

COUNCIL MEETING – 12 OCTOBER 2021

MEMBERS INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To enable Members to consider re-convening the Members Independent Remuneration Panel.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The process for determining and setting Members' Allowances for local authorities is set out in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. These Regulations set out the range of allowances that can be paid to Councillors and the requirement to have an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council regarding Members' Allowances.
- 2.2 The Panel must consist of at least three people whose purpose is to make recommendations about the allowances paid to elected members. The Council must "have regard" to the Panel's recommendations in setting its scheme. None of the panel members can be a member of the Council or one of its committees or of an authority in respect of which the Panel makes recommendations.
- 2.3 The basic role of the Panel is to make recommendations as to:
- the level of Basic Allowance for all Members
 - the categories of special responsibility for which a Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid and the levels of those allowances
 - as to whether Dependent Carers' allowance should be payable to Members and the amount of such an allowance
 - travelling and subsistence allowances
 - any annual increase
- 2.4 As Members will be aware, the Independent Remuneration Panel report, following their review conducted in late 2020, was submitted to the Full Council at their meeting held on 9 March 2021. The Council approved the recommendations made by the Panel in their report, but resolved not to implement at the current time, given the pandemic, the constraints on public sector pay and the review of the Council's governance arrangements.
- 2.5 At the Annual Council Meeting held on 4 May 2021, the Council resolved to adopt a Leader and Cabinet style of governance with implementation to take effect from May 2022. Since that resolution, the Member Working Group tasked with formulating the detail of how the governance arrangements should operate, have made significant progress in designing a new governance model. This model was submitted to the Councillors' Commission at their meeting held on 28 October 2021 for consideration.
- 2.6 Given the progress made, it is considered that the Independent Remuneration Panel could now be reconvened with a view to writing a further report which would be presented to the Full Council Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8 March 2022, which would enable a new Scheme of Members Allowances to be adopted as from May 2022 to account for the new governance arrangements.

3.0 **Proposals**

Convening the Panel

- 3.1 It is proposed that the same Panel be re-convened to undertake this further review, given the knowledge they acquired and the evidence they gathered during the last process. The Panel comprised of John Shaw who acted as Chairman, and the Council's two Independent Persons, Paul Cox and Sarah Britton. As Chairman, John Shaw has the requisite local government financial background and has sat on Members' Independent Remuneration Panels for North Kesteven District Council.
- 3.2 All three members of the Panel have indicated their willingness to support this further review, and as before, it is considered that they would bring a good and appropriate mix of skills and experience required for the Panel.

Indicative Timetable

- 3.3 An indicative timetable for the review was considered by the Councillors' Commission at their meeting held on 28 September 2021, and this is set out below:

Activity	Time frame
Full Council to approve the convening of the Independent Remuneration Panel	12 October 2021
Re-provide bench marking data and information on the proposed new governance arrangements to be sent to the Panel members	October 2021
Panel to meet with the Statutory Officers – Chief Executive / Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer	November 2021
Panel to meet with the Governance Review Member Working Party	November 2021
Chairman of the Panel to draft report and submit to the Council	December 2021
Draft Panel report to be considered by the Councillors' Commission	December 2021
Any comments on the draft Panel report to be considered by the Panel	January 2022
Chairman to submit final report to the Council	February 2022
Full Council to consider and adopt the Final Recommendations on the Members' Allowances Scheme	8 March 2022
New Scheme for Members' Allowances to be implemented	18 May 2022 following Annual Council and implementation of new governance arrangements

Payments to the Panel

- 3.4 When convening the Panel, the Council will need to determine the level of payments to the Panel members. For the last review, payments of £2,000 were agreed for the Chairman and £1,200 for the two further members.

4.0 Equalities Implications

- 4.1 There are no equalities implications that arise from the establishment of the Independent Member Remuneration Panel, however the Panel will need to take into account any relevant equalities implications when undertaking its review of the Members Allowances Scheme.

5.0 Financial Implications – FIN (21-22/4409)

- 5.1 This report proposes that Members consider convening a Members' Independent Remuneration Panel and appropriate payment amounts for Panel members. If a Panel is convened and the Council pays Panel members in line with the previous payments, it is forecasted that there would be spend of up to £5,000 in 2021-22 only. This would be paid for from the Corporate Change Management budget.

8.0 RECOMMENDATIONS that:

- (a) the Members Allowance Independent Remuneration Panel be reconvened in accordance with section 3 of the report; and**
- (b) the Council determine an appropriate payment for the Panel members, which will be financed from the Corporate Change Management budget.**

Background Papers

Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

For further information please contact Nigel Hill on Ext 5243

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