scheme has to be in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Council is required to have regard to the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
- 3.2.10 The scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Annual Uplift

- 3.2.11 Brent's Members Allowance Scheme states that Basic, Special and Civic allowances "shall be increased with effect from each April, by a percentage equal to the inflation pay award agreed as part of the Local Government Pay Settlement in the previous financial year, unless otherwise determined by the Council". In 2025, the decision was made to increase the basic allowance by 2.5% increasing it to £13,978.
- 3.2.12 We have undertaken some general benchmarking with a range of London boroughs and note that, while some authorities offer higher allowances, their member group sizes vary significantly and, in many cases, are larger than ours. These variations make direct, like-for-like comparisons difficult and limit the applicability of their allowance structures to Brent. Based on the sample, Brent's current basic allowance is £13,978, compared to a London median of ~£12,580 (range £7,500–£16,359), placing Brent in the upper quartile of boroughs (5th of 32).
- 3.2.13 In light of the above and given Brent's current financial challenges and the need to prioritise essential services, we are not proposing an uplift of the Basic Allowance or an automatic linkage to staff pay at this time.

Special Responsibility Allowances

- 3.2.14 The annual review has also included consideration of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payments.
- 3.2.15 Similar benchmarking has been carried out for SRAs, which again vary significantly across councils. Brent's SRA for the Chair of Planning (£14,858) sits above boroughs such as Barnet (£9,051) and Bexley (£9,720), and broadly aligns with Camden (£11,859), while remaining significantly lower

than the atypically high rate paid by Wandsworth (£30,410). A similar pattern is seen for the Chair of Audit, where Brent's allowance is again consistent with regional norms and compares reasonably with authorities such as Camden (£9,834) and Tower Hamlets (£6,526).

3.2.16 It is also recommended that no changes in the current level of SRAs payable under the scheme are made.

3.2.17 The figures are reflected in Appendix 1.

4.0 Publicity

4.1 As soon as reasonably practicable after the making or amendment of a Scheme, copies of the Scheme have to be made available for inspection at the Civic Centre and a notice has to be published in a local newspaper. It is recommended that the Corporate Director of Finance & Resources be authorised to comply with these requirements.

5. Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

5.1 The outcome of the annual review has been subject to consultation with members of the Constitution Working Group.

6.0 Financial Considerations

6.1 The actual overall cost of the payment of allowances depends on which Members are appointed to the roles where an SRA is received, as only one such allowance is payable irrespective of the number of roles held. At the end of each financial year, the payments made to each Member are published in accordance with statutory rules.

7.0 Legal Considerations

7.1 The Council's Members' Allowance Scheme must comply with the relevant provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003; the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Government Act 2000. In adopting or amending the scheme the Council is required to have due regard to the report published by its Remuneration Panel, which is the IRP appointed by London Councils.

7.2 The basic allowance for all members and the Special Responsibility Allowances are consistent with the recommendations of The Remuneration of Councillors in London 2023 – Report of the Independent Panel, to which the council must have regard.

8.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

8.1 Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council has a duty when exercising their functions to have 'due regard' to the need:

a) To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and

- other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- b) Advance equality of opportunity; and
- c) Foster good relations between those who share a “protected characteristic” and those who do not.

8.2 This is the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The ‘protected characteristics’ are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

8.3 The purpose of the duty is to enquire into whether a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic. In other words, the indirect discriminatory effects of a proposed decision. Due regard is the regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances.

8.4 This report outlines the allowances for all Members for 2026-27. As the allowances are the same for all Members, irrespective of their background, there are no equality, diversity or inclusion implications for the proposals within this paper.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

9.1 None.

10.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

10.1 None.

11.0 Communication Considerations

11.1 None.

Report sign off:

Minesh Patel
Corporate Director, Finance & Resources