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**The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel  
appointed to review the allowances paid to Councillors  
of Spelthorne Borough Council**

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March 2026

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the 2003 Regulations"), as amended, require all local authorities to appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to advise on the terms and conditions of their scheme of councillors' allowances.
- 1.2 Spelthorne Borough Council formally appointed the following persons to undertake this process and make recommendations on its future scheme.

Sir Ivan Lawrence- Local Resident and Former Member of Parliament (Chair)
Alison Osmond - Local Resident and Business Person
Colin Squires- Local Resident and Business Owner.
Mark Palmer – Director: Development and Governance, South East Employers (Panel Adviser).

- 1.3 Our terms of reference were in accordance with the requirements of the 2003 Regulations, together with "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances" issued jointly by the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Inland Revenue (July 2003). Those requirements are to make recommendations to the Council as to:

- *Whether an adjustment to the level of allowances provided in 2025/26 should be applied and, if so, which index should apply and when should this be backdated to;*
- *Whether an adjustment to the level of allowances provided in 2026/27 should 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; and*
- *The level of Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair for the Audit Committee and should this be altered, when should this be backdated to.*

2. CURRENT SCHEME

- 2.1 The last full review of councillors' allowances was undertaken by Spelthorne Borough Council in February 2024. The scheme of allowances was brought into effect in May 2024.
- 2.2 As part of the last review the Panel recommended that a decision on the indexation of the allowances should be taken on an annual basis. The Panel did not meet in 2025 to determine the indexation rate for 2025/26. The Panel was also asked to consider the indexation rate for 2026/27.
- 2.3 Finally, the Panel was also asked to consider the Special Responsibility Allowance for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair for the Audit Committee and should this be altered, when should this be backdated to.

3. CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To determine whether a SRA should be payable to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee and the level of that allowance. The Panel reviewed the terms of reference for the committee and considered the frequency of meetings.

- 3.2 Following the consideration by the Panel of the role of the Audit Committee and the frequency of meetings the Panel recommends that the Chair should continue to receive an allowance of 40% of the Leader's Allowance and the Vice Chair 20% of the Leader's Allowance.

WE RECOMMEND: that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Audit Committee should continue to receive an allowance of 40% (Chair) and 20% (Vice Chair) of the Leader's Allowance. Therefore, no backdating in accordance with the 2003 Regulations is required.

- 3.3 The Panel considered the rate of indexation for the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2025/26 and recommended that for 2025/26 the indexation rate should be at the rate of staff salary increases for 2025/26 (2.8%). In accordance with the 2003 Regulations the Panel recommends that this increase should be back dated to 1st April 2025.

WE RECOMMEND: that the Indexation for 2025/26 should continue to be in line with the staff salary increases, 2.8%. WE FURTHER RECOMMEND: that in accordance with the 2003 Member's Allowances Regulations the increase should be backdated to 1st April 2025.

- 3.4 The Panel considered the rate of indexation for the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2026/27 and recommended that for 2026/27 the indexation rate should be at the percentage rate of staff salary increases as agreed by the Council. The indexation rate should apply from 1st April 2026 for a year.

WE RECOMMEND: that the indexation for 2026/27 should continue to be in line with the percentage staff salary increases. The indexation rate should apply from 1st April 2026 for a year.

**Mark Palmer (Independent Remuneration Panel, Adviser to the Panel)
March 2026**