Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority **Item 13**

31 March 2026

Scheme of Members' Allowances 2026-27

Purpose of the report

1. To recommend the adoption of the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2026/27 (see **Appendix**).

Recommendation

2. To adopt the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2026/27.

Strategic Planning Framework

3. The information and recommendation contained in this report is consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework.

    - **Corporate Plan Objective 28:** Plan and manage the Authority's work so as to make the most effective use of its resources, including generating sufficient income to maintain expenditure at the same level as 2014/15 in real terms across the extended National Park area.

Background

4. The current version of the Scheme of Members' Allowances was adopted by the Authority in 2011. The Scheme is reviewed and approved annually.

5. The table below shows the current Basic Allowance ("BA") and Special Responsibility Allowances ("SRA") available to Members, with effect from 1 April 2025.

	Annual allowance From 1 April 2025
Basic Allowance [BA] (available to all Members)	**£3,901**
Special Responsibility Allowance [SRA] ♦ Chair of the Authority (BA x 2) ♦ Deputy Chair of the Authority (BA x 0.5) ♦ Chair of the Planning Committee (BA x 0.75) ♦ Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee (BA x 0.4) ♦ Chair of Finance and Resources Committee (BA x 0.5) ♦ Chair of Audit & Review Committee (BA x 0.5)	**£7801** **£1,951** **£2,925** **£1,560** **£1,951** **£1,951**

5. Before the beginning of each financial year, the Authority must 'make a scheme' for the payment of BA for that year. The scheme must also make provision for other allowances, if the Authority intends to pay them – SRA, travelling, subsistence and Dependents' Carers' allowance (DCA).

6. Before a National Park Authority makes or amends a scheme, it must have regard to the recommendations made by any Independent Remuneration Panels (IRPs) of any Unitary or County Councils which appoint Members to the Authority. The following table shows those IRPs which have made recommendations in 2025-26 and a brief summary of their recommendations. The full reports are available from the relevant Local Authority websites - links are in the table below.

Local Authority	Date of IRP report	Recommendation(s)
North Yorkshire Council	12 November 2025 NY IRP Report	• The Basic Allowance paid to each councillor should increase by 3.6% (June 2025 CPI) from the existing £17,340 to £17,964 for 2026/27. • The Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) paid to those councillors who take on additional duties and responsibilities should increase by 3.6% (June 2025 CPI) for 2026/27. • The SRA paid to the Chair and members of the Licensing Sub-Committees should be amended so that the maximum amount paid for sessional payments is increased from £750 per person per annum to £1,000. • The mileage and subsistence rates paid to councillors be amended so that they are aligned with those paid to officers.
Westmorland and Furness Council	WF Members Scheme of Allowances 25/26 The IRP report was adopted for Member's Allowances Scheme 2024/25, 2025/26 and 27/28. WF IRP Report	• Basic Allowance in 2025/26 of £14,280.30 to £14,737.30 with an annual increase in line with JNC rates of 3.2%. • That the present Special Responsibility Allowances use the same index of 3.2%. SRA Chair £ 7,140.30, Deputy Chair £2,856.06 and Chair of Planning £ 7,140.30 • A Dependent Carer's Allowance will be payable based upon a reimbursement of actual receipted costs of up to the rate £12.71 per hour (alignment with the National Living Wage)
Lancashire County Council	12 March 2026 (Subject to approval) LCC IRP Report	• Recommended that the BA increase by £500 per member from 14,301 to £14,801 for 2026/27. This increase shall equate to the

		annual percentage increase in employees' pay under the National Joint Council for Local Government Services pay structure." • Dependents' Carers' Allowance be increased in line with the "Real Living Wage" (per hour) Current rate £13:45 OR the actual cost of providing the care, whichever is the lesser amount for the care of each dependant who is a child aged 14 or under.
Lancaster City Council	17 December 2025 LCyC IRP	• A rise in the basic allowance in-line with the staff pay award for 2025/26 which was agreed at 3.2%. This would represent an increase of £138.27, from £4,434.15 per annum to £4576.04 per annum • The Panel was, however, keen to make sure that SRAs, do not fall behind and therefore recommends that these also rise by 3.2% on 6 April 2026. • To reconfirm that the Dependents Carers Allowance should allow for reimbursement up to the maximum of the Real Living Wage as determined by the Living Wage Foundation (currently £13.45 per hour) on 1 May 2026.

7. In 2011, the Authority adopted a policy tying any increases in the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to staff pay increases. This is detailed in the Scheme of Members' Allowances, paragraph 10.1: 'Rates of BA and SRA will be updated annually, in line with the percentage change applicable to SCP 28 of the National Local Government pay spine.' The Local Government Employers in negotiation with the trade unions UNISON, Unite and GMB have agreed an increase on pay points 2 to 51 (an increase of 3.2% for SCP28). Members' allowances were uplifted in line with this National Pay Award, with the increase backdated to 1 April 2025 or from the start date for new Members.

8. If a pay increase for 2026/27 is agreed this will be back-dated to 1 April 2026 or from start date for new Members. Budgetary provision has been made for a 3% increase.

9. Members will recall that travel and subsistence rates are set at the same level as those paid to staff. The current scheme includes a travelling allowance with no longer a cap on miles per claim.

10. The maximum hourly rates of DCA have been increased in line with the increases announced to the rates of the national living wage which take effect from 1 April 2026.

Financial Implications

11. Budget provision has been made for the Scheme of Allowances 2026-27.

Legal Implications

12. The Scheme of Allowances 2026-27 complies with legal requirements.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

13. The Scheme of Allowances 2026-27 has been updated in line with the Authority's EDI policy and dyslexia friendly style guide.

Rebecca Eslick
Committees Officer

Scheme of Members' Allowances

Approved 31 March 2026 for the financial year 2026/27

1. Introduction

1.1 As required by the Environment Act 1995 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the National Park Authority, makes a scheme for the payment of allowances to Members. The scheme provides for payment of the following allowances: -

- Basic Allowance - payable to each Member;
- Special Responsibility Allowance - for certain Members in recompense for additional duties undertaken as a result of their holding of various positions within the Authority;
- Dependents' Carers' Allowance – payable for attendance at an "Approved Duty" [see **Appendix A**] and some "Special Responsibility Duties" as agreed by the Authority;
- Travel and Subsistence - payable for attendance at an "Approved Duty" [see **Appendix A**] and for relevant "Special Responsibility Duties" as agreed by the Authority.

1.2 Details of the current rates for the various allowances referred to above are set out in **Appendix B**.

2. General Points

2.1 A Member may choose to forego all or any part of their entitlement to an allowance by giving written notice to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer).

2.2 All enquiries relating to Members' allowances should be made to the Committees Officer by telephone: 01969 652364 or by email: committees@yorkshiredales.org.uk

3. Basic Allowance (BA)

3.1 BA is: -

- payable to all Members, unless they elect to not receive the payment.
- payable in monthly instalments, in arrears and apportioned for part year entitlements, where the term of office of a Member begins or ends otherwise than at the beginning or end of a year. [As it is paid automatically, direct into a bank account, Members do not need to claim it.]
- subject to the deduction of Income Tax and National Insurance if necessary [see Paragraph 9.3].

3.2 Definition of BA
BA is payable in recognition of the time and resource devoted by Members to their work, including: dealing with correspondence; attendance at meetings; training, conferences and workshops, and incidental costs such as IT consumables, postage and private telephone use.

4. Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA)

4.1 SRA is: **-**

- paid to Members who have specified special responsibilities, unless they elect not to receive payment.

- allocated on the basis of degree of responsibility and on the expected call on Members' time.

- paid monthly in arrears and apportioned for part year entitlements, where a Member does not have throughout the whole of a year any such special responsibilities as entitle him / her to an SRA.

- As determined by HMRC, is subject to the deduction of Income Tax and National Insurance.

4.2 A full list of the posts that receive SRA and the current rates payable is set out in **Appendix B.**

4.3 SRA is in recognition of the duties over and above those of a "normal" Member that relate to certain positions within the Authority, including: meetings with officers; dealing with correspondence; visits; meeting official Visitors to the National Park; official openings and familiarisation/fact finding visits.

4.4 SRA does not include an element for travel or subsistence. Claims for travel and subsistence can, therefore, be claimed for any duty that is covered by the payment of an SRA.

4.5 SRA does not include an element for payment of expenses of care for dependents. Members are expected to carry out some SRA duties (such as dealing with correspondence, research and reading), without having to organise external care. DCA will not be payable for these types of activity. DCA can be claimed for attending meetings and events, attended as part of the SRA duties.

5. Dependents' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

5.1 Subject to paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3, DCA may be claimed where a Member arranges paid care in respect of named children aged 14 or under for whom the Member has parental responsibility, or in respect of other named dependents where there is medical or social evidence that care is required and for whom the Member is a carer.

5.2 Payment of DCA is:-

- claimable for any approved duty, and for attending meetings or events covered by a special responsibility payment (see also paragraph 4.5);

- payable for the duration of the meeting or event attended, plus travelling time to and from the meeting;

- paid on the basis of the actual expenditure incurred, subject to a maximum hourly rate and a maximum annual allowance, as specified in Appendix B;

- not payable where a Member already receives a carer's allowance from the Department for Works and Pensions;

- not payable where the care provided is by a parent of the dependent, a person who is part of the Member's household or someone under 16;

- claimed monthly on the Members' claim form.

5.3 All claims for DCA must be supported by receipts.

6. Travel Allowance (TA)

6.1 TA is:-

- claimable for any approved duty, and for any duty covered by a special responsibility payment;

- claimed monthly on the Members' claim form;

- payable at the rates set out in Appendix B.

6.2 **Notes**

- Train Fares are reimbursed at standard rate

    - [NB - Members who regularly use the train for Authority business, may reclaim the cost of an appropriate Railcard.];

- If practicable, Members should use public transport and claim the fare(s) rather than the mileage allowance;

- Members should, wherever possible, share transport - an additional payment is payable for each passenger carried;

- Reimbursement of Taxi Fares may be made in exceptional circumstances;

- Reimbursement may be claimed for expenditure on tolls, ferries, parking fees etc.;

- Any Member who submits mileage claims for reimbursement must ask for and retain sufficient Value Added Tax (VAT) receipts for the purchase of fuel to support their claim. These receipts must be retained by the Member for six years. These procedures are necessary to enable the Authority to recover VAT from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) on reimbursement of mileage claims.

7. Subsistence Allowance (SA)

7.1 SA is:-

- claimable for any approved duty or SRA duty exceeding 4 hours which spans the agreed meal time periods;

- claimable for the actual cost of the meal (*) or the overnight expense up to the maximum allowed;

- claimable monthly via the Members' claim form; receipts should be submitted whenever possible, to support expenditure (*);

- Not claimable when the Authority provides food for Members at meetings;
- reimbursed at the rates set out in Appendix B (*).

7.2 Note: * - all claims for subsistence must be supported by receipts.

8. Non Claimable Duties

8.1 For the avoidance of doubt, the following duties are not approved for the purpose of claiming Travel Allowances and Subsistence Allowances:-

- single Member duties (unless sanctioned by Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority);
- Parish Council meetings;
- attendance at a meeting of a committee, sub-committee, panel or working group of which you are not a Member, unless you have been specifically invited in advance by the Chair;
- outside bodies who pay expenses to Members;
- duties relating to outside bodies that are not committee, sub-committee or working group meetings (please see “Approved Duties” – Appendix A).

9. Claims

9.1 How to Claim

- BA and SRA are paid automatically; monthly in arrears, direct into a bank account, after completion of initial details, and assuming a Member chooses to receive them.
- DCA, TA and SA must be claimed on the Members’ Claim Form for allowances.
- In order to assist with the monitoring of the budget, Members are requested to submit claims monthly, no matter how small. In order to try to ensure payment at the end of the following month, claims should be received by the Committees Officer (at the Bainbridge Office) at the latest by the 4th of the month following that claimed for. This allows all claims to be paid together on the last working day of that month.
- Claims should be submitted as soon as possible after the month end. If that is not possible, then they should be submitted within three months of a duty having been performed.
- Claims should be submitted electronically (in which case receipts obtained by Members for subsistence or other expenses should be retained by the Member for six years). A supply of claim forms can be obtained from the Committees Officer.
- Allowances must not be claimed where the Member is entitled to receive payment from another body.

9.2 Partial Year Entitlement

- A Member, who begins or ends a term of office or a SRA post during the course of the financial year, is entitled to an appropriate proportion of the BA or SRA for that year.

9.3 Tax and National Insurance

- BA, SRA and DCA are all taxable and are subject to national insurance, depending on individual circumstances.
- Members can request a PAYE code from HMRC for the taxing of payments.
- If no other tax code is supplied, Members will be taxed at basic rate.
- Members may be able to obtain an exemption for national insurance if they are over State Retirement Age upon proof of date of birth.

10. Other Provisions

10.1 Annual Updates

- Rates of BA and SRA will be updated annually, in line with the percentage change applicable to SCP 28 of the National Local Government pay spine.
- Hourly rates of DCA will be updated annually, in line with the national living wage.

10.2 Repayment

- Where payment of any allowance has already been made in respect of any period during which the Member is not a Member of the Authority, or for any other reason not entitled to receive the allowance in respect of that period, the Authority may require repayment of such part of the allowance.

Appendix A

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Approved Duties

1. Attendance at any of the following is specified as an approved duty:

   (a) Any meeting of the Authority, or any of the Authority's Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Parties, Panels or other bodies of which they are a Member specified in a list approved from time to time by the Authority.

   (b) Any other meeting the holding of which is authorised by the Authority, or a Committee or Sub-Committee, Working Party or Panel of the Authority, provided that attendance at the meeting is specified as an approved duty by a resolution of the body authorising it.

   (c) Any meeting or event (non-social) attended by a Member Champion (MC) in the performance of his/her duties as a MC and which is authorised by the Lead officer for that area of the Authority's work.

   (d) Any formal training event, conference or outside body at which the Member has been formally authorised to attend as a representative of the Authority.

   (e) Any formal meetings of the Local Government Association or the Association of National Park Authorities or the English National Park Authorities Association by the Chair and/or Deputy Chair of the Authority.

   (f) Any meetings or events (non-social), not covered elsewhere in the Scheme, on the official invitation of the Chief Executive

2. Allowances must not be claimed where the Member is entitled to receive payment from another body.

3. Attendance by the Chair and/or Deputy Chair at Authority/Committee/Sub-Committee briefings shall be deemed 'approved duty' for the purposes of the payment of DCA and Travelling and Subsistence Allowances.

Appendix B

Summary of Rates of Allowances for Members

Allowances and subsistence rates 2026/27, pending any 2027/28 pay settlement

Category of Allowance	Rates Payable Annual
Basic Allowance [BA] (available to all Members)	**£3,901**
Special Responsibility Allowance [SRA] • Chair of the Authority (BA x 2) • Deputy Chair of the Authority (BA x 0.5) • Chair of the Planning Committee (BA x 0.75) • Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee (BA x 0.4) • Chair of Finance and Resources Committee (BA x 0.5) • Chair of Audit & Review Committee (BA x 0.5)	 **£7801** **£1,949** **£2,925** **£1,560** **£1,951** **£1,951**
Dependents' Carers' Allowance [DCA] • Hourly rate paid up to national living wage • Maximum annual allowance (equivalent to 100 hours per Member per year)	**Up to £12.71** **£1271.00**

Travelling Allowance [TA] and Subsistence and Accommodation

Expense Type	Rates
Accommodation (London)	£150 per night
Accommodation (Elsewhere)	£120 per night
Other accommodation	£50 - No change
Breakfast	£10
Lunch	£10 - No change
Tea	£8 - No change
Evening Meal	£20
Mileage (Car, up to 10,000 miles/year)	45p per mile - No change
Mileage (Car, over 10,000 miles/year)	25p per mile
Business passenger	5p per mile - No change
Mileage (Bike)	20p per mile
Mileage (Motorbike)	24p per mile

If you have any queries about the Scheme of Allowances, please contact the Committees Officer on 01969 652364 or by email: **Committees@yorkshiredales.org.uk**