

# **REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS WITHIN THE EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT BY THE INDEPENDENT PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL**

## **November 2007**

### **Scope**

This report gives suggested levels of allowance for the financial year commencing on 1 April 2008.

### **Background**

Composition of the 2007/08 East Cambridgeshire District Council Parish Independent Remuneration Panel (PIRP):

Mr. Alastair Haines (Chair)  
Dr. John Dudeney OBE  
Mrs. Stella Johnstone

The Panel was originally convened for the purpose of setting Member Allowances for East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC). Within the remit of the Panel, provision is made to consider Parish Council allowances.

Four meetings were held between August 2007 and November 2007 where the Panel set out the matters to consider and proposed methodology.

Members of the Panel also met with a representative of Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils (CALC) to discuss in detail the role of Parish Councils. The panel were also provided with an information pack containing copies of allowance schemes set by other Parish Remuneration Panels across the country and general information regarding the work of Parish Councils.

A letter sent in January 2007 to Parish Councils invited a response to the proposed work of the PIRP. This was followed in August 2007 with a letter outlining the progress made and provided information on the process required to determine subsistence and travel allowances for Parish Councillors, namely, that the PIRP, in order to provide a view on these Allowances, must also provide recommendations on the level of Parish basic allowances.

The Panel have been mindful not to dictate allowance levels. The figures are given primarily for enabling purposes, (i.e. Parishes need to give notice of receipt of the PIRP report, to consider at a Parish Council meeting if they wish to provide allowances and at what level, then publicise any allowances they agree to pay, and their requirements within the regulatory framework will have been satisfied).

### **Approach**

The Panel concluded that it was essential to create a simple framework on which to make recommendations on Parish allowances, providing easy to use and flexible outcomes. Additionally, the Panel considered that the work of a Parish Councillor was voluntary and that any payment should be of a nominal amount predominantly to cover expenses incurred by them in carrying out their duties.

In assessing the basic levels, the Panel noted that the Chair of the Parish would undoubtedly carry more responsibility and be required to undertake more duties. The Panel considered this additional work merited additional payment.

The Panel are required to express the suggested Parish Basic Allowance as a percentage of the amount recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel of the District Council. These figures are presented in the following section.

Basic allowances for Parish Councillors and Chairs.

The Panel agreed that the baseline level of allowance should be set at £100 per annum for councillors and £200 per annum for Chairs of Parish Councils to reflect the additional responsibilities and workload associated with this role. The Panel decided to establish five bands for which allowances would be set based on the size of the electorate to reflect the wide diversity in size and complexity of the Parishes in East Cambridgeshire. These bands are shown in the table annexed to this report, which identifies in which band each Parish sits.

To determine the actual rate from the baseline level:

$$\text{Actual rate} = \text{baseline rate} \times \text{Band Number}$$

So for example, for Wilburton Parish Councillors: Actual = £100 X 3 = £300  
 Chair of Council: Actual = £200 X 3 = £600

The Table below summarises the suggested allowances for each band

**Suggested Allowance Levels for Parish Councillors**

Band	Member		Chair	
	£	%	£	%
1	100	2.8	200	5.7
2	200	5.7	400	11.4
3	300	8.5	600	17.0
4	400	11.4	800	22.7
5	500	14.2	1000	28.4

It is to be noted that Parish Basic Allowance only applies to elected Members of a Parish Council and is taxable.

Travel and Subsistence

The Panel considered that the travel allowances should be based on, and linked to, approved mileage payment levels, directed by HM Revenue and Customs, and in use by East Cambridgeshire District Council. Where public transport is used, the standard class fare should be used and reimbursement made from receipts provided. A copy of the existing ECDC 2006/7 rates are attached as Appendix 2.

With regards to subsistence allowances, the Panel felt that the allowances should also mirror those in operation at East Cambridgeshire District Council, and should be administered in the same way and adjusted in accordance with changes adopted by

East Cambridgeshire District Council. Details of when such allowances can be paid are detailed in the attached Appendix 2.

The Regulations also state that the report should make recommendations on the responsibilities or duties in respect of which Members should receive travel and subsistence allowances. In line with the objective of not dictating allowance levels to Parish Councils, the PIRP equally do not want to dictate what should be considered as 'approved duties' for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances. However, from the information the PIRP have received, it is apparent that Parish Council meetings are usually held in a location that is very local for the vast majority of Councillors and therefore it may not be considered appropriate/necessary to pay travelling allowance for attendance at these. Parishes might wish to restrict the payment of travel and subsistence allowances to Parish Council duties conducted outside of the immediate locality of the Parish.

### **Thanks**

The Panel would like to give thanks to those Councillors and Council employees who gave their time, knowledge, advice and experience.



Appendix 1 East Cambridgeshire Parish Council Groupings for determining Councillors Allowances

<b>Council</b>	<b>Precept</b>	<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Group</b>
Westley Waterless	1500	0	0	<b>One</b>
Wentworth	1000	5	142	
Snailwell	2200	7	143	
Kennett	5500	5	255	
Kirtling & Upend	3500	7	261	
Burrough Green	5500	7	273	
Reach	5500	7	280	
Brinkley	6300	7	301	
Coveney	8500	7	325	
Witcham	9000	6	352	
Chippenham	5637	7	401	
Ashley	8500	7	466	
Stetchworth	11500	7	509	
Dullingham	12600	7	563	
Little Thetford	11000	9	565	
Wicken	14000	9	608	
Swaffham Prior	14500	9	628	
Swaffham Bulbeck	12500	9	679	
Lode	11500	7	726	
Mepal	22900	7	786	
Wilburton	19000	9	1067	<b>Three</b>
Stretham	37500	11	1325	
Wooditton	12500	11	1336	
Cheveley	35000	11	1539	
Bottisham	19500	11	1584	
Isleham	36000	11	1734	
Witchford	41300	11	1761	
Little Downham	59034	11	1948	
Fordham	30000	11	1963	
Haddenham	44860	13	2641	<b>Four</b>
Sutton	124978	15	2819	
Burwell	96000	17	4776	
Littleport	124965	15	5874	
Soham	119000	15	7252	
Ely	251995	15	13718	

The table shows the sorting of Parish Councils into five groups based on the size of their electorates. It is to be used in conjunction with the baseline rate of allowance proposed for Councillors of £100 per annum and for Chairs of Councils of £200 to determine the actual rate using the formula:

$$\text{Actual rate} = \text{baseline rate} \times \text{Group Number}$$

So for example, for Wilburton Parish Councillors: Actual = £100 X 3 = £300  
 Chair of Council: Actual = £200 X 3 = £600

## Appendix 2 Travel and Subsistence Allowances

The rates recommended for travel and subsistence are as follows:

- (a) Private Cars 40 pence per mile  
Maximum HM Revenue and Customs allowed rate.
- (b) Motorcycle and Cycle
- |                                    |               |               |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Cycles                             | 5p per mile   |               |
| Motorcycles                        | up to 125cc   | over 125cc    |
| Up to 4000 miles                   |               |               |
| a. 3 <sup>rd</sup> party insurance | 18.38p / mile | 27.92p / mile |
| b. Comprehensive insurance         | 20.36p        | 31.86p        |
| Over 4000 miles                    | 7.77p / mile  | 11.36p / mile |
- (c) Public Transport  
Necessary travel to be refunded with receipted claims, paid at Standard or Second Class rate.
- (d) Day subsistence guidelines from East of England Regional Assembly from January 1st 2007:
- (i) Breakfast allowance (More than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, before 11 am) £6.24;
  - (ii) Lunch allowance (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, including the lunchtime between 12 noon and 2 pm) £8.62;
  - (iii) Tea allowance (more than 4 hours away from normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, including the period 3 pm to 6 pm) £3.40;
  - (iv) Evening meal allowance (more than 4 hours away from the normal place of residence or where the authority permits, a lesser period, ending after 7 pm) £10.67.
- (e) Overnight subsistence  
For an absence overnight from the usual place of residence the rate will be based on actual reimbursement for a reasonable area rate of accommodation. Guidance rates are available.