



Subject:	Revisions to the Scheme of Allowances
Date:	26th June, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Ms. Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor
Contact Officer:	Mr. Jim Hanna, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	To consider amendments to the Council's Scheme of Allowances, adjusting the rates of Special Responsibility Allowances to reflect the increase in membership of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee and the change in Party strengths at the recent Local Government Elections.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is recommended to: 1. approve the increase in the allowance of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee to the same as the Council's seven other Standing Committees; 2. approve the adjustments to the allowances of the Council's seven other Standing Committees; and 3. approve the adjustments to the allowances for the Party Group Leaders, Deputy Party Group Leaders and the Party Group Secretaries.

3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p data-bbox="276 226 424 255"><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p data-bbox="276 275 1490 405">The Local Government (Payments to Councillors) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019, Part 2, par 3 states that the Council must agree a new Scheme of Allowances for each year in which allowances are paid.</p> <p data-bbox="165 477 1490 562">3.1.1 Paragraphs 4(2) and 5(2) further state that the amount of basic allowance and special responsibility allowances shall be determined by the Council.</p> <p data-bbox="165 629 1490 759">3.1.2 The Department for Communities issued a circular, LG 10/2022, dated 28th March, 2022, which set out revised maximum limits for basic and special responsibility allowances with effect from 1st April, 2021.</p> <p data-bbox="165 826 1490 956">3.1.3 The Department for Communities issued a further circular, LG 03/2023 dated 25th January, 2023, which set out revised maximum limits for basic and special responsibility allowances with effect from 1st April, 2022 which the Council chose not to apply.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1023 1490 1261">3.1.4 The allowance paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Belfast Waterfront and Ulster Hall Ltd. Shareholders' Committee was previously set at half that paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the other Standing Committees as it had a membership of 14 Councillors compared to the 20 Councillor membership of most of the other committees.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1328 1490 1458">3.1.5 The membership of this committee, along with the Planning Committee, was increased this Council term to 20 members to bring them in line with all of the Council's other Standing Committees.</p> <p data-bbox="165 1525 1490 1762">3.16 For a number of years, the Council has agreed a split in the special responsibility allowance budget so as to pay a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Chairpersons and the Deputy Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and to the Party Officers (Party Leaders of parties of 12 or more members, Deputy Party Leader of parties of five or more members, and Party Secretary of parties of 12 or more members).</p>
3.17	<p data-bbox="276 1839 708 1868"><u>Special Responsibility Allowance</u></p> <p data-bbox="276 1888 1490 2018">The Committee is requested to consider whether it wishes to apply the increases to the allowances paid to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of each of the Council's Standing Committees as detailed in Appendix 1.</p>

<p>3.18</p> <p>3.19</p>	<p>The Committee is further requested to consider if it wishes to apply the suggested increase to the allowances for Party Officers following the changes to party strengths at the recent Local Government Election.</p> <p><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There is no increase to the overall Special Responsibility budget as any increases are the result of adjustments made according to different party strengths following the recent Local Government Election.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are not any Good Relations, Equality or Rural Needs issues associate with this report.</p>
<p>4.0</p>	<p>Documents Attached</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Appendix 1 – Division of SRAs</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Proposed revised Scheme of Allowances 2023-2024</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Local Government Circular LG 10/2022</p>