



Committee and Date

Council

23 February 2012

Item

7

Public

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

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1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report brings to members' attention the recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on Members' Allowances for the 2012/13 financial year in respect of the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, as well as reimbursement of expenses for travel, subsistence and overnight accommodation.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Council is requested to consider and approve, with or without amendment, the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, set out in its report attached at Appendix 1.

REPORT

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has reviewed the Members' Allowances Scheme prepared in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, following consideration of representations from the political group leaders, individual office holders and other members, both in person and in writing and from the Council's Chief Executive.
- 3.2 The report addresses the statutory requirement to present recommendations on Basic, Special Responsibility, Dependent Carers' and Co-optees' Allowances, as well as those on expenses for travel, subsistence and overnight accommodation.
- 3.3 Having taken account of all relevant considerations and publications, as well as comparable arrangements in similar authorities, the Panel recommends that:

- (a) All members receive a Basic Allowance of £11,514 per annum, indexed to the NJC staff annual salary award, (which is likely to remain unchanged until 20 February 2013 at the earliest);
- (b) All Special Responsibility Allowances are based on multiples of the Basic Allowance and indexed to the NJC staff annual salary award;
- (c) No member receives more than one Special Responsibility Allowances;
- (d) The Special Responsibility Allowances paid to the Deputy Portfolio Holders remain at 0.25 of the Basic Allowance but that their job description be reviewed to define more precisely the work each is expected to undertake and that they maintain a log of their activity for further consideration by the Panel in May/June 2012 in order that the level of any increase can be assessed and paid from the date of appointment.
- (e) A Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to the Chairman of the Licensing Sub-Committee subject to this role being combined with that of Vice-Chair of Strategic Licensing Committee in the interest of consistency, with the combined allowance being set at 0.25 of the Basic Allowance.
- (f) No further change be made to any of the other Special Responsibility Allowances at this time.
- (g) The mileage rate paid to members for "Approved Duties" be increased from 40p to 45p per mile with effect from 1 January 2012, to be paid retrospectively in April 2012, in line with the arrangement applied to staff.
- (h) No change be made to the other travel, subsistence and overnight allowances payable to members at this time.
- (i) No change be made to the level of the Co-optees' and Dependent Carers' allowances at this time.

3.4 During consideration of the IRP's previous report by Council on 15 December 2011, the Leader invited all Group Leaders to participate in a discussion on a proposal to vary the arrangements relating to approved duties. Following further consideration of this matter, the Group Leaders recommend that rather than the recommended amendment set at paragraph 5.18 of the IRP's report, the current rule, which is set out below, should be retained:

"Any duty undertaken in connection with the discharge of the functions of the Council by virtue of holding the office of councillor, or co-optee of co-opted member."

3.6 The Council is requested to reaffirm the acceptability of this rule.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Keith Barrow

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – February 2012.