



**St Helena
Government**

ST HELENA GOVERNMENT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REMUNERATION REVIEW REPORT, AUGUST 2025

L A I D U P O N T H E T A B L E

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL REMUNERATION REVIEW REPORT

August 2025

Executive Summary

In accordance with Section 72(2) of the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, His Excellency the Governor appointed an Independent Body to recommend appropriate levels of remuneration, allowances, and other benefits for the Members of the Executive Council, Legislative Council, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

The Legislative Council is separate from the Public Service. Members are financially compensated for holding a political position for St Helena. Therefore, the remuneration for the Legislative Council should not be compared directly to the Public Service which consists of professional employees who are held accountable to job descriptions and employment policies, but is reflective of the unique responsibilities of their political office, and in line with St Helena's economy.

The Independent Body made the following recommendations to Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Legislative Council (Remuneration and Allowances) Ordinance 2010, 16 of 2021:

SCHEDULE 1

(Section 3 (1))

REMUNERATION OF MEMBERS

Item	Description	Amount	Proposed
1	Remuneration of an Elected Member of the Legislative Council, except where item[s] 2, 3, 4 or 5 applies	£20,000 per annum	£20,000 per annum
2	Remuneration of a Minister as an elected member of the Executive Council	£35,000 per annum	£35,000 per annum
New	Where a Minister holds two portfolios, additional remuneration is provided		£5,000 per annum
3	Remuneration of a temporary member of the Executive Council deputising for a Minister under Section 37H of the Constitution	Payment pro-rata at an annual rate of amount in item 2 from day 5 onwards	Payment pro-rata at annual rate of amount in item 2 from date of deputisation
4	Remuneration of the Chief Minister	£50,000 per annum	£50,000 per annum
5	Remuneration for a Minister deputising for the Chief Minister under Section 37F of the Constitution	Payment pro-rata at an amount rate of amount in item 4 from day 5 onwards	Payment pro-rata at annual rate of amount in item 4

			from date of deputisation
6	Remuneration of the Speaker	£15,000 per annum	£20,000 per annum
7	Remuneration of the Deputy Speaker, except where item 8 applies	£11,00 per annum	£11,000 per annum
8	Remuneration of the Deputy Speaker when deputising for the Speaker	Payment pro-rata at an annual rate of amount in item 6	Payment pro-rata at an annual rate of amount in item 6
9	A contributory pension will be paid on behalf of a member	Payment will be in line with the St Helena Government staff policy and the pension rules as applicable at the time the relevant Member entered Council	All members will be eligible for a 15% pension contribution, in line with the Legislative Council Pension Policy.

SCHEDULE 2

(Section 3 (2))

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES AND BENEFITS

Item	Description of Allowance or Benefit	Proposed Allowance or Benefit
1	Internet: No separate provision. Cost of internet included in the remuneration payments listed in Schedule 1.	No changes proposed. <i>We recommend removing this line item.</i>
2	Computer Equipment: An Elected Member will be provided at public expense with a laptop computer (with mouse and printer) and reasonable quantities of consumables such as paper and ink for the conduct of their duties as an Elected Member.	Computer Equipment: An Elected Member will be provided at public expense with a laptop computer (with mouse). This will be allocated in line with the Legislative Council IT Policy.
3	Mileage and Transport: a b c d e	Mileage and Transport: No separate provision. Mileage and transport expenses included in remuneration payments listed in Schedule 1. <i>We recommend removing this line item.</i>
4.	Overseas Travel and Subsistence:	

	a	An Elected Member who travel[s] overseas on official business will be provided with travel, accommodation and allowances on the basis set out in the several sub-items of this item. Publicly funded travel and accommodation [are] limited to the Elected Member; additionally, costs for a spouse or partner must be paid by the Elected Member. Similarly, if an Elected Member travelling alone prefers more expensive travel or accommodation, the additional cost will be the responsibility of the Elected Member.	An Elected Member who travels overseas on official business will be provided with travel, accommodation and allowances. This will be allocated in line with the Legislative Council Overseas Travel and Subsistence Policy.
	b c d e f g h i j		<i>We recommend removing line items 4, b-j.</i>

During the review, the Independent Body made other findings that they felt important to consider, especially during this period where the Governance Review of June 2025 will be addressed. The additional recommendations are as follows:

- The Legislative Council is a body separate to the Public Service, but the Public Service provides its administration and finance. It is recommended that a Service Level Agreement is established between the Legislative Council and Public Service on the support provided.
- The role of Champion for Culture, Children, Older Persons, etc is strengthened by providing broad descriptions of the role, ensuring regular engagement with focus groups, creating structured reporting mechanisms, and raising public visibility so that communities understand who the Champions are and how they can be approached.
- The Code of Conduct for Members of the Legislative Council approved by Resolution on 16 December 2022 should be upheld. Members should be regularly reminded about ethical conduct and their accountability to the people throughout their term. They should be encouraged to periodically reflect on and challenge themselves to uphold the Code of Conduct to the highest standard.

Legislative Council Remuneration Review

Introduction

In accordance with Section 72(2) of the Constitution of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha, His Excellency the Governor appointed an Independent Body to recommend appropriate levels of remuneration, allowances and other benefits for the Members of the Executive Council, Legislative Council, the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Terms of Reference

The Independent Body was required to review the current remuneration rates and allowances as set out in the Legislative Council (Remuneration and Allowances) Ordinance, 2010, 16 of 2021, and make recommendations for change, if required.

In carrying out the review, the Independent Body was required to consider views from serving members of Legislative Council, make comparison with comparable levels of responsibility within the Public Service and Private Sector, and meet with key officials.

The remuneration review was carried out following the completion of the first term of the ministerial system.

The Independent Body consisted of:

Chairperson: Helena Bennett

Members: Barbara A George
Giselle Richards
Leeanne Henry

Methodology

Evidence was gathered from the following sources:

- i) Code of Conduct for Members of Legislative Council, December 2022
- ii) Discussions with key actors, including Chief Minister and Ministers, Elected Members, Speaker and Deputy Speaker, Chief Secretary and Financial Secretary, Portfolio Directors/Head of Sections, Youth Parliament, Public Accounts Committee Chair, locum Attorney General and Pension Administrators.
- iii) IT Policy for members and ministers
- iv) Income Tax Ordinance, 2012, 5 of 2019
- v) Legislative Council Remuneration and Allowances Ordinance 16 of 2021 and 10 of 2018
- vi) Public Service Pay Spine, 1 July 2025
- vii) St Helena Governance Review Report, June 2025
- viii) St Helena Government, LD – Guide to subsistence rates for programmes and visits overseas
- ix) Standing Orders of the Legislative Council, December 2022

- x) The St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha Constitution (Amendment) Order 2021

Using the information, each item of Schedule 1 and 2 of the Legislative Council Remuneration and Allowances Ordinance 16 of 2021 was considered, whilst bearing in mind:

- i) Encouraging a diversity of individuals to consider a political role
- ii) Reduction of administrative time to manage the remuneration, benefits and allowances
- iii) The levels of responsibility and accountability
- iv) To allow flexibility within benefits and allowances to reflect changing economy

Findings and Recommendations

i) Schedule 1 Remuneration of Members

The Legislative Council (meaning Ministers, Elected Members and Speaker's Office) is separate from the Public Service. Its Members are financially compensated for holding political positions for St Helena. The Public Service consists of professional employees, holding contracts for specific roles and responsibilities that require qualifications, skills, and experience. These employees work to employment policies and procedures and are performance managed. Therefore, the remuneration for the Legislative Council should not be compared directly to the Public Service, but be reflective of the unique responsibilities of their office and in line with St Helena's economy of scale.

Schedule 1, Item 1 – Elected Member

The role of the Elected Member is to a) legislate laws for St Helena, b) scrutinise the implementation of laws and policies, and c) to champion the people of St Helena. To strengthen democratic effectiveness, Elected Members should be encouraged and supported to engage more robustly with the scrutiny processes, actively represent their constituents by raising community concerns in an efficient manner, and take forward legislative initiatives.

After the first term of the Ministerial System, it was found that the majority of the Elected Members were unsure of their roles and responsibilities. Rather than adopting a proactive stance, some were perceived as limited in their engagement. There was insufficient use of the Scrutiny Committees, and limited in their challenge (Ministers Question Time) to the Ministers. During the term, only 6 formal scrutiny committee meetings were held¹. Whilst the Constitution, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct provide a broad overview of expectations for Elected Members under the new ministerial system, Elected Members preferred to have a Terms of Reference.

¹ Post report edit: 3 formal scrutiny committee meeting were held per Scrutiny Committee, with reports laid before the House, which can be found on the St Helena Government website

The current remuneration specified in the Legislative Council Remuneration Ordinance 16 of 2021 is appropriate to the role. Members are elected to this political position and cannot be compared to a government employee, who is required to hold qualifications, skills and experience. This remuneration is approximately 1.9 times higher than the average national salary².

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that no change is made to the Ordinance and the Elected Members are remunerated at the sum of £20,000 per annum.

The £20,000 per annum takes into account the role of the public office, and mileage provision.

Schedule 1, Item 2 – Minister

The new Ministerial System arrangements have provided strong accountability for decision-making and policy setting, with individual Ministers taking responsibility for a portfolio within the Public Service. Ministers recognised their responsibility for providing strategic direction and policy design, whilst the Portfolio Directors are required to implement. However, more often Ministers defaulted to operational matters, and Advisory Board meetings were held more frequently than necessary, sometimes weekly, not allowing Portfolio Directors sufficient time to manage operations and implement policies effectively.

Reference was made to align the Ministers remuneration with the salaries of Portfolio Directors; however, it is recognised that the two roles are fundamentally different. Portfolio Directors are paid a professional salary that reflects their qualifications, expertise and responsibility for operational management. Ministers are elected by the constituents and remunerated according to the political nature of their role, which carries responsibility for strategic leadership and political decision-making. The current remuneration specified in the Legislative Council Remuneration Ordinance 16 of 2021 is appropriate. This is approximately 3.3 times higher than the average national salary¹.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that no change is made to the Ordinance and the Ministers are remunerated at the sum of £35,000 per annum.

The £35,000 per annum takes into account the role of the public office, and mileage provision.

² St Helena Statistics 2023/24 average salary for full time employment £10,490.

The Statistics Office is aware of 2 x minimum wage increase since 2023/24; however the full-time employment is in decline, a factor that is considered during the average salary calculation. This is still to be calculated.

The Constitution makes provision under Section 35 (1) that there will be a Chief Minister and four other Ministers appointed, and under Section 37B, the Chief Minister will recommend allocation of Government portfolios to Ministers to the Governor. The remaining functions that fall outside of the portfolios will become the responsibility of the Chief Minister. During the 2021-2025 term there were five portfolios and one portfolio was allocated per Minister, with the fifth portfolio being the responsibility of the Chief Minister. The review found that whilst the Chief Minister took on the additional responsibility, this potentially could become burdensome with providing due diligence as Head of the Government, Central Support, and providing strategic direction and policy decisions to a separate portfolio. This however, was the choice of the 2021-2025 Chief Minister and Ministers, but may not be the same arrangements for the new term, where a Minister could hold two portfolios.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that an additional £5,000 be paid to the Minister that supports two portfolios.

Schedule 1, Item 4 – Chief Minister

The Chief Minister is the Head of Government. The political representative for St Helena, providing continuity in island related matters to the UK government and internationally. The Chief Minister provides the overarching strategic vision and supports their Ministers in policy setting.

During the 2021-2025 term, the Chief Minister shaped the structure of the ministerial system of St Helena and gained the respect of her peers within the overseas territories and UK government. Taking on the additional role as the Minister for Education, Skills and Employment Portfolio, could have impacted the focus that was given to both the position of Chief Minister and that of Portfolio Minister. It was found that operational issues were being addressed at a strategic level.

The review revealed that plans are in place to provide a Private Secretary to the Chief Minister. At present, any research or administration is carried out directly by the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary. With a Private Secretary carrying out administration, communications and secretarial support, time will be freed for the Chief Minister to focus on big-ticket items. The current remuneration specified in the Legislative Council Remuneration Ordinance 16 of 2021 is therefore appropriate. This is approximately 4.8 times higher than the average national salary¹.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that no change is made to the Ordinance and the Chief Minister is remunerated at the sum of £50,000 per annum.

The £50,000 per annum takes into account the role of the public office, and mileage provision.

Schedule 1, Item 6 – Speaker

The Speaker is the presiding officer for the Legislative Council. The Speaker is not elected by the public, but appointed by the Elected Members. It was found from the review that the role of the Speaker was not compelling during the first term of the ministerial system. Elected Members were not supported in their roles and were not held accountable for their productivity and conduct. Conduct was only addressed if a formal complaint was raised, whilst the Speaker did not believe that it was his role to hold Elected Members to account. As a result, low-level questions were sometimes raised in Legislative Council, Scrutiny Committees, and Ministers Question Time that would have been better addressed directly to the Minister or Portfolio Director. Greater guidance and scrutiny of questions from the Elected Members was needed to ensure meaningful contributions to governance and policy development.

The Speaker is the Chair of the local Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) branch. The Speaker uses the CPA for advice, or alternatively matters are developed through self-learning. Support was provided during the 2021-2025 term from the UK Speaker's Office, with the Speaker being able to attend the annual conferences of Parliamentary Speakers and Presidents, whose aim is to foster contact, coordination and exchange among Speakers of the UK House of Commons and Overseas Territories.

The role of Speaker is of utmost importance by providing strong leadership of the Legislative Council, actively promoting democracy both within St Helena and across the Overseas Territories, and ensuring Elected Members engage responsibly, and guiding their input to support robust governance and policy outcomes.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that the Speaker is remunerated at £20,000 per annum.

The £20,000 per annum includes mileage provision.

Schedule 1, Item 7 – Deputy Speaker

The Deputy Speaker is required to take on the role of Speaker, when the Speaker is not available. The Deputy Speaker is otherwise not allowed to participate in the Legislative Council matters. The Deputy Speaker is however, required to familiarise him or herself with the proceedings and papers, in case they are called upon at short notice to deputise. The Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Council also fills the role of Deputy Chair of the local CPA branch, and attends every meeting of this association.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended that no change is made to the Ordinance, and that the Deputy Speaker is remunerated at £11,000 per annum.

The £11,000 per annum includes mileage provision.

Schedule 1, Items 3, and 5 – Deputisation

The Legislative Council (Remuneration and Allowance) Ordinance specifies that:

- a) Any Elected Member deputising for a Minister
- b) Any Minister deputising for the Chief Minister

is provided additional payment pro-rata an annual rate of the amount paid to the Minister or Chief Minister from day 5 onwards.

Deputising is carried out if a Minister or Chief Minister either leaves the island for overseas business and their schedule does not provide scope to continue their day-to-day duties, or for personal reasons. Given that the person starts deputising immediately, they should be paid from the date of deputisation, not a few days later. It is noted that the Deputy Speaker is paid from start of deputisation.

Recommendation 7

It is recommended that the Ordinance is changed for item 3 and item 5, whereby “payment pro-rata at an annual rate of amount in item 2 or 4”.

Schedule 1, Item 9 – Pension Contribution

Under the Legislative Council (Remuneration and Allowance) Ordinance, Elected Members, Ministers, Chief Minister, Speaker and Deputy Speaker are eligible for pension contribution. The Ordinance specifies that the contribution is treated in line with St Helena Government’s staff policy and pension rules.

However, it was found that the Government staff policy did have a few grey areas when it came to the treatment of the Legislative Council. A new government employee is not eligible for pension contributions until 3 months into their contract. This was applied to the 2021-2025 term of Legislative Council and was queried, as they are not Government employees.

The age range of the outgoing Legislative Council Members was varied with a few members already retired. It was questioned as to whether retired Members were eligible for pension contribution. However, SHG made the decision to provide contribution to all Elected Members. It was also found that not all Members provided a Pension scheme for their contribution to be paid into, and opted to receive their pension contribution in hand, but taxed. Once a contribution is taxed and paid in hand, it no longer can be defined as a pension contribution.

A retired person can draw on their pension, and can still receive pension contributions. However, it cannot be paid into the same pension account, a new account/scheme must be set up. If serving for a short period on the Legislative Council, the investment made on the new account/scheme will be minimal, unless the individual is re-elected or takes up new employment.

Pension contribution, however, is included in the remuneration package to make the role of Legislative Council attractive to all eligible on the electoral role, regardless of age. It makes provision for individuals to secure their financial future, whilst serving in a political role.

Recommendation 8

It is recommended that all Members are eligible for a 15% pension contribution. This will be paid directly to an approved pension scheme under the Income Tax Ordinance, 2012, 5 of 2019 of the Members choosing.

Pension contributions will not be paid in hand.

Recommendation 9

It is recommended that a Pension Policy is drawn up for the Legislative Council that provides direction for the treatment of pensions for Members.

ii) Schedule 2 - Members Allowances and Benefits

The Legislative Council (meaning Ministers, Elected Members and Speaker's Office) is separate from the Public Service. The Legislative Council should be treated separately, with its own policies and procedures. St Helena Government policies should not apply.

Schedule 2, Item 1 – Internet

This item no longer exists, nor has the review found it necessary to add internet provision.

Recommendation 10:

No changes are proposed to Ordinance 16 of 2021. It is recommended that the line for internet provision is removed from the schedule.

Schedule 2, Item 2 – Computer Equipment

The Elected Members felt that they should not be held accountable to the St Helena Government IT Policy, as it provides stipulations for staff members and does not allow Elected Members flexibility, particularly in their communication with the public. Whilst a policy was drawn up specifically for Legislative Council, there were a few Members that decided not to sign the Policy and instead used their personal computers, as they felt behold to St Helena Government scrutiny.

Recommendation 11:

The “Policy for the issue, use and return of information technology resource and for the issue of IT consumables for members of the legislative council” should be reviewed to ensure it is up to date for the new Ministerial Government term and signed off by the Legislative Council.

Keeping in line with St Helena’s green agenda, printing (use of paper and ink) should be kept to a minimum. Ministers’ individual offices, Elected Members common room and Speaker’s office are equipped with printers for the occasional use.

Recommendation 12:

It is recommended that the Legislative Council is provided with a laptop computer and mouse only.

Schedule 2, Item 3 – Mileage and Transport

Administrative burden is placed on St Helena Government employees for interpreting Schedule 2, Item 3. For example, home to office transport is included within the remuneration, but it is queried where is the designated office. However, the majority of the Legislative Council do not claim for mileage; when carrying out their constituency duties or attending meetings. The recommended remuneration is set at a level to cater for mileage.

Recommendation 13:

It is recommended that no separate provision is made for mileage and transport.

Schedule 2, Item 4 – Overseas Travel and Subsistence

As part of their public role, Legislative Council Members will be required to represent St Helena at international conferences, meetings and networking. This is essential as it allows for St Helena to be represented in important Overseas Territories decisions.

Recommendation 14:

It is recommended that Item 4’s description is changed to, “Elected Members who travel on overseas official business will be provided with travel, accommodation and allowances. This will be allocated in line with the Legislative Council Overseas Travel and Subsistence Policy”.

Item 4 is very descriptive of what allowances and benefits are due to a member with regards to attending business overseas. Members are required to provide receipts for every meal purchased, which are scrutinised on their return. When Elected Members and Ministers are on overseas business, there are occasions where they eat on the go between meetings, and therefore are not able to obtain a receipt from a street vendor. A level of privilege should be given to the Legislative Council when travelling overseas on official business, that is applied to St Helena Government employees and almost all organisations world over. However, as

these provisions are set out in the Ordinance, there is currently no flexibility to make any change.

Recommendation 15:

It is recommended that an Overseas Travel and Subsistence Policy is created for the Legislative Council and approved by the Council. The following allowances are included in the Overseas Travel and Subsistence Policy and financial provision is made as follows:

- (a) Members who travel overseas on official business will be provided with travel, accommodation, and allowances. Publicly funded travel and accommodation is limited to the Member; additional costs for a spouse or partner will be paid by the Member. Similarly, if the Member prefers an upgrade to their travel or accommodation, the additional cost will be the responsibility of the Member.
- (b) Travel, appropriate to the purpose of the official business, will be arranged on the following bases:
 - Elected Members and Speaker by premium economy class (or equivalent, depending on airline)
 - Ministers by business class (or equivalent, depending on airline)
- (c) Transfers to and from the airport outside of St Helena, where possible, will be arranged and booked prior to departure from the island, using best value for money
- (d) Local transport in country: A sum will be provided for travel to and from meetings and accommodation (amount dependent on country and length of stay). It will be left to the Members discretion as to what mode of transport is used; however, an expense account must be kept.

The Chief Minister and Ministers will be provided with a private car for official business only.

- (e) Fitting accommodation will be booked in a suitable area that will allow Members to carry out their official duties with ease. Accommodation will be booked at best value.
- (f) Subsistence: A daily meal allowance will be provided at rates suitable to the country and city. Members are not required to provide receipts as evidence. This can be researched at the time of planning. With basic guideline as follows:

Daily Meal Allowance	
Breakfast	£10
Lunch	£15
Dinner	£30
Daily Incidental Expenses	£20

Note daily incidentals should allow provision for laundry as meetings and travel may not allow Members time to make other arrangements.

- (g) An entertainment allowance will be provided to the Chief Minister whilst carrying out official business overseas (amount dependent on country and nature of trip).
- (h) Travel Insurance will be provided for Members when travelling overseas on official business; this includes equipment for official business.

The Speaker, the Public Accounts Chair and the Deputy Chair are also invited to represent St Helena at conferences and workshops. Note: Public Accounts Chair and Deputy Chair are independent members appointed from the community by His Excellency the Governor. These conferences and workshops are often supported by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK and UK National Audit Office, which focus on improving understanding of financial scrutiny, and performance measurement. Whilst travel and accommodation are provided, subsistence is not. These roles are part of the Legislative Council.

Recommendation 16:

It is recommended that the Overseas Travel and Subsistence Policy is applied to all members of the Legislative Council and sub-committees.

Additional Findings and Recommendations

Legislative Council is not part of the Public Service

Whilst the Public Service provides administrative support to the Legislative Council, the Legislative Council should not be held accountable to Public Service's policies and procedures. The Legislative Council should be treated separately. However, this may be difficult to process especially where the Legislative Council does not have their own office, and funding comes from the Public Service budget.

Recommendation 17:

A Service Level Agreement should be established between the Legislative Council and Public Service, where the Public Service carries out day to day administration, IT and financial transactions, and provide resources such as a Clerk of Council, etc

Champions are not defined

At present, the roles of Champions within the Legislative Council are not clearly defined. Elected Members are assigned responsibilities as Champions for specific areas such as Culture, Children, and Older Persons, but there is little guidance on what these roles entails, how they should be carried out, or how their impact should be measured.

During our discussions with the St Helena Youth Parliament for example, it was observed that the Youth Parliament remains somewhat isolated from the work of the Legislative Council. This highlights a broader concern that the Champion roles, while well-intentioned, are not being used to create strong and sustained links between elected representatives and the groups they are meant to advocate for.

Recommendation 18:

It is recommended that the role of Champion is strengthen by introducing a broad description of what the role entails, ensuring regular engagement with focus groups,

creating structured reporting mechanism, and raising public visibility so that communities understand who the Champions are and how they can be approached.

Code of Conduct for the Legislative Council

During the review, multiple references were made to the Nolan Principles and questions were raised about whether Ministers and Elected Members consistently upheld these standards, particularly regarding personal interests and commitments to their roles. It was observed that some Elected Members failed to attend briefings, meetings, and community gatherings. Informal Legislative Council meetings are treated informally, with Members dressing casually, not being present for the entire meeting or carrying out other business during the meeting.

The Code of Conduct for Members of the Legislative Council approved by Resolution on 16 December 2022, clearly outlines the conduct of a Member.

Recommendation 19:

To reinforce ethical conduct and accountability, the Legislative Council should be regularly reminded of the expected conduct throughout their term and encouraged to periodically reflect on and challenge themselves to uphold the Code of Conduct to the highest standard.

They are the representatives of the people and should hold their term in office in highest regard.

Independent Body, constituted 3rd June 2025

19 September 2025

