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**Report To:** Full Council

**Date:** 18 November 2024

**Contact Officer:** Paula Harrison

**Subject:** Swindon Parish Independent Remuneration Panel

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## 1. Background

1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 state that:

- Parish councils may choose to pay their members an allowance, known as 'parish basic allowance', to recognise the time and effort they put in to their parish duties.
- Each parish council may make an allowance available to its Chair only, or to each of its members.
- Where all members receive an allowance, the amount payable to the chair may be different to that paid to other members, but otherwise the amount paid to each member must be the same.
- Parish basic allowance is a discretionary allowance. It may be paid in a lump sum, or at intervals throughout the year.

1.2 Councillor allowances are established to encourage and enable members of the public to stand for public office with the benefit of an allowance that assists with the costs of the role such as telephone, travel, printing, childcare etc.

1.3 Swindon Borough Council convenes an Independent Panel to review the formula for establishing allowance amounts and this Panel makes recommendations for each Parish Council. The Panel have used a formula (based on a percentage of the Borough Council's Basic Allowance and electorate populations) to create a single recommendation in the form of a scale of allowances that could be applied to all parish and town councils in the Borough. The Independent Panel Recommendation for West Swindon Parish recommended in the report is as follows

Parish	Electors (Nov 2024)	Parish Electorate Band	% of SBC Allowance per band	Parish Cllr Allowance	Parish Chair Allowance
West Swindon	19,460	17,500-19,999	20%	£1,888	£3,776

1.4 In the previous financial year, it was agreed that Councillor allowances would rise at the average rate of staff salaries, which for that year was an average of 7%. In the current financial year, allowances are

Councillor Annual Allowance    £535

Chair Annual Allowance            £1605

- 1.5      The Councillor allowances for West Swindon Parish are well below the amount recommended by the Panel.

## **2. Financial Considerations**

- 2.1      The budget allocation for Councillor Allowances is currently £8000. Whilst generally not all Councillors choose to claim an allowance, the budget for the year should be sufficient to allow for Councillors to claim if they so choose. Allowances are paid to nine Councillors.

## **3. Recommendation:**

- 3.1      That Council considers the information and confirms the individual allowance amount for Councillors and the Chair for 2025-26, to be paid monthly alongside staff payroll.

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