

Report to: Meeting of the Full Council: 21 October 2025

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor Paul Peacock, Strategy, Performance & Finance

Director Lead: Sue Bearman, Assistant Director Legal & Democratic Services

Lead Officer: Nigel Hill – Business Manager Elections & Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Ext. 5243

Report Summary	
Report Title	Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel
Purpose of Report	To convene an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider Members Special Responsibility Allowances given the recent changes in Committees.
Recommendations	That Council: a) approves the convening of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in the report to undertake a full review of the Special Responsibility Allowances; and b) approve a cost envelope of £4,500 for the purposes of the review.
Reason for Recommendation	To bring the current Scheme of Members Allowances in line with the current Committees following the recent changes.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its last meeting held on 15 July 2025, Full Council approved the Terms of Reference and made appointments to the two new committees, the Audit & Accounts Committee and Governance, General Purposes & Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Committee.
- 1.2 At this same meeting, appointments were made to the new Licensing Committee for which Terms of Reference were approved on 20 May with the Committee taking effect as from 15 July 2025.
- 1.3 These new Committees replaced the former General Purposes and Audit & Governance Committees.
- 1.4 Given these changes, the Full Council considered arrangements for the convening of an Independent Remuneration Panel and agreed to reconvene the same Panel who last undertook a review of Special Responsibility Allowances. The resolution of the Full Council was to convene the same Panel to undertake a full review of Special Responsibility Allowances within a cost envelope of £2,200.

- 1.5 Further to the Council resolution, the previous panel were approached to carry out the review. The Council's two Independent Persons confirmed their availability to assist, but unfortunately the previous Chair of the Panel was unable to undertake the review. Therefore, an alternate Chair has been sought which requires the approval of the Council.

2.0 Proposal/Options Considered

- 2.1 Following various enquiries and recommendations as to potential Chairs, an approach was made to Mr Declan Hall. Mr Hall acts as a 'remuneration consultant' and has a wealth of experience of Independent Remuneration Panels having conducted circa 20 reviews in the last 18 months for a whole range of authorities including Ashfield District Council and the East Midlands Combined Authority.
- 2.2 Mr Hall has indicated his availability for the Panel to consider Special Responsibility Allowances which reflected the resolution of the Full Council.
- 2.3 Given information provided by Mr Hall, it is anticipated that a review of Special Responsibility Allowances would take around 3- 5 days. Approximate costs for Mr Hall services are £550 per day plus any expenses.
- 2.4 With the support of the two other Panel Members, as Chair Mr Hall would undertake the relevant benchmarking and research and would produce the final report following various interviews with stakeholders and relevant parties.
- 2.5 Given the estimate of time required, costs for the proposed Chair would be up to £3,000 for a full review of Special Responsibility Allowances. An appropriate payment for the two Independent Persons as the other panel members would also need to be made and it is suggested that dependent on the scope of the review these be made at £750.
- 2.6 Based on the approximations above the Council will need to consider a cost envelope of £4,500 to support the full review of the Special Responsibility Allowances.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications (FIN25-26/2029)

- 3.1 The £4,500 can be financed by the Corporate Contingency budget in year.

Legal Implications (LEG2526/7873)

- 3.2 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 (with particular reference to special responsibilities) and the requirement to have an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council regarding Members' Allowances.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

The current Councillors' Allowance Scheme is published - <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/your-council/your-council/councillors-and-committees/councillor-allowances/>