SECTION 2
COUNCILLORS

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CHAPTER 2.1 – ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF COUNCILLORS

2.1.1 Composition and Eligibility

a) **Composition**. The Council comprises 54 Members, otherwise called Councillors. One or more Councillors will be elected by the voters of each ward in the Borough in accordance with a scheme drawn up by the Local Government Commission and approved by the Secretary of State.

b) **Eligibility**. Only registered voters of the Borough of Wokingham or those living or working in the Borough will be eligible to stand for the office of Councillor. There are other criteria which may preclude a person from standing.

2.1.2 Election and Terms of Office of Councillors

The ordinary election of a third (or as near as may be) of all Councillors will be held generally on the first Thursday in May in each year, except that in 2009 and every fourth year after that there will be no regular election. The term of office of Councillors will be four years starting on the fourth day after being elected and finishing on the fourth day after the date of the regular election four years later.

2.1.3 Roles and Functions of all Councillors

Key Roles

a) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and oversee a number of strategic and corporate management functions;

b) contribute to the good governance of the area and actively encourage community participation and involvement of citizens in decision making;

c) effectively represent the interests of their ward and of individual constituents;

d) respond to constituents' enquiries and representations, fairly and impartially;

e) oversee the governance and management of the Council; and

f) maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics and adhere to the Code of Conduct (Chapter 9.2.)

Rights and Duties

a) Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information, land and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law;

b) Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a Councillor or Officer entitled to know it;

c) For these purposes, "confidential" and "exempt" information are defined in the Access to Information Rules in Chapter 3.2 of this Constitution.

2.1.4 Conduct

Councillors will at all times observe the Members' Code of Conduct and the Protocol on Member/Officer relationships set out in Section 9 of this Constitution.

2.1.5 Allowances

Councillors will be entitled to receive allowances in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme set out in Chapter 2.2 of this Constitution.

The Scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis.

2.1.6 Members' Interests

The Council maintains a register of the interests of Members and co-opted members of the Council. The Monitoring Officer is responsible for maintaining and updating the register, which is available on the Councils website and for public inspection during office hours (8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday).

CHAPTER 2.2 – MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME

2.2.1 Introduction

Members of Wokingham Borough Council are entitled to a number of Financial Allowances. These allowances are provided to compensate Members for costs incurred whilst undertaking their public duties. There are also allowances to compensate Members with additional Special Responsibilities. Members are entitled to these allowances under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003.

The terms 'Councillor' and 'Member' refer to an individual currently elected at local Borough elections to serve on Wokingham Borough Council.

Co-opted Members of the Council are entitled to receive Special Responsibility Allowances in recognition of their work.

Local Authority Allowance Schemes are set up in accordance with guidance from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Inland Revenue. Copies of this guidance are available from Democratic Services. Should conflicting advice arise between this scheme and Government Guidance, the Government Guidance shall always take precedence.

2.2.2 Party Political Work

No allowances can be paid to cover any party political work.

2.2.3 Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council commissions an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Scheme of Members Allowances annually. The Panel also considers which Members are entitled to claim which allowances.

The Panel considers:

a) how much Basic Allowance Councillors should receive;

b) which Councillors' roles qualify for Special Responsibility Allowances and the level at which those allowances are set;

c) the rate of subsistence, travel and dependants carers' allowances;

d) if allowances are pensionable under the Local Government Pension Scheme; and

e) the rate of co-optees' allowances.

The Process that will be followed when appointing panel members is set out in Appendix A to this Chapter.

The Process for appointing members to the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in Appendix B to the report.

After considering the above, the Panel makes recommendations to the Council. These recommendations aren't binding, but the Council must consider them when creating or changing an allowance scheme.

Wokingham's Independent Panel is made up of up to five people. One panel member to be appointed to serve on the panel for four years and the remaining members to serve for three years. Members of the panel are not paid any allowance.

2.2.4 Effective Date
This scheme is effective from 17 September 2015 which covers the 2015/16 Municipal Year and will remain in effect until it is reviewed by the Independent Remuneration Panel and is superseded by a revised scheme agreed by Council.

2.2.5 Types of Allowance
There are four main types of allowance as follows:

a) Basic Allowance;

b) Special Responsibility Allowance;

c) Dependants Carers' Allowance; and

d) Travelling and Subsistence Allowance.

2.2.5.1 Basic Allowance
A Basic Allowance is payable to all Councillors monthly. The current Basic Allowance is an annual amount of £7,552 which comprises

a) £500 for out of pocket expenses

b) £6,552 for time contributed

c) £500 for IT, communication and home office

The amount set out in b) above is intended to recognise the time commitment of all Councillors, including such calls on their time as meetings with Officers and constituents and attendance at Conferences.

The amount set out in c) above covers the incidental costs of being a Councillor, such as the use of their homes, IT costs and telephone bills. It is expected that acceptance of c) puts a responsibility on Members to have an effective home office. Therefore the IT Communication and home office component of the Basic Allowance should only be claimed by those members who provide facilities which allows constituents and Officers to communicate with them by email.

Each Member is expected to undertake some area of additional responsibility that does not qualify for Special Responsibility Allowance. This could include being:

a) a Political Group Spokesperson for a particular Service Area;

b) a Committee or Sub-Committee Chairman;

c) a lead Member on a Community Consultation or Liaison;

d) a representative on a number of Outside Bodies;

e) a Chairman of a specific task or time limited Sub-Committee; or

f) a member of Appeals Panels.

2.2.5.2 Special Responsibility Allowances

Special Responsibility Allowances are paid to Councillors with significant responsibilities in addition to those covered by the Basic Allowance.

Each year, the Independent Remuneration Panel determines the level of the Special Responsibility Allowance and agrees a formula to compare the various levels of responsibility attached to each post. The panel also agrees which specific duties and posts qualify for payments of this allowance.

Members of the Executive can only receive one Special Responsibility Allowance Members below Executive Level can receive more than one Special Responsibility Allowance.

The Rate of the Special Responsibility Allowance is £5,000. The current schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances is as follows:

Political Post	Rate of Allowance	Total SRA Allowance
Leader of the Council	4 x SRA	£20,000
Leader of the Opposition where there is a majority group	1.5 x SRA	£7,500
Members of the Executive	2 x SRA	£10,000
Deputy Executive Members	0.4 x SRA	£2,000
Chairman of the Audit Committee	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Chairman of the Licensing and Appeals Committee	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	1 x SRA	£5,000
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees-		
Children's Services	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Community Partnerships	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Corporate Services	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	0.5 x SRA	£2,500
Chairman of the Personnel Board	0.25 x SRA	£1,250
Chairman of the Planning Committee	1 x SRA	£5,000
Members of the Planning Committee	0.25 x SRA	£1,250
Chairman of the Standards Committee	0.25 x SRA	£1,250

Should the Council be in a 'hung' position, the Special Responsibility Allowance scheme will, in the main, remain the same. As there would effectively be two Leaders and two Deputy Leaders, the following changes would be made:-

The normal sum set for the Leader of the Council and the sum set for the Leader of the Opposition will be added together and shared equally by the two Leaders. i.e.

Sum set for the Leader of the Council	4 x SRA	£20,000
Sum set for the Leader of the Opposition	1.5 x SRA	£7,500
		= £27,500
Allocated equally	2.25 x SRA	£13,750

The normal sum set for the Deputy Leader of the Council will be shared equally by the two Deputy Leaders. i.e.

Sum set for the Deputy Leader of the Council	2 x SRA	£10,000
Allocated equally	1 x SRA each	£5,000

2.2.5.3 Childcare And Dependants Carers Allowance

Members who have children or other dependants can claim an allowance for their care whilst undertaking Approved Council Duties.

The list of approved duties is included in the section on travel and subsistence expenses.

The Allowance is limited to a maximum of thirty five hours per month and the carer employed must not be a member of the Councillor's family that lives at the same address.

The Allowance can only be claimed by Members with direct caring responsibilities.

The Childcare and Dependents' Carers' Allowance is set at the National Minimum wage (£6.50) or whatever that may be in the future, and where there are exceptional circumstances, any increase in this allowance be approved by the Council's Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Panel;

A sample of the claim form is included at the back of this scheme. Copies of the form are available from Democratic Services, 0118 974 6054

2.2.5.4 Travel And Subsistence Allowance

Members are entitled to claim reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred whilst undertaking 'approved' duties on behalf of the Council. Unless there are exceptional circumstances which have previously been approved by the Democratic Services Manager, all claims for travel allowance should be deemed to start and finish from the Member's usual place of residence or work within the Borough, or from the Borough Boundary, and claims would need to be made on this basis.

Travel expenses usually take the form of mileage claims and parking fees, though there are arrangements for expenses incurred by other forms of travel.

Due to the fact that a car parking permit scheme is in force for the car park at Council Offices at Shute End, Members will not be able to claim car parking expenses for attendance at meetings at these offices.

Subsistence payments are designed to compensate Members for additional costs incurred when undertaking approved duties.

Rates of Travel and Subsistence Allowance are reviewed annually by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Approved duties for which Members can claim travel and subsistence expenses are defined in the regulations that govern Members' Allowances. If you are in any doubt about whether you can claim for a particular duty, please contact Democratic Services on 0118 974 6051, or Email: democratic.services@wokingham.gov.uk for clarification.

The list of approved duties is defined as attendance at any of the following:

a) a meeting of the Executive;

b) a meeting of a Committee of the Executive;

c) a meeting of the Authority;

d) a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority;

e) a meeting of some other body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations;

f) a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of a body to which the Authority make appointments or nominations;

g) a meeting which has been authorised by the Authority, a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority or a Joint Committee of the Authority and one or more other Authorities, or a Sub-Committee of a Joint Committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the Authority is divided into several political groups) or to which two or more Councillors have been invited (if the Authority is not divided into Political Groups);

h) a meeting of a Local Authority Association of which Wokingham Borough Council is a member;

i) duties undertaken on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council in pursuance of any standing order requiring a Member or Members to be present while tender documents are opened;

j) duties undertaken on behalf of the Authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the Authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises;

k) duties undertaken on behalf of the Authority in connection with arrangements made by the Authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of section 342 of the Education Act 1996;

l) any other duty approved by the Authority in connection with discharging the duties of the Authority or its Committees or Sub-Committees;

m) attendance at relevant training events;

n) attendance at an event or outside meeting etc, if a Member has received a written invitation to attend because of their specific role eg as an Executive Member. (Please note that written evidence must be provided with the claim). If a Member was invited in their capacity as a Borough Councillor, they would not qualify for this payment;

o) attendance at any informal meeting, seminar or briefing where the Member has received an invitation to attend from the Officer calling the meeting;

p) attendance at any meeting held at the Council Offices at which Members of any party could attend if they wished e.g. Executive or Planning Committee;

q) attendance at meetings of a Committee or Panel when the Member concerned was not a member of that Committee or Panel but was attending to represent the views of their Ward on a specific report relating to that Ward;

r) any function/meeting attended by the Leader of Council, Deputy Leader(s) of Council, Leader of Opposition, Executive Member(s) or Deputy Executive Member(s) relevant to their roles in those offices, except events primarily of a social nature;

s) any meetings that are not about a Ward matter where an Officer asks the Member to attend, or where the Officer agrees that their presence is needed.

2.2.5.5
Members cannot claim allowances for the following types of meeting:

a) school Governing Bodies;

b) events primarily of a social nature;

c) political Group meetings or policy team meetings.

These are also the lists for which Members can claim Dependants' Carers Allowance (see 2.2.5.3).

2.2.6 Travel Allowance Rates
Members are entitled to claim standard class fare only when using public transport.

Councillors should only use taxicabs in urgent cases or if there is no reasonable public transport available. Members will be reimbursed the amount of the fare and any reasonable gratuity paid.

In the interests of economy and other than in exceptional circumstances, Councillors are expected to use public transport for long journeys rather than travelling by car.

Under the Road Traffic Act 1988 Members must ensure that their motor insurance policy covers business use if they are claiming mileage allowance. No additional payments will be made to cover insurance costs.

2.2.6.1 Mileage Rates

Mileage will be paid at the following rates

	Per Mile
Car User – all engine sizes – first 10,000 miles	45p
Car User – all engine sizes – after 10,000 miles	25p
Motorcycle User – all engine sizes	24
Bicycle User	35

2.2.6.2 Subsistence Allowance Rates

		£
Breakfast allowance	more than a four hours away from normal place of residence before 11am	4.92
Lunch allowance	more than four hours away from normal place of residence, including the lunchtime between 12 noon and 2pm	6.77
Tea allowance	more than four hours away from normal place of residence including the period 3pm to 6pm	2.67
Evening meal allowance	more than four hours away from normal place of residence ending after 7pm	8.38
Overnight	if Members attend a training course or conference which is held at a venue beyond reasonable daily travelling distance, the reasonable cost of overnight accommodation (e.g. 3* star hotel) may be claimed subject to agreement with the Budget Manager prior to booking-	
Please note receipts are required when claiming for any of the above		

2.2.7 Allowances for Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Sections 3(5) and 5(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 provide for the Council to pay the Mayor and Deputy Mayor an allowance which it believes reasonable to enable them to meet the expenses of their office.

The Independent Remuneration Panel is not required to review these allowances.

The rate of these allowances is currently as follows:-

Mayor	£7,420 p.a.
Deputy Mayor	£1,960 p.a.

Changes to the rates of these allowances are agreed by the Council as part of the budget making process.

2.2.8 Councillors' Tax and Benefits

The allowances that Councillors can claim can affect a Councillor's income tax liability and their rights to Social Security Benefits. It could also affect the Benefits Entitlement of a Councillor's Partner if their benefits are means-tested.

The rules surrounding Councillors' Allowances can be complicated, particularly in respect of their effects upon benefits entitlement.

Below is a basic table detailing how each of the allowances affects Benefits Entitlement and Tax Liability. The table is only a guide, and there are some exceptions:

Type of Allowance	Paid Monthly?	Is this counted as Earnings for Benefits Purposes? eg Housing Benefit	Is this counted as Taxable income PAYE Purposes?
Basic Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Childcare and Dependants Carer's Allowance	✖ Paid on receipt of claim	✖	✖
Mayor and Deputy Mayor Allowances	✓	✓	✓
Mileage	✖ Paid on receipt of claim	✖	✓
Special Responsibility Allowance	✓	✓	✓
Subsistence Allowance	✖ Paid on receipt of claim	✖	✖
Travelling Allowance (Public Transport, Taxis fares etc)	✖ Paid on receipt of claim	✖	✖

The whole issue of tax and benefits can appear a bit of a muddle, but there is help at hand. Members can contact the Chief Finance Officer (Graham Ebers – 0118 974 6557 Email: graham.ebers@wokingham.gov.uk. Members can get personal advice and guidance on how their benefits entitlement, tax liability and National Insurance is affected by their Allowances.

2.2.9 Revocation

Some Councillors may choose to forego either some or all of their entitlement to an allowance under this scheme. To do this, a Member must give notice, in writing, to the Chief Executive.

2.2.10 Part-year Entitlements

It is possible that a Member's entitlement could change during the course of the year.

This could be because:

a) the Scheme changes;

b) the Councillor's responsibilities change; or

c) the Councillor becomes, or ceases to be, a Councillor part way through the year

In each case, a Member will be paid a 'pro rata' amount, equivalent to the amount of the year that they undertook the duties qualifying for the allowance.

2.2.11 Conference Allowances

The Independent Remuneration Panel recommended in June 2006 that attendance at Conferences approved by the appropriate Director should be eligible for the payment of travel and subsistence allowance.

2.2.12 Allowances for Co-opted Members

The 2003 Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations make it possible for Local Authorities to pay Co-opted Members of its Committees an allowance for attendance at meetings and conferences.

Wokingham Borough Council currently only has co-opted members on the Standards Committee. The Council agreed on 30 June 2005 that the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee should be entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance of £1,250 per annum.

2.2.13 Pensions

In accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014. Councillors are no longer eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

2.2.14 Suspension and Withdrawal of Allowances

The Council has agreed that, should Members be suspended from office or expelled from office, their allowances can be either suspended or withdrawn as appropriate.

If a Member is suspended, their allowances will be withheld for the duration of the suspension. In the event of a Member being partially suspended, their allowances applicable to the area of activities from which the Member is suspended will be withheld.

If a Member is expelled from the Council, their allowances will be withdrawn.

2.2.15 Claiming Your Allowances

Both the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances will be paid in equal monthly instalments. These will be paid via the Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS). It is essential that the Council has received your bank details for these allowances to be paid.

You can check that the Council has these details by contacting Sue Balbi in Democratic Services on 0118 974 6054.

Members have to complete a claim form for reimbursement of Travel, Subsistence and Childcare costs. Members must claim back these expenses within two months of the meeting for which the costs were incurred.

A sample of the claim form is included at the back of this scheme. Copies of the form are available from Democratic Services, 0118 974 6054.

Claims must be accompanied by receipts or proof of costs. Once completed, the forms can be handed back into Democratic Services by the 1st of each month for processing.

2.2.16 Supporting Documents

This Members Allowance Scheme is based upon the following documents: -

- Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 1021 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
- Local Government Act 2000
- Local Government and Housing Act 1989
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel July 2009
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel May 2010
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel May 2011
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel July 2012
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel July 2013
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel September 2014
- Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel September 2015

- Resolutions of Wokingham District Council

29 April 2004	30 June 2005	29 June 2006

- Resolutions of Wokingham Borough Council

30 October 2008	14 May 2009	15 July 2009
9 September 2009	18 November 2009	20 May 2010
22 July 2010	23 October 2010	18 November 2010
20 January 2011	22 February 2011	19 May 2011
21 July 2011	22 September 2011	19 July 2012
18 July 2013	18 September 2014	17 September 2015

2.2.17 MEMBER ALLOWANCES CLAIM FORM

1	2		3		4	5	6		7
Date	Place & Time of **Dep**	**Ret**	Details of Meeting or Approved Duty **and / or** Name of Officer who requested meeting. If an Invitation was received from another organisation, a copy of the invitation must be submitted in order for the claim to be paid	**Start Time**	No. of Miles	Public Transport Fares ***Receipt Required***	Details and Subsistence Amount (including parking, Childcare & Dependent Carers Allowance) ***Receipt Required*** ***Form attached to be used for Carers Allowance***		Receipt/ Ticket Letter/invitation Enclosed? Cols 3, 5 & 6
				TOTALS					

SAMPLE

DECLARATION BY MEMBER

Travelling and Subsistence Allowance

I declare that

1 I have necessarily incurred expenditure on travelling and subsistence for the purpose of enabling me to perform approved duties as set out in Column 3 of this claim form

2 I have actually paid the fares and made the other payments shown in Columns 5 and 6 of this claim form.

3 The amounts claimed are strictly in accordance with the rates determined by the said Council.

4 My motor insurance covers business use in connection with my role as an elected Member.

General

I declare that the statements above are correct. Except as shown above I have not made and will not make, any claim under any enactment for financial loss allowance and for travelling or subsistence allowances in connection with the duties indicated overleaf

Date…….……..……. Please Print Name…….……. Signature…….……..….

To avoid delay in payment please check all relevant details are completed and forward to Democratic Services by the **1st day** of each month**.**

Please note that all claim forms must be submitted within **two months** of the expense being incurred

This claim form has been checked by Democratic Services

Signed	Wise Ref	Mileage
	Wise Ref	Non Mileage
Dated	Wise Ref	Non Mileage
	Wise Ref	Non Mileage

SAMPLE

PLEASE USE THIS FORM WHEN CLAIMING FOR CHILDCARE / DEPENDENTS ALLOWANCE.

The allowance is limited to a maximum of thirty-five hours per month and the carer employed must not be a member of the Councillor's family that lives at the same address.

Members Name	
Date of Care	
Details of meeting or approved duty.	
Total amount of hours	
Amount Paid	
Signature of Carer	

PLEASE USE THIS FORM WHEN CLAIMING FOR CHILDCARE / DEPENDENTS ALLOWANCE.

The allowance is limited to a maximum of thirty five hours per month and the carer employed must not be a member of the Councillor's family that lives at the same address.

Members Name	
Date of Care	
Details of meeting or approved duty.	
Total amount of hours	
Amount Paid	
Signature of Carer	

Appendix A

Process for Appointing Independent Remuneration Panel Members

The process below will be followed when appointing new members to the Independent Remuneration Panel:

1 Advert placed in the local newspaper.

2 Advert respondents sent an information pack containing:

a An application form for the role (Appendix 1);
b Job Description and Personal Specification (Appendix 2);
c The Terms of Reference of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendix 3);
d The current Members' Allowances Scheme;
e The last two Independent Remuneration Panel reports;

3 Interested applicants, either from the advert or found via other sources, such as recommendations from current Panel members, would then be asked to fill in an application form and submit a CV should they wish;

4 Application forms to be considered by the Chairman of the Panel and the Chief Executive or Monitoring Officer;

5 Successfully shortlisted candidates to be interviewed as above;

6 Chosen candidates asked to provide a paragraph of information about their background/suitability for the role to be included in the report to Council.

7 Council be asked to appoint the relevant person to the Independent Remuneration Panel;

8 New Panel members to be given an induction, ideally by the relevant Democratic Services Officer, the Chairman of the Panel and other Panel members, but at least the first two, before they take part in a review.

CONFIDENTIAL

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

APPLICATION FORM

Name:			
Address: **Post Code:**			
Daytime Tel		**Mobile:**	
Email:			
Date Of Birth:		**Sex:**	Male/Female
Employment Status *(please delete as appropriate) Employed/Self-employed/Retired **If employed or self-employed please give the following details.** *If retired please give the relevant details at the time of retirement.* **Name of Employer/Business: Nature of Business:** **Position Held:**			
Please describe any links which you have or have had with the Borough or with the community of the Borough e.g. living or working in the Borough, through work or business, through voluntary bodies, public bodies etc., including an contributions to the community you have made.			

Are you currently a Member of any other Local Authority? (This includes Parish Councils, Police and Fire Authorities)

Yes/No

If yes please provide the name of the Authority:

Are you a relative or a close friend of any Member or Officer of the Council?

Yes/No

(Note: a relative is defined as (a) a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step- daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or (b) the spouse or parent of any of (a))

If yes, please give details:

Please provide details of any organisations (including political parties) you are, or have been a Member of during the past 5 years.

Relevant Experience and Qualities
Please explain why you wish to be a Member on the Independent Remuneration Panel and give details of any relevant experience you may have for the role

Please supply the name and address of a person whom we may contact for a reference as to your suitability for the role. **Name:** **Address:** **Tel:**

DECLARATION I confirm that:

I have read the background information and understand and accept the commitment need to be an active member of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

The information that I have provided on this application form is correct.

I would fully respect the confidentially of the information provided to me as a member of the Panel.

I would observe any rules set by the Panel and act in good faith in the interests of the Panel.

Signed ……

Date ……...

Please return this form to:

Democratic Services
Wokingham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBER

Overview of the Independent Remuneration Panel

The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) has been established under the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended in order to make recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme and the nature and level of allowances to be paid to elected members.

The IRP must consist of at least three members. Wokingham previously agreed that it would have up to five members on the IRP. For continuity purposes one panel member is appointed to serve on the panel for four years and the remaining members to serve for three years.

The Role of Independent Remuneration Panel Member

- To receive reports/proposals from Officers and Members of the Council in connection with the Members' Allowance Scheme;
- To formulate a view as to any appropriate changes to the Members' Allowance Scheme;
- To attend meetings of the IRP, as appropriate, and contribute to the production of recommendations to be put before the Council.

Conditions of Appointment

Term of Membership:	Three years.
Workload:	All IRP members are required to undertake appropriate training upon taking up appointment. The IRP normally produces one report per annum. Generally, each report requires attendance at several meetings of the Panel, plus associated correspondence, email and telephone follow up.

Appointment Restrictions

Persons will be disqualified from serving on the panel if they:

1 Are an elected Councillor of any Local Authority

2 Are employed or appointed by Wokingham Borough Council

3 Are a senior employee (in a politically restricted post) of another local authority

4 Are the holder of any position within a political party at local, regional or national level

5 Are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order

6 Have been convicted in the last 5 years of an offence with a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than three months without the option of a fine

7 Are in debt to or in dispute with Wokingham Borough Council

8 Are a relative or personal friend of an elected Member of Wokingham Borough Council

Personal Attributes			
		Essential	Desirable
1.	Ability to read and assess information and identify key points/issues	✓	
2.	Ability to listen to information and identify key points and issues	✓	
3.	Ability to ask questions in order to obtain information and open up discussion	✓	
4.	Ability to analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions	✓	
5.	Ability to communication effectively with a wide range of people	✓	
6.	Have an awareness of the sensitive and confidential nature of the work.	✓	
7.	To be contactable via e-mail.	✓	
8.	To be available to attend and contribute to meetings.	✓	
9.	Be committed to undertaking the background work in preparation for meetings.	✓	
10.	Have an understanding of the role and work of a local authority, including a knowledge of the decision making process		✓
11.	Have an understanding of the role of a Councillor and the regulations and guidance which apply to Members' Allowances		✓
12.	You should live or work in the Borough of Wokingham	✓	
13.	You should not be politically active to the extent that a reasonable person would conclude that this activity would influence your judgement	✓	
14.	You must have no personal, legal or contractual relationship with Wokingham Borough Council, its Members, co-opted members or employees.	✓	

Removal from the Panel	
The Council will have the right to remove particular members from the panel before their term expires in special circumstances such as:	
1	The appointee becoming disqualified for any of the reasons detailed in the restrictions outlined above.
2	Persistent non-attendance.
3	Breach of confidentiality.
4	Conduct that brings the panel into disrepute and/or prejudices its impartiality or its effective operation.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL'S INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

Purpose

The Independent Remuneration Panel is established in accordance with Part 4 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

The Panel shall produce a report making recommendations:

1 as to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following should be available:

   a Special Responsibility Allowance;
   b subsistence and travel allowances; and
   c co-optees' allowance;

2 as to the amount of such allowances and as to the amount of Basic Allowance;

3 as to whether dependants' carers' allowance should be payable to Members of the Council, and as to the amount of such an allowance;

4 as to whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with regulation 10(6) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003;

5 as to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed;

6 as to which Members of the Council, if any, are to be entitled to pensions in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972; and

7 as to treating Basic Allowance or Special Responsibility Allowance, or both, as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable in accordance with a scheme made under section 7 of the Superannuation Act 1972.

Once the Council receives a copy of a report made to it by the Independent Remuneration Panel, it shall, as soon as reasonably practical:

1 ensure that copies of that report are available for inspection by members of the public at the main Council Offices and on the Council's website; and

2 publish in one or more newspapers circulating in its area, a notice which:

   a states that it has received recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of its scheme;

b describes the main features of that Panel's recommendations and specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance mentioned in the report;
c states that copies of the Panel's report are available at the main Council Offices for inspection by members of the public at such times as specific in the notice; and
d specifies the address of the Council Offices at which such copies are made available.

The Council shall supply a copy of a report made by the Independent Remuneration Panel to any person who requests a copy and who pays to the Council such reasonable fee as may be determined.

Before the Council makes or amends its scheme for the payment of allowances to Members, it must have regard to the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations to it on the scheme.

Membership
The Panel shall consist of up to five members, none of whom:

1 is also a Member of the Council in respect of which recommendations are made by the Panel, or a member of a committee or sub-committee of the Council; or

2 is disqualified from being or becoming a Member of the Council.

Quorum:
3 Members

Frequency of meetings:
As required