



COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR

7 MAY 2025

SENIOR COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to advise Members of the implementation of the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025 and to recommend the level of remuneration for Chairs of the Comhairle's Committees and Boards.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) was reconvened in April 2023 to undertake an independent review of councillor remuneration. THE SLARC published their Report in February 2024. The Scottish Government published an official response in July 2024, indicating that they would accept the pay and banding recommendations and introduce Regulations in 2025 with a view to implementation on 1 April 2025.
- 2.2 The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025, which implement the recommendations of the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) require the Comhairle to review the remuneration for Senior Councillors. Elected Members salaries were increased in accordance with the Regulations with the annual amount to each Member increasing from £21,345 to £25,982 per annum.
- 2.3 The Comhairle is asked to note the implementation of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025, consider whether to increase the number of Senior Councillor Allowances to be awarded to a maximum of 10 and to determine the level of each Allowance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Comhairle:
 - (a) note the implementation of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025.
 - (b) agree to set the salary of the Convener at the maximum of 75% of the post of Leader as prescribed in the Regulations.
 - (c) consider whether to designate two further positions of Senior Councillor, in respect of the posts of Chair of Comataidh na Gàidhlig and of the Community Safety Board; and
 - (d) determine the allowances for Senior Councillors in the amounts set out in paragraph 5.6 below.



Contact Officer: Derek Mackay, Governance and Elections Manager
Appendix: None
Background Papers: The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025

IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

Resource Implications	Implications/None
Financial	There will be a cost of £789,125 from implementation of the Regulations; implementation of the recommendations would cost an additional £40,035
Legal	Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025. The Comhairle is obliged to implement their provisions.
Staffing	None
Assets and Property	None
Strategic Implications	Implications/None
Risk	None
Equalities/Child Rights	None
Corporate Strategy	The Comhairle will continue to have in place proper arrangements (known as the Governance Framework) for the governance of the Comhairle's affairs.
Environmental Impact	None
Consultation	None

BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) was reconvened in April 2023 to undertake an independent review of councillor remuneration. THE SLARC published their Report in February 2024. The Scottish Government published an official response in July 2024, indicating that they would accept the pay and banding recommendations and introduce Regulations in 2025 with a view to implementation on 1 April 2025.
- 5.2 The Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025, which implement the recommendations of SLARC require the Comhairle to review the remuneration for Senior Councillors. Elected Members salaries were increased by 21.72% from 1 April 2025 in accordance with the Regulations with the annual amount to each Member increasing from £21,345 to £25,982 per annum. The amount is based on 80% of the median salary for all employees in the public sector as published in the October 2022 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings data. This has been uplifted by 5.7% in line with the median increase in salaries of public sector employees and reflects the uplift that would have been due had the recommendations been implemented from 1 April 2024.
- 5.3 The Regulations also reduced the number of bands, moving the Councils in Band A to Band B, and set new increased salaries for Local Authority Leaders and Civic Heads. The Comhairle is in Band B and the revised salary for the Leader is £50,063. The revised salary for the Civic Head is £37,548 which represents 75% of the Leader's salary.



- 5.4 The Regulations permit up to 10 Senior Councillor Allowances for Authorities in Band B. In May and June 2022, the Comhairle agreed to award 8 Senior Councillor Allowances to Service Committee Chairs, the Vice-Chair of Policy and Resources Committee/Depute Leader, Chair/Vice-Chair of the IJB, Chair of the Planning Applications Board and the Chair of the Social Work and Social Care Board. The Comhairle may wish to consider awarding a further 2 Senior Councillor Allowances to the remaining unremunerated posts of Chair of Comataidh Gàidhlig and of the Community Safety Board.
- 5.5 The calculation of the amount available for Senior Councillor Allowances is unchanged in the Regulations and amounts to £317,646.25. There is discretion within the Regulations in determining the amounts, but the total spend must remain within the cap and no Senior Councillor Allowance can be more than 75% of the amount paid to the Leader. The Comhairle has previously recognised the duties of each post in determining the level of Allowances with the Chairs of Service Committees receiving a higher Allowance. The Comhairle may wish to consider awarding an Allowance to the Depute Leader at the same level as that of the Service Committee Chairs to take account of the duties of the role.
- 5.6 Should the Comhairle wish to continue to award Allowances recognising the duties an option is detailed below which sets the Allowance for Service Committee Chairs and the Depute Leader at the mid-point between the new Councillors salary and the Convenor's Allowance with the remaining Allowances set at £28,207 which is the amount payable to Chairs of Joint Boards in terms of the Regulations. The Joint Boards meet with a similar frequency to the Comhairle's Boards. Should the Comhairle award two additional Allowances the total would come to £299,855 which is within the cap. This figure includes the basic Councillor salary of £25,982.

	2024	2025
Leader	35,580.00	50,063.00
Convener	26,686.00	37,548.00
Depute Leader	22,823.00	31,764.00
Chair Education, Sport and Children's Services Committee	24,541.00	31,764.00
Chair Transportation and Infrastructure Committee	24,541.00	31,764.00
Chair Sustainable Development Committee	24,541.00	31,764.00
Chair Audit and Scrutiny Committee	24,541.00	31,764.00
Chair Planning Applications Board	22,823.00	28,207.00
Chair/Vice Chair Integrated Joint Board (IJB)	22,823.00	28,207.00
Chair Social Work and Social Care Board	22,823.00	28,207.00
Chair Community Safety Board	N/A	28,207.00
Chair of Comataidh na Gàidhlig	N/A	28,207.00

- 5.7 Members may wish to consider other options in determining the level and number of Senior Councillor Allowances awarded, noting that the overall amount must be within the cap of £317,646.25.

CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Comhairle is asked to note the implementation of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2025, consider whether to increase the number of Senior Councillor Allowances to a maximum of 10 and to determine the level of each Allowance.

