



QUADRENNIAL REVIEW OF TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES



**East Kent Joint Independent
Parish Remuneration Panel**

December 2025

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Section One

Foreword by the Chairman

*An introduction by Kenneth London, Chairman of the East
Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel*

Chairman's Foreword

Since 2003 the law has required that an independent panel is established to recommend the amount of allowance that might be applied to the duties of elected members of the town and parish councils. The East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel has therefore been established and tasked with determining a reasonable level of remuneration for the period 2026 to 2030.

The level of response by town and parish councils to the invitation for comments on this review was low, possibly due to the number of parishes that choose not to pay a Parish or Chairman's Basic Allowance. However, the comments that were received have been carefully considered, and the Panel has recommended that a fourth remuneration band for towns and parishes with an electorate over 30,000 should be added. It has also recommended that the percentage rates for each band should be increased by 4.5% to reflect the average rate of inflation over the last four years.

Since the last review in 2021 there have been increased pressures on household budgets caused by various factors including a global energy/fuel crisis, demand and supply chain disruption and domestic inflation. The cumulative effect of rising prices means that households face a much higher cost of living now than they did in 2021. The recommended uplift to allowance levels recognises the impact these have had (and continue to have) on councillors' household expenditure, particularly in relation to utilities.

It should be noted that city/district councils do not necessarily pay the full rates of allowances recommended by the Panel, and it is recognised that town and parish councils may not wish to pay the full levels either. In fact, at the time of writing, only a small minority of councils pay any Parish Basic and/or Chairman's Allowances, although some do pay Civic Allowances (the setting of which falls outside the remit of the Panel). Nevertheless, it is the Panel's duty to suggest a fair level of remuneration for the duties undertaken and responsibilities placed upon town and parish councillors, and the Panel believes that this report and its recommendations are a reasonable assessment. Ultimately, it is up to individual councils to decide what they want, or can afford, to pay their councillors.

This will potentially be the last parish review conducted by the Panel in its current configuration with the potential changes arising from Local Government Reorganisation expected to come into effect from 2028. In respect of the proposals submitted by Canterbury City Council

(Option 4b), Dover District Council and Thanet District Council (both Option 4d), it is noted that all have expressed support for unitary models that group the three authorities together. Whilst the Panel does not know what the final form of Local Government Reorganisation for East Kent will look like, it is felt that this review will provide a solid basis for the next review in 2029, regardless of whether this or another Panel is undertaking it. Should town and parish councils take on additional responsibilities previously undertaken at district/city level post-unitarisation, this will need to be factored into the 2029 review.

The methodology supporting the recommendations of the Panel is set out in this document and a summary of the recommendations is provided at Section 4.

I commend this report to the officers and members of the town and parish councils within the areas of Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council and Thanet District Council.

Kenneth London
Chairman

Section Two

The East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel

*The membership and Terms of Reference of the East Kent
Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel*

East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel is appointed by, and acts in accordance with, the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended). The regulations stipulate that the Panel should be a minimum of three members who cannot be serving officers or councillors of a local authority covered by the Panel.
- 1.2 The membership of the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (EKJIRP) currently comprises two members appointed by each of the participating councils which are Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council, Folkestone & Hythe District Council and Thanet District Council.
- 1.3 In addition to setting allowances for district councils, the East Kent Joint Independent Remuneration Panel is required to convene as the East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel to recommend allowances for the town and parish councils within the areas covered by the authorities named at paragraph 1.2. However, please note that Folkestone & Hythe District Council was not a member of EKJIRP at the time of the review and its towns and parishes are therefore not included.
- 1.4 The Panel currently consists of the following members (with one vacancy for Folkestone & Hythe District Council):

Kenneth London (Chairman)

Kenneth is a retired Local Government civil engineer and Chairman of the Kent Courts Board.

Sophie Chadwick

Sophie is a senior manager at Canterbury Christ Church University with experience in both the public and private sectors.

Alan Goodall

Alan is a retired Civil Servant (UK Border Force) and former Independent Chairman of Dover District Council's Standards Committee. Following retirement, he worked as a funeral director and now acts as a funeral celebrant.

David Irvine

David is a retired agronomist and agricultural consultant. He now serves as an Independent Person or Independent Remuneration Panel member on several local authorities and mayoral bodies.

Sue Longden

Sue is a retired management accountant who spent 30 years working in Local Government. She now volunteers as a part-time generalist adviser for Citizens' Advice.

Kerry Sabin-Dawson

Kerry is a qualified teacher who also volunteers with many wildlife organisations including Kent Wildlife Trust, WWF and the RSPB.

Astrid Weekes

Astrid has over 21 years' experience as an auditor in Local Government and serves as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Mid Sussex District Council.

2. Terms of Reference

2.1 The Panel is required under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) to produce a report containing recommendations for an allowance scheme as follows:

- *To recommend the amount of Parish Basic Allowance payable to councillors;*
- *To recommend the amount of Chairman's Parish Basic Allowance payable to the chairman of the council;*
- *To recommend the amount of Travel and Subsistence allowance payable to the chairman of the town/parish council and/or to all of its members; and*

- *To determine whether to recommend the same levels of parish basic allowance and parish travel and subsistence allowance to all the authorities in respect of which it was established.*

2.2 The Panel may make recommendations on allowances for a period of up to four years.

2.3 The Panel must express any recommendation in respect of the Parish Basic Allowance as a percentage of the Basic Allowance paid to district/city councillors in the corresponding District or City Council and a monetary sum corresponding to that percentage. The percentage may be up to 100%.

3. Civic Dignitaries' Allowance

3.1 The Local Government Act 1972 permits the payment of an allowance to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (or Mayor and Deputy Mayor) of a town/parish council to meet the expenses of the office. The civic dignitaries' allowance falls outside the remit of the Panel and it will not therefore be making any recommendation in respect of it.

Section Three

Quadrennial Review for Town and Parish Councils

*The process and recommendations of the East Kent Joint
Independent Parish Remuneration Panel for 2026-2030*

Quadrennial Review for Town and Parish Councils

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Panel is aware that the majority of town and parish councils do not pay any allowances to their elected members and that the receipt of allowances is not a motivating factor for members of the public wishing to stand for office and represent their communities. However, it is also conscious that the payment of an allowance could make the difference to some people in being able to afford to stand for office. Consideration has therefore been given to the impact that the proposed allowance levels could have in this respect.
- 1.2 It is of course for each town and parish council to determine whether it wishes to implement allowances for its elected members and the level that it sets them at, subject to the council taking into consideration the recommendations of the Panel in making that decision.

2. Methodology of Review

- 2.1 The East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel initiated the Quadrennial Review of allowances for town and parish councils in March 2025 by writing to all the towns and parishes within the boundaries of Canterbury City, Dover District and Thanet District Councils, inviting them to give their views, with a deadline for responses of 31 May 2025.
- 2.2 The Panel considered the limited number of responses received: of the 72 parishes contacted, only 15 responded (with 7 of those offering no comments). The only responses of a substantive nature came from Ramsgate Town Council, Sholden Parish Council, Whitfield Parish Council and from a long-serving councillor who is a member of both Guston and Whitfield Parish Councils.
- 2.3 A summary of consultation responses is included in Appendix 2 at Section 5.

3. **PARISH BASIC ALLOWANCE**

Introduction

- 3.1 The Basic Allowance is a discretionary allowance *'intended to recognise the time commitment of councillors, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents...It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of their homes.'*¹
- 3.2 However, the original guidance on Members' Allowances for England stated that *'it is important that some element of the work of members continues to be voluntary – that some hours are not remunerated. This must be balanced against the need to ensure that financial loss is not suffered by elected members.'*
- 3.3 The regulations permit the Parish Basic Allowance and the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance to be paid to elected members only, whilst the travel and subsistence allowance can be paid to elected, co-opted or appointed members.
- 3.4 In response to the consultation, Ramsgate Town and Sholden Parish Councils respectively have requested that the Basic Allowance be increased from £600 to £1,000 for councils currently in Band A (equivalent to a 66% increase) and from £150 to £200 for Band C councils (equivalent to a 33% increase). Whitfield Parish Council expressed concerns that the Band C Basic Allowance had not been increased since 2015 and that the Panel was therefore not following its own ongoing recommendation that allowances should be index-linked to parish council officer pay awards. (NB This is factually incorrect as the Panel recommended in 2021 that the Band C Basic Allowance should be increased from £140 to £150, an increase of 7%).

4. **Banding**

- 4.1 The evidence gathered by the Panel during its 2015-2019 review indicated a general correlation between the size of the electorate and the precept and activity levels of the town and parish council/councillors, with a few exceptions. The choice of using electorate over population numbers was based on the fact that accurate electorate

¹ ODPM Guidance EIM65960 – Local Government Councillors and Civic Dignitaries in England: Part One: Members' Allowances

figures are produced annually as opposed to the population census which is conducted only every 10 years.

4.2 On this basis, three bands were identified and a percentage allocated to each which equated to the relevant district/city council's Basic Allowance levels as follows:

- Band A: Electorate 20,000 upwards 12%
- Band B: Electorate 10,000 to 19,999 6%
- Band C: Electorate 9,999 and below 3%

These bands and percentages were maintained for the 2021-2025 review and equated to the following levels of Parish Basic Allowance recommended by the Panel in 2021:

- Band A (12%) - £600
- Band B (6%) - £300
- Band C (3%) - £150

4.3 As part of this year's consultation response, Whitfield Parish Council has commented that the current banding does not reflect the actual size or workload for some parishes like itself which have significant planned development and other issues, arguing that Whitfield should be in Band B irrespective of its electorate size.

4.4 Whilst the Panel acknowledges the case put forward by Whitfield Parish Council, it is the Panel's view that the principal factor governing the workload of town and parish councils is the size of the local electorate. There will always be variations in workload and casework complexity between parishes within the same band, but evidencing and quantifying these variations would be difficult. Allowing parishes to move between bands to reflect their heavier workload or the complexity of councillors' casework would be complicating a banding system which is currently clear and easy to understand. In any case, and most importantly, it is open to a town/parish council to pay whatever level of allowance it feels is appropriate, regardless of its band and the amount of allowance recommended by the Panel, if it believes that its councillors deserve additional compensation for their extra workload or responsibilities.

4.5 Ramsgate Town Council is the largest council in the area covered by the review with an electorate of 30,773. Folkestone & Hythe District Council rejoined EKJIRP on 1 June 2025. Folkestone Town Council has an electorate of 34,812 but is not covered by this review. Nevertheless, with the addition of a second parish with over 30,000 electors, it

is the Panel's view that an additional band should be created for these councils in recognition of the size and often greater complexity of their workload.

4.6 Adding an extra band for the two largest councils requires a review of the percentages allocated to each band. Having regard to the principle that allowances should be index-linked, it is recommended that the percentages used for each band should be increased by the average rate of inflation over the last four years (i.e. the period since the last review) which is approximately 4.5%².

4.7 With the 4.5% percentage applied (but rounded down for ease of calculation), the new banding and percentage structure would look like this:

- Band A (Electorate of 30,000 and above) 20%
- Band B (Electorate of 20,000 to 29,999) 15%
- Band C (Electorate of 10,000 to 19,999) 10%
- Band D (Electorate of 1 to 9,999) 5%

4.8 When determining the levels of Parish Basic Allowance for 2026-2030, a number of factors have been taken into account, including the average level of inflation since the last review, the comments from respondents concerning the increasing level of work being undertaken by town and parish councillors - particularly for the larger councils - and the historically low level of recommended allowance. As a consequence, a decision was made to remake the three-band model as a four-band model and to increase the percentages based on the district average significantly.

4.9 An idea that was rejected was simply to apply the average rate of inflation since the last review to the allowance levels previously recommended by the Panel. However, this resulted in a minimal increase that it was felt did not adequately reflect the work being done by town and parish councillors.

4.10 When the percentages stated at paragraph 4.7 are applied to the Basic Allowance currently paid by the three district/city authorities covered by this review, the figures are as follows:

² Based on Consumer Price Index data from the Office of National Statistics

Table 1: Parish Basic Allowance as a Percentage of a District's Basic Allowance

Local Authority	100% Basic Allowance	20% of District/City Basic	15% of District/City Basic	10% of District/City Basic	5% of District/City Basic
Canterbury	£6,638.27	£1,327.65	£995.74	£663.82	£331.91
Dover	£5,000	£1,000	£750	£500	£250
Thanet	£5,475	£1,095	£821.25	£547.50	£273.75
Average	£5,704	£1,140.88	£855.66	£570.44	£285.22

4.11 In line with previous reviews, the Panel has decided that the average of the allowances shown in Table 1 is the appropriate level to use as a benchmark across the three authority areas. Rounding the figures down for administrative ease results in the following recommended Parish Basic Allowance levels for the 2026-2030 period:

- Band A Parish (20%) - £1,140
- Band B Parish (15%) - £850 (41% increase on 2021-2025)
- Band C Parish (10%) - £570 (90% increase on 2021-2025)
- Band D Parish (5%) - £280 (86% increase on 2021-2025)

4.12 The proposed new levels will address concerns raised by parishes such as Whitfield and the councillor serving with Guston and Whitfield Parish Councils who believe that councillors are insufficiently compensated for the time and resources they invest in carrying out their town/parish council work. As stated elsewhere, the Panel's recommendations are not binding and parishes have discretion to pay as little or as much of the basic allowance proposed for their band. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of town and parish councils choose not to pay their councillors at all and, in all likelihood, will continue with that approach.

5. Voluntary Component

5.1 In reviewing the parish remuneration scheme for 2026-2030, the Panel has considered the application of a voluntary component principle, in line with the guidance on Members' Allowances for England. This is the principle that an important part of being a councillor is the desire to serve the public and, consequently, the allowances scheme should not recompense an elected member for 100% of their time. The Panel's view is that a Parish Basic Allowance should be recommended to town/parish councils given the time

commitment and responsibilities placed upon councillors. However, whilst providing a contribution towards incidental expenses such as telephone and broadband costs, postage and stationery, the overwhelming percentage of a councillor’s time should be given voluntarily and not remunerated, and there should be no opportunity for financial gain as a result of being a councillor.

5.2 The Panel considered whether there should be a differential between towns and parishes in different authority areas. However, it felt that there was no significant difference in workload or basic costs for town and parish councillors in different authorities other than due to variations between parishes of different sizes. It is therefore the Panel’s view that one Parish Basic Allowance should be applied to all parishes within each band, irrespective of local authority.

5.3 The following tables show the amount of Parish Basic Allowance recommended for each band for 2026-2030 and the actual percentage they represent of each District/City Council’s current Basic Allowance (remembering that the Panel’s final recommendations are based on the average of the three authorities’ basic allowances):

Table 2: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance (Band A)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Recommended Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
30,000+ (20%)	£1,140	17%	22.8%	20.8%

Table 3: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance (Band B)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Recommended Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
20,000-29,999 (15%)	£850	12%	17%	15%

Table 4: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance (Band C)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Recommended Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
10,000-19,999 (10%)	£570	8.5%	11.4%	10.4%

Table 5: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance (Band D)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Recommended Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
1-9,999 (5%)	£280	4.2%	5.6%	5.1%

- 5.4 If the electorate of a town/parish council increases or decreases sufficiently to move it from one remuneration band to another, the Panel recommends that the town/parish council recalculates its Parish Basic Allowance in line with the new banding.

6. PARISH CHAIRMAN'S BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 6.1 The Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance is designed to compensate the chairman of the town/parish council for the additional duties and responsibilities resulting from the position. As with the Parish Basic Allowance, the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance may only be paid to elected members of the authority.
- 6.2 In line with the approach taken for the 2021-2025 review, the Panel recommends that the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance should be a multiple of two of the Parish Basic Allowance. The Panel saw no reason to adjust the multiple this time given that only two parish councils mentioned the allowance in their responses and only then to comment that it should stay the same. Applying a multiple of two would result in the following Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance for 2026-2030:

Table 6: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance (Band A)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Chairman Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
30,000+	£2,280	34.3%	45.6%	41.6%

Table 7: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance (Band B)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Chairman Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>

20,000-29,999	£1,700	25.6%	34%	31%
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Table 8: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance (Band C)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Chairman Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
10,000-19,999	£1,140	17.17%	22.8%	20.8%

Table 9: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance (Band D)

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Chairman Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
1-9,999	£560	8.43%	11.2%	10.22%

6.3 The payment of a Chairman's Parish Basic Allowance does not preclude the payment of a civic allowance under the Local Government Act 1972, and the Panel recognises that most of the town councils make provision for a civic allowance which is on a par with or higher than the district/city council Basic Allowance.

6.4 The Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council should be treated as an ordinary member of the parish council and therefore only entitled to the Parish Basic Allowance.

7. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

7.1 Town and parish councils may pay discretionary allowances for travel and subsistence to councillors, both elected and co-opted, in respect of the following:

- Attending a meeting of the parish council;
- Attending a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the parish council;
- Attending a meeting of some other body to which the parish council makes appointments or nominations;
- Attending a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of some other body to which the parish council makes appointments or nominations;
- Duties undertaken on behalf of the parish council in pursuance of any standing order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened;
- Attending a meeting of a local authority association of which the parish council is a member;
- Duties undertaken on behalf of the parish council in connection with the discharge of any function of the parish council conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the parish council to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises; or
- Any other duty approved by the parish council in connection with discharging the duties of the parish council or its committees or sub-committees.

Travel

7.2 The regulations permit allowances to be paid for travel inside and outside the parish boundary. They also allow for non-motorised methods of transport (such as walking and cycling) to be remunerated within an allowances scheme. That said, it is noted that as part of the responses to the 2021-2025 review, some town/parish councils had opted to restrict the payment of allowances to travel undertaken outside the parish boundary only. The Panel supports this approach and recommends a restriction on the payment of travel and subsistence for journeys within the parish boundary where the parish is geographically compact.

- 7.3 The Panel supports town and parish councils making provision for a bicycling allowance as cycling and walking are practical methods of getting to meetings for some members in smaller parishes. However, the Panel does not recommend the introduction of a walking allowance due to concerns over the administration of such a scheme.
- 7.4 Two motor vehicle allowances schemes are predominant – the National Joint Council (NJC) rate and His Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) rates.
- 7.5 The disadvantage in using the NJC rates is that an additional administrative burden applies in relation to tax and national insurance when claims exceed the tax-free limits. Accordingly, the Panel has selected HMRC’s AMAP scheme as its recommended travel allowance model.

Subsistence

- 7.6 The regulations also permit the payment of a subsistence allowance to town/parish councillors for actual expenses incurred as a result of performing official duties away from their home (or normal operating base). The Panel recommends that HMRC’s subsistence rates are used.
- 7.7 The period of absence is defined as the elapsed time from leaving home (or normal operating base) to return. Appropriate evidence of expenditure, such as itemised receipts, must be provided.
- 7.8 Expenses cannot be claimed if:
- a meal or beverage has not been purchased
 - the meal does not constitute additional expenditure
 - the ‘staying with friends or relatives allowance’ has been claimed (in which case the 24-hour claim is not allowed)
 - meals have been taken at home
 - meals are provided during a training course, conference or similar activity
 - meals are provided on the train or plane and included in the ticket cost.

7.9 Alcohol cannot form part of any claim. If councillors choose to stay with friends or family while on official business, they are entitled to claim a flat rate allowance which is currently £42 per night.

HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) and Subsistence Rates

7.10 HMRC's AMAP rates are the level up to which travel allowances can be claimed free from tax and national insurance contributions. The current AMAP rates are as follows:

Table 10: Current HMRC AMAP Rates

	First 10,000 business miles in the tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 miles in tax year
Cars and Vans	45 pence per mile	25 pence per mile
Motorcycles	24 pence per mile	24 pence per mile
Bicycles	20 pence per mile	20 pence per mile

7.11 HMRC's subsistence rates are currently as follows:

Table 11: Current HMRC Subsistence Rates

Period of Absence	Upper Limits
One Meal (5-hour) ceiling	£5
Two Meal (10-hour) ceiling	£10
Three Meal (12-hour) ceiling	£15
24-hour ceiling	£25

Summary

7.12 The Panel, in principle, supports the payment of travel and subsistence allowances to town and parish councillors. Whilst the Panel is keen to minimise the administrative burden on officers, it recognises that there should be a robust and transparent governance framework around the payment of such allowances.

7.13 The Panel does not recommend the payment of travel allowance for meetings held within the town/parish boundary in geographically smaller parishes due to the relative size of most parishes and the fact that town and parish councillors should be giving the majority of their time voluntarily. Nevertheless, the Panel does recognise the increasing amount of partnership work undertaken by town and parish councils and

therefore recommends that, for approved duties that take place outside the parish boundary, travel and subsistence allowances should be paid.

- 7.14 The Panel also recommends that town and parish councils impose time limits within which claims may be submitted under the travel and subsistence allowances scheme.

8. **Index-Linking Arrangements**

- 8.1 The Panel recommends that the Parish Basic Allowance and the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance be index-linked to the Consumer Price Index for the next four years as this will ensure that allowances for parishes in the same band increase at the same level.
- 8.2 The Panel recommends that the travel and subsistence allowances be index-linked to HMRC's AMAP and subsistence rates for the next four years.

Section Four

Summary of Recommendations

*The summary of recommendations of the East Kent Joint
Independent Parish Remuneration Panel for 2026-2030*

Summary of Recommendations

1. **Commencement and Period of Scheme**

- 1.1 As stated elsewhere, the payment of parish allowances is discretionary but, if town and parish councils wish to pay them, the regulations stipulate that they must give consideration to the recommendations of the East Kent Joint Independent Parish Remuneration Panel before setting the level of allowances.
- 1.2 The regulations restrict payment of the Parish Basic Allowance and the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance to elected members of the authority only, whilst travel and subsistence allowances can be paid to elected, co-opted and appointed members.
- 1.3 The recommendations contained within this report do not affect the right of a town/parish council to pay the chairman/mayor a civic allowance under the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.4 All recommendations are intended to be effective from the start of the municipal year 2026/2027.

2. **Definitions**

- 2.1 For the purposes of these recommendations, the term 'parish council' covers both town councils and parish councils.
- 2.2 The use of the word 'co-opted member' is the same as in The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

3. **PARISH BASIC ALLOWANCE**

- 3.1 The Panel recommends the following Parish Basic Allowance for 2026-2030 (based on the average of the three City/District Councils' Basic Allowances for 2025/26):

BAND A

Table 12: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
30,000+	£1,140	17%	22.8%	20.8%

Band A would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Ramsgate Town Council

BAND B

Table 13: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
20,000-29,999	£850	12%	17%	15%

Band B would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council, Dover Town Council

BAND C

Table 14: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
10,000– 19,999	£570	8.5%	11.4%	10.4%

Band C would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Deal Town Council

BAND D

Table 15: Recommended Parish Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
1–9,999	£280	4.2%	5.6%	5.1%

Band D would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Acol Parish Council, Adisham Parish Council, Alkham Parish Council, Ash Parish Council, Aylesham Parish Council, Barham Parish Council, Bekesbourne with Patixbourne Parish Council, Birchington Parish Council, Bishopsbourne Parish Council, Blean Parish Council, Bridge Parish Council, Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council, Chartham Parish Council, Chestfield Parish Council, Chislet Parish Council, Cliffsend Parish Council, Denton with Wootton Parish Council, Eastry Parish Council, Eythorne Parish Council, Fordwich Town Council, Goodnestone Parish Council, Great

Mongeham Parish Council, Guston Parish Council, Hackington Parish Council, Harbledown & Rough Common Parish Council, Herne & Broomfield Parish Council, Hersden Parish Council, Hoath Parish Council, Hougham Without Parish Council, Ickham & Well Parish Council, Kingston Parish Council, Langdon Parish Council, Littlebourne Parish Council, Lower Hardres & Nackington Parish Council, Lydden Parish Council, Manston Parish Council, Minster Parish Council, Monkton Parish Council, Nonington Parish Council, Northbourne Parish Council, Petham Parish Council, Preston Parish Council, Ringwold with Kingsdown Parish Council, Ripple Parish Council, River Parish Council, Sandwich Town Council, Shepherdsweil-with-Coldred Parish Council, Sholden Parish Council, St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council, St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council, Staple Parish Council, Stourmouth Parish Council, Sturry Parish Council, Sutton-by-Dover Parish Council, Temple Ewell Parish Council, Thanington Parish Council, Tilmanstone Parish Council, Upper Hardres Parish Council, Walmer Town Council, Waltham Parish Council, Westbere Parish Council, Westgate-on-Sea Town Council, Whitfield Parish Council, Wickhambreaux Parish Council, Wingham Parish Council, Womenswold Parish Council, Woodnesborough Parish Council and Worth Parish Council

4. PARISH CHAIRMAN'S BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 4.1 The Panel recommends that the Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance be applied as a multiple of two to the recommended Parish Basic Allowance. This would result in the following Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance for 2026-2030:

BAND A

Table 16: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	Parish Basic Allowance	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
30,000+	£2,280	34.3%	45.6%	41.6%

Band A would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Ramsgate Town Council

BAND B

Table 17: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	Parish Chairman Basic Allowance	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
20,000- 29,999	£1,700	25.6%	34%	31%

Band B would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council, Dover Town Council

BAND C

Table 18: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance

<i>Electorate</i>	Parish Chairman Basic Allowance	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
10,000- 19,999	£1,140	17.7%	22.8%	20.8%

Band C would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Deal Town Council

BAND D**Table 19: Recommended Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance**

<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Parish Chairman Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Canterbury CC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Dover DC Basic Allowance</i>	<i>Actual percentage of Thanet DC Basic Allowance</i>
1-9,999	£560	8.4%	11.2%	10.2%

Band D would cover the following parish councils if applied to the current electorate at the time this report was written:

Acol Parish Council, Adisham Parish Council, Alkham Parish Council, Ash Parish Council, Aylesham Parish Council, Barham Parish Council, Bekesbourne with Patricxbourne Parish Council, Birchington Parish Council, Bishopsbourne Parish Council, Blean Parish Council, Bridge Parish Council, Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council, Chartham Parish Council, Chestfield Parish Council, Chislet Parish Council, Cliffsend Parish Council, Denton with Wootton Parish Council, Eastry Parish Council, Eythorne Parish Council, Fordwich Town Council, Goodnestone Parish Council, Great Mongeham Parish Council, Guston Parish Council, Hackington Parish Council, Harbledown & Rough Common Parish Council, Herne & Broomfield Parish Council, Hersden Parish Council, Hoath Parish Council, Hougham Without Parish Council, Ickham & Well Parish Council, Kingston Parish Council, Langdon Parish Council, Littlebourne Parish Council, Lower Hardres & Nackington Parish Council, Lydden Parish Council, Manston Parish Council, Minster Parish Council, Monkton Parish Council, Nonington Parish Council, Northbourne Parish Council, Petham Parish Council, Preston Parish Council, Ringwould with Kingsdown Parish Council, Ripple Parish Council, River Parish Council, Sandwich Town Council, Shepherdswell-with-Coldred Parish Council, Sholden Parish Council, St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council, St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council, Staple Parish Council, Stourmouth Parish Council, Sturry Parish Council, Sutton-by-Dover Parish Council, Temple Ewell Parish Council, Thanington Parish Council, Tilmanstone Parish Council, Upper Hardres Parish Council, Walmer Town Council, Waltham Parish Council,

Westbere Parish Council, Westgate-on-Sea Town Council, Whitfield Parish Council, Wickhambreaux Parish Council, Wingham Parish Council, Womenswold Parish Council, Woodnesborough Parish Council and Worth Parish Council

5. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES

5.1 The Panel, in principle, supports the payment of travel and subsistence allowances to parish councillors (elected, co-opted and appointed members). The Panel has selected HMRC's Approved Mileage Allowance Payments (AMAP) scheme and subsistence rates as its recommended travel and subsistence allowances models for 2026-2030.

5.2 The Panel recommends that payment of the allowance should be restricted to claims for travel outside parish boundaries. In addition, it recommends that parish councils should give consideration to imposing a time limit within which claims must be submitted.

Table 20: Current HMRC Approved Mileage Allowance Payments

	First 10,000 business miles in the tax year	Each business mile over 10,000 miles in tax year
Cars and Vans	45 pence per mile	25 pence per mile
Motorcycles	24 pence per mile	24 pence per mile
Bicycles	20 pence per mile	20 pence per mile

Table 21: Current HMRC Subsistence Rates

Period of Absence	Upper Limits
One Meal (5-hour) ceiling	£5
Two Meal (10-hour) ceiling	£10
Three Meal (12-hour) ceiling	£15
24-hour ceiling	£25

6. Index-Linking Arrangements

6.1 The Panel's recommendation is that the Parish Basic Allowance and Parish Chairman's Basic Allowance should be index-linked to the Consumer Price Index for the next four years to ensure that the allowances for parishes in the same band increase at the same rate.

6.2 The Panel recommends that travel and subsistence allowances be index-linked to HMRC's Approved Mileage Allowance Payments and subsistence rates for the next four years.

Section Five

Appendix 1

Town and Parish Councils by Electorate Size

Town and Parish Councils by Electorate Size

Rank	Parish (or Town) Council Name	Electorate	Band	Number of Parish/Town Councillors
1	Ramsgate Town Council	30,773	A	16
2	Dover Town Council	21,861	B	18
3	Broadstairs & St Peters Town Council	20,223	B	15
4	Deal Town Council	15,806	C	15
5	Birchington Parish Council	8,556	D	10
6	Herne & Broomfield Parish Council	6,862	D	13
7	Walmer Town Council	6,546	D	15
8	Westgate-on-Sea Town Council	5,662	D	10
9	Whitfield Parish Council	5,025	D	14
10	Aylesham Parish Council	4,714	D	9
11	Sturry Parish Council	4,344	D	11
12	Sandwich Town Council	4,291	D	16
13	Chartham Parish Council	3,397	D	11
14	River Parish Council	3,020	D	10
15	Minster Parish Council	3,015	D	11
16	Ash Parish Council	2,750	D	11
17	Chestfield Parish Council	2,744	D	9
18	Thanington Parish Council	2,215	D	9
19	St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council	2,156	D	9
20	Eythorne Parish Council	1,969	D	11
21	Eastry Parish Council	1,925	D	11
22	Manston Parish Council	1,752	D	5
23	Cliffsend Parish Council	1,751	D	7
24	Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council	1,670	D	9
25	Hersden Parish Council	1,668	D	7
26	Ringwould with Kingsdown Parish Council	1,664	D	9
27	Sholden Parish Council	1,637	D	7
28	Harbledown & Rough Common Parish Council	1,634	D	11
29	Shepherdswell-with-Coldred Parish Council	1,524	D	12
30	Wingham Parish Council	1,443	D	9
31	Temple Ewell Parish Council	1,387	D	12
32	Littlebourne Parish Council	1,364	D	

Rank	Parish (or Town) Council Name	Electorate	Band	Number of Parish/Town Councillors
33	Bridge Parish Council	1,279	D	9
34	Blean Parish Council	1,269	D	9
35	Barham Parish Council	1,044	D	9
36	Woodnesborough Parish Council	1,031	D	9
37	St Nicholas-at-Wade with Sarre Parish Council	1,019	D	7
38	Worth Parish Council	834	D	7
39	Preston Parish Council	731	D	7
40	Chislet Parish Council	721	D	9
41	Bekesbourne with Patricxbourne	706	D	9
42	Nonington Parish Council	695	D	7
43	Guston Parish Council	653	D	7
44	Lydden Parish Council	644	D	9
45	Monkton Parish Council	628	D	5
46	Alkham Parish Council	617	D	7
47	Sutton-by-Dover Parish Council	611	D	7
48	Great Mongeham Parish Council	591	D	7
49	Northbourne Parish Council	566	D	7
50	Adisham Parish Council	518	D	7
51	Langdon Parish Council	486	D	7
52	Lower Hardres and Nackington Parish Council	473	D	5
53	Hoath Parish Council	467	D	5
54	Petham Parish Council	455	D	7
55	Hackington Parish Council	462	D	5
56	Staple Parish Council	452	D	7
57	Kingston Parish Council	403	D	7
58	Wickhambreaux Parish Council	403	D	7
59	Hougham Without Parish Council	392	D	7
60	Waltham Parish Council	365	D	5
61	Ickham & Well Parish Council	339	D	7
62	Upper Hardres Parish Council	334	D	5
63	Fordwich Town Council	330	D	5
64	Goodnestone Parish Council	308	D	5
65	Tilmanstone Parish Council	292	D	5

Rank	Parish (or Town) Council Name	Electorate	Band	Number of Parish/Town Councillors
66	Ripple Parish Council	291	D	5
67	Denton with Wootton Parish Council	290	D	5
68	Womenswold Parish Council	264	D	5
69	Westbere Parish Council	256	D	7
70	Acol Parish Council	246	D	5
71	Stourmouth Parish Council	220	D	5
72	Bishopsbourne Parish Council	197	D	5

Note 1 – The colour banding indicates which district authority area the parish falls into as follows: Canterbury City Council (Highlighted in Gold); Dover District Council (Pink); and Thanet District Council (Blue).

Section Five

Appendix 2

Town and Parish Councils' Consultation Responses

Name of Town/Parish	Response
Broadstairs & St Peter's Town Council	No comments
Capel-le-Ferne Parish Council	'Keep rates as they are. HMRC recommend that for 2025'
Dover Town Council	No comments
Eastry Parish Council	No comments
Great Mongeham Parish Council	'PC is fine with this'
Ramsgate Town Council	Recommend £1,000 p.a. for members of larger councils. Ask Panel to consider what happens after local government reorganisation, e.g. if T&PCs' role is enhanced, would more money be appropriate?
Ripple Parish Council	No comments
St Margaret's-at-Cliffe Parish Council	Recommend no changes to current levels
Sandwich Town Council	No comments
Sholden Parish Council	Requests that the Band C Parish Basic Allowance be increased from £150.00 to £200.00 with the Chair's Allowance remaining the same.
Temple Ewell Parish Council	Chairman's allowance should stay the same. Should be no Parish Basic Allowance.
Whitfield Parish Council	<p>1) Banding doesn't reflect size or workload of some parishes like Whitfield with its planned development and other issues. Larger and busier parishes like Whitfield should be in Band B.</p> <p>2) PBA of £150 has not increased since 2015 despite EKJIRP's recommendation that allowances should be index-linked to officer pay awards. EKJIRP should follow its own recommendations regarding inflationary increases.</p> <p>3) The PBA barely covers incidental expenses such as telephone, broadband, printing, etc or use of family home and is further taxed at 20% for most councillors.</p> <p>4) Remuneration for hours of work: £150 taxed at 20% is equivalent to just £2.31 a week or 11½ minutes per week paid at the National Living Wage of £12.21 per hour.</p> <p>5) Amount of allowance for Band C parishes is only 3% of that received by district councillors.</p> <p><u>Summary</u></p> <p>'The guidance states that some hours should not be remunerated, and that financial loss should not be suffered by elected members. Payment of £2.31 or 11½ minutes a week to cover a Councillor's time and incidental expenses is not realistic. Few, if any, Councillors want to profit from their role as an elected Member, but the current recommended allowance does not value the role</p>

	<p>or encourage new Councillors from a diverse background.</p> <p>The present level of the allowance could be seen as a discriminatory barrier against young people with families and/or those on tight budgets who struggle to justify the cost to their 'family budget' of serving their community.'</p>
Wickhambreaux Parish Council	Councillors don't currently claim an allowance which isn't likely to change. No specific comments in advance of review but will consider Panel's recommendations in due course.
Wingham Parish Council	No comments
Woodnesborough Parish Council	Agree with the proposed allowances
<p>Keith Gowland, Vice-Chairman of Kent Association of Local Councils and elected member of Whitfield and Guston Parish Councils</p> <p><i>(Comments received after consultation deadline)</i></p>	<p>'One of the points which I have raised over the years is the issue of the amount of time that should be classed as 'voluntary'. Your figure of 10% is totally unrealistic as maybe 100% is excessive with a more realistic figure being 40/50%. The amount of time required to properly carry out Local Council duties will, as the immediate future demands. Over the years Parish Council responsibilities have increased considerably and will continue to do so as Devolution progresses with now even more involvement in preparation. More time and responsibilities are increasing with a more professional approach being necessary.</p> <p>The other issue which may well be outside of your remit is that the Parish Allowance is classed by HMRC as a PAYE issue and is therefore subject to a 20% Income Tax charge. Surely one of the reasons this is paid is to offset the cost of carrying out a public duty? Any legitimate cost incurred should at the very least be taken into consideration.'</p>