

APPENDIX 1

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL

**REPORT
OF
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
ON
MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

23 NOVEMBER 2009

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1.0 CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

- 1.1 The Panel met on 6 November 2009 to consider the representations received on the operation of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme. We reviewed the comments, both written and oral, in the light of the voluminous reading we had previously examined in 2008, as set out in Appendix 2, as well as information presented by members about the operation of the current arrangements during the last six months.
- 1.5 This report sets out our recommendations on which we are unanimous. As members will see, we still consider that the model which was developed to fit the Blueprint Design for One Council for Shropshire report, a vital component in the successful bid for unitary status, remains appropriate and is still fit for purpose. Moreover, we consider the model to be transparent to members and public alike. It should therefore provide a framework that the Council can use in future years

Ciaran Martin
Chairman

November 2009

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Local Authority (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, as amended, require the Council to review its scheme of Members' Allowances by 31 March each year. As the election of the new Authority did not take place until 4 June 2009, this is a little sooner than we were anticipating. Nevertheless, it has given us the opportunity to consider whether the principles and assumptions on which our earlier recommendations were based were sound and continue to apply.

2.2 Our last report, dated September 2009, was referred to both the former Shropshire County Council and the Implementation Executive before adoption. In this we outlined our statutory role and the terms of reference which the former Council had set for us. We are not aware of any alteration to the law since that time; neither have we been informed of any change to our terms of reference. We have therefore presumed that the new Council would require us to make recommendations on:

- the level of a Basic Allowance payable to all members of the Council;
- the roles and responsibilities for which Special Responsibility Allowances should be payable and the level of each such allowance;
- whether allowances should also be pensionable;
- the inclusion of child care and/or dependent carers allowances and the level of any such payments; and
- the level of allowances for travel, subsistence and overnight stays.

2.3 Having done so, it is then for the Council to determine whether to accept, with or without amendment, the recommendations on the level and extent of allowances, expenses and subsistence payments contained in this report.

2.4 Our last review was the most comprehensive review in recent times. We received numerous representations and considered many varied documents over a period of seven months. The list of briefing documents is contained in Appendix 2.

2.5 The three most important reports were:

- the Blueprint Design for One Council for Shropshire;
- the New Shropshire Council Political Structure; and
- the Member Roles and Responsibilities.

2.6 These were approved by the Implementation Executive and provided us with a vital insight into the intended style of the new authority. They were extremely influential in our thinking and we drew from them heavily when framing our recommendations. Having examined the current position, we are content that our earlier assessment continues to have currency.

2.7 We also took account of information published by the Local Government Association on the average number of hours per week spent on Council/political duties. This followed the publication of the National Census of Local Authority Councillors in England in 2008. Again, this appears to remain current.

3.0 PRINCIPLES

3.1 The principles on which the Council's scheme are based are:-

- that no member should be out-of-pocket as a result of undertaking his/her public duties;
- that the level of allowances should not act as a disincentive to anyone wishing to stand for election to the Council;
- that the Government's expectation that the voluntary nature of the office of councillor requires a public service discount to be incorporated in the calculation of final allowances paid to members; and
- that the method of determining the number and level of Special Responsibility Allowances payable to senior office holders is fair and transparent.

3.2 We strongly believe that these principles remain fundamentally correct. But, to ensure their robustness, we shall continue to review them in the light of statutory advice and current best practice.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 In reaching our conclusions this time we have again relied on the work completed in 2008. We have also considered the generic role that councillors are expected to perform, the different levels of responsibility attached to specific senior offices and the time councillors spend undertaking their various public duties. We have also canvassed the views of the four political group leaders.

4.2 The leaders of the Labour and Independent groups informed us that, although they think the workload for members is greater than was originally expected, they do not feel that the extra warrants any increase in the allowances at this time.

4.3 The Liberal Democrat Leader and Deputy Leader consider the current scheme to be reasonably satisfactory, but suggest the following changes:-

- Increasing the Basic Allowance by between £2-£3,000 to make the role of councillor sufficiently attractive to working people.
- Linking the Basic Allowance to a recognised professional white collar or local government salary grade.
- Paying a modest Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to all members of the Area Planning Committees at a similar percentage to that applied by the former district councils in recognition of the additional workload.
- Increasing the level of the Group Leaders' SRA so that it equates to that paid to the Chairs of the Area Planning Committees to reflect the range and breadth of the Leaders' role.
- The introduction of a SRA for Deputy Group Leaders where that Group has a membership of at least 10% of the Council.

- Reversing the policy limiting members to one SRA so that those that qualify are entitled to receive 50% of any second and subsequent SRA.
 - Increasing the Subsistence and Overnight Allowances to accord with the present cost of living.
 - Introducing a performance assessment framework for those receiving Special Responsibility Allowances.
- 4.4 Conversely, the Leader of the Council, as Leader of the Conservative Group, advised us in discussion that he felt the current scheme was pitched about right. It had addressed a number of longstanding issues for the groups, particularly the need to attract a wider and more socially representative cross-section of the community to stand for election. And, although those members serving on the Area Planning Committees had a heavy workload, this was normally balanced off by their other Group commitments.
- 4.5 Structural changes to the current scheme were therefore premature in his opinion and anything other than the normal annual indexing of allowances would send out a completely wrong message to the public.
- 4.6 It is our opinion that another element which needs to be reflected in the design of any allowances scheme is the public's expectation that a proportion of a councillor's work will be undertaken voluntarily. This view is reinforced by Government guidance and the views of the Councillors' Commission published in December 2007.
- 4.7 In its report, entitled "Representing the Future", the Commission argues strongly against the creation of a class of professional councillors. This view which is supported by the Government, and endorsed by other work undertaken by the Local Government Association, indicates that the majority of members elected to English unitary councils spend an average of about 26 hours per week on council and political business.
- 4.7 We have taken account of these matters, as well as the views put to us by the respective Group Leaders, in framing the recommendations contained in the following sections of the report.
- 5.0 BASIC ALLOWANCE**
- 5.1 Every allowance scheme must make provision for a basic, flat rate allowance which is payable to all elected members. Its purpose is to recognise the time councillors are required to give to the role, as well as such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and electors. It also covers attendance at Council and political group meetings and such incidental costs as the use of their homes.
- 5.2 Last year the significant difference between the roles of councillors in the new council and the former county and district/borough councils was emphasised by most commentators and we took full account of this when framing our recommendation on the level of the Basic Allowance. On this occasion the Liberal Democrats have made representations suggesting that this allowance ought to be increased by between £2-3,000. They maintain that the current allowance is not sufficiently attractive at the present level to encourage those currently in employment to stand for election to the Council.

- 5.3 The other political groups have not expressed similar reservations. Consequently, we feel that it would be premature to draw such a conclusion, particularly as only one of the 74 seats on the new Council was uncontested last June.
- 5.4 When looking to set the level of the Basic Allowance last year, we considered a number of options. These include introducing a formulaic approach based on either a senior officer or professional white collar salary grade, as now suggested by the Liberal Democrats. We also evaluated the use of the hourly rate paid under the national minimum wage for someone aged over 21 years, as well as a fixed monetary sum similar to that paid by comparable authorities. Having factored in the time commitment expected and the advice provided on these matters by Government and other agencies into our assessment, we concluded that the most straightforward approach would be to set all allowances by reference to a fixed monetary sum.
- 5.5 Using the level of allowances paid elsewhere in the country, we recommended that the amount payable to all councillors should be set at £12,000 in a full year. We can see no reason to alter our earlier view, so recommend no increase in the Basic Allowance other than that resulting from its indexing to the annual NJC staff pay award.

6.0 **SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES**

- 6.1 Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) are payable for duties which fall within a number of categories. These include acting as a leader of a political group, being a member of the Council's Executive (Cabinet), chairing a committee, or sub-committee.
- 6.2 The scheme must specify the precise amounts of allowance paid for each responsibility and, where one political group is in control, the Council must make provision for the payment of a SRA to at least one member of a minority group. It should be noted, however, that this does not require the scheme to provide for a Deputy Leader's allowance. Neither does it require that the amount payable to any such person be set at a particular amount of percentage of the Basic Allowance.
- 6.3 We have received further comment on the current range and level of SRAs from the Liberal Democrats. These relate to the need for additional SRAs for each member of the Area Planning Committees and the inclusion of a new SRA for Deputy Group Leaders for those groups with a membership which is at least equivalent to 10% of the Council. The Liberal Democrats have also suggested that some method of performance assessment should be introduced to ensure that those receiving SRAs are properly fulfilling their roles.
- 6.4 It is suggested that this could be done by the role being validated against an agreed job description by the political groups, an officer, or an external agency (e.g. IDEA). However we do not consider this to be a matter within our terms of reference at present. For this to happen, Group Leaders would need to take the lead in comparing performance against their expectations and the role descriptions contained in the Constitution.
- 6.5 Further investigation of the suggested introduction of SRAs for members of the Area Planning Committees has the potential to affect over 30 individual members. Together with the other officers for which SRAs are payable, this number would result in more than half the Council receiving such payments. This is not regarded as good practice and therefore is something we feel unable to support at this time.

- 6.6 It has also been proposed that a SRA should in future be paid to the Deputy Leader of groups with seven or more members. The rationale is based on workload which is seen as being significantly greater, certainly in relation to policy formulation, than that of backbench members. At present we have seen limited evidence to support the introduction of such an SRA and so, on balance, consider such a change to be premature. We will, of course, reconsider the position in the light of fresh evidence.
- 6.7 Following from the precedent set last year, our recommendations for the holders of the most senior offices and for other related arrangements, including subsistence and travelling expenses, are set out below:-

Leader of the Council

- 6.8 During previous discussions with Group Leaders and senior officers about the respective workloads of the Leader of the Council and various Cabinet members there has been general agreement about the increasing demands, both in terms of physical workload and time commitment, which unitary status has placed on the Leader. These demands are considered to be substantially above those placed on all other members of the Executive. We continue to hold the view that the Leader's SRA should be set at twice the Basic Allowance and recommend accordingly.

Deputy Leader(s)

- 6.9 We regard the office of Deputy Leader as an important one to which additional responsibilities attach above and beyond those of being a Portfolio Holder. We consider that in combination these extra responsibilities justify SRAs of 1.25 x the Basic Allowance.

Portfolio Holders (Members of the Executive)

- 6.10 We consider that the remaining seven Portfolio Holders do give up a substantial amount of time to perform their duties and responsibilities. In recent times we have been aware that the relative workloads of the Portfolio Holders differ and have given serious consideration to the introduction of differential payments to reflect the actual workloads. But, on this occasion, no such representations have been made to us, presumably because any relative variation in workloads was evened out when the new portfolios were fixed. This being the case, we find it difficult to recommend anything other than a single flat rate allowance for all Portfolio Holders and duly recommend a SRA which is equivalent to the Basic Allowance.

Scrutiny Chairs

- 6.11 We consider the contribution made by Scrutiny through policy review, policy development and by holding the Executive to account is critical to healthy political debate. The role of the Scrutiny Panel Chairmen in this process cannot therefore be overstated.
- 6.12 We regard the role as being as important to the political and democratic process as that of the Portfolio Holders. For this reason we previously recommended that the Chairman of the Strategic Overview Panel and the Chairmen of each of the four service related Scrutiny Panels each receive a SRA equivalent to the Basic Allowance. Again, we are happy to reiterate our recommendation.

Speaker and Chairman of the Council

- 6.13 The Special Responsibility Allowances paid to both the Speaker and the Chairman of the former County Council were aligned some while ago. Accordingly, we recommended that, in view of the importance of both offices and the wide range of ceremonial and civic duties each is required to perform separately or as deputy for the other, both office holders receive a Special Responsibility Allowance which is equivalent to 0.75 x the Basic Allowance.
- 6.14 This appears to have worked well and we therefore recommend that this arrangement continues.

Chairmen of Regulatory Committees (Planning and Licensing)

- 6.15 The importance of these bodies has been emphasised during discussions with the Group Leaders. We have listened to the representations made by numerous members, particularly concerning the work of the Area Regulatory Committees and consider that our earlier decision to recommend SRAs for the Chairs of the Area Committees was correct.
- 6.16 We therefore reiterate our recommendation that the Chairmen of the Area Planning Committees, as well as the Strategic Planning Committee, continue to receive SRAs which are equivalent to 0.75 x the Basic Allowance and that the Chairs of the Area and Strategic Licensing Committees receive a SRA which is equivalent to 0.25 x the Basic Allowance.

Group Leaders' Allowance

- 6.17 As mentioned earlier in the report, there is a statutory requirement where one political group is in control and the Council has decided to pay Special Responsibility Allowances, for the scheme to include provision for the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to at least one member of a minority group.
- 6.18 Traditionally, Councils have followed the Parliamentary model and included a payment for the leader of the next largest political group who has also assumed the designation Leader of the Opposition. But, where there have been two or more opposition groups of similar or equal standing, this has sometimes led to practical difficulties over interpretation and representation. We have received numerous representations of this type in recent times.
- 6.19 For a scheme to be lawful it is not necessary to designate the leader of the second largest group as Leader of the Opposition within the scheme. Neither does the allowance have to be set at a particular level. Although it has been suggested that this scheme should reflect the traditional model and include a designated Opposition Leader, the majority of contributors to the debate locally take a contrary view. Our current perception is that there appears to be limited value in following the Parliamentary model locally. Similarly, we are not convinced of any reason to suggest enhancing the level of the current allowance.
- 6.20 Accordingly, we recommend that all Group Leaders receive a SRA that is equal to 0.5 x the Basic Allowance and we further recommend that in order to qualify for such

payment, a political group must be at least equal to 10% of the total membership of the Council. (7 Members).

Champions

- 6.21 We still consider that the Member Champions' role has the potential to provide a genuine benefit to those communities they have been established to represent. And it is principally for this reason that we recommend that SRAs for Champions be maintained at the equivalent of 0.125 of the Basic Allowance.

Independent Chairman and Vice Chairman of Standards Committee

- 6.22 The Local Government Act 2000 requires that hearings into Members' conduct under the statutory code are chaired by one of the Independent Members co-opted to serve on the Council's Standards Committee.
- 6.23 We consider that these office holders play an extremely important part in the governance of the Council. They also provide the Monitoring Officer with an impartial source of advice, as well as an independent "listening ear" on matters of probity and propriety.
- 6.24 Further the recent changes around the Members' Code of Conduct and the role the Council takes in relation to Parish/Town Councils need to be recognised and only serves to reinforce the value of the present arrangements. Again, we recommend that individual SRAs which are the equivalent 0.25 and 0.125 times the Basic Allowance be paid to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Standards Committee.

Chairs of Audit and Pensions Committees

- 6.25 Since statute requires the establishment of these two important Committees, we consider that the office of Chairman of both the Audit and Pensions Committees have comparable responsibilities, although their duties and time commitments differ.
- 6.26 Accordingly, we recommend that they both receive SRAs which are equivalent to 0.25 of the Basic Allowance.

Payments to the Vice Chairs of Panels and Committees

- 6.27 Representations have been received about the long established policy of not paying allowance to any of the Vice Chairmen of Committees and Panels. After giving the matter considerable thought, we have again concluded that, whilst we appreciate the role of Vice Chairmen is potentially an important one, we remain unconvinced that a Special Responsibility Allowance for undertaking this role is necessary.
- 6.28 We consider that the office affords the person a valuable opportunity to see the work undertaken by a Chairman at close quarters and learn the skills necessary to hold senior office at some point in the future. We therefore recommend that no SRA be paid to the Vice Chairs of committees and panels.

Co-Optees' Allowance

- 6.29 We recommend that this allowance should be maintained and paid at the rate of £75 for meetings up to four hours duration and £143 where the meeting exceeds over four hours.

Child and Dependent Carers' Allowance

- 6.30 We recommend the retention of this allowance which is set by reference to the National Minimum Wage for people aged 22 years. The hourly rate from 1st October 2009 will be £5.80 per hour.
- 6.31 Last year we recommended that the ceiling per member per annum be increased to £2,500 as it had not been adjusted since September 2004. Members accepted both this recommendation and the proposal that it be reviewed biennially so as to keep the amount relevant. Again we recommend the retention of this principle.

Travel Expenses and Subsistence Allowances

- 6.32 Travel expenses and subsistence allowances are payable in accordance with regulations for attendance at an "approved" duty which is defined in the Members' Allowances Regulations 2003. To assist members the relevant paragraphs have been reproduced in Schedule 2 of this report.
- 6.33 We have received no representations in respect of the allowances payable for the use of cars, taxis or bicycles and therefore recommend that the current NJC rates be applied and increased in line with the conditions relating to staff.

Buses and Trains

- 6.34 Again, no representations were received on this subject. We recommend that the future arrangements should normally be based on second class travel, but any member wishing to travel first class by train should obtain approval from the Chief Executive prior to them booking their ticket.

Overnight Stays

- 6.35 We have received representations about the need to review the level of subsistence payments, particularly for overnight stays in London. It is now three years since we recommended that the Council depart from the National Joint Council for staff conditions in this area so as to give members sufficient flexibility in relation to bed, breakfast and evening meal when required to stay in the capital. At that time our recommendation that the maximum amount should be increased to £130 exclusive of VAT (£152.70 gross) was accepted. But it appears that the cost of accommodation in Central London has risen recently, thereby limiting the intended flexibility. In addition, members have also pointed out that it is not possible to purchase a modest two course evening meal at a hotel within the NJC staff scale of £8.38.
- 6.36 We accept the existing limits for overnight stays in London need to be increased to reflect recent price inflation and recommend the current limit of £130 exclusive of VAT be increased to £145 exclusive of VAT, making a total allowance of £170.37 gross, but subject to the following:-

- (i) Wherever possible trips should be planned well ahead so the Council is able to purchase at the most economic cost.
- (ii) That, to facilitate this approach, the Members' Secretary be required to undertake a monthly review of the travel needs of all Directorates.
- (iii) Members should be encouraged to resist last minute (next day) invitations to London unless they really must attend.
- (iv) That the current purchasing arrangements be reviewed to ensure that the Council is continuing to get value for money when balancing the need for reasonable proximity/convenience. As an interim measure and whilst more detailed research on linkage is conducted by the Panel and procurement activity is undertaken, the Members' Services staff will try to identify suitable inclusive hotel deals which would enable Members to have a reasonable standard of accommodation and a reasonable evening meal."

6.37 With regard to overnight stays in the provinces, we consider that the current level of £120, exclusive of VAT remains appropriate and recommend its retention for 2010.

Subsistence

6.38 We have some sympathy with the suggestion that the National Joint Council for staff meal rates are no longer appropriate particularly for members visiting London. We have therefore considered replacing the current NJC for staff scale with the Soulbury scale, but there appears little difference between the two. Furthermore, before recommending any departure from the NJC conditions, we would wish to ensure that any new arrangements are aligned to a recognised national scale. This aids transparency and has the added benefit of enabling the Council to index its rates to increases in such a scale. Unfortunately, we are yet to find such a scale but will return to this matter when we undertake our next review. For the time being, we recommend the retention of the NJC for staff subsistence scale for the reasons already mentioned.

Receipts

- 6.39 Audit regulations and current best practice require members to produce formal receipts to be forwarded with all mileage and subsistence claims.
- 6.40 We consider this to be in keeping with private sector companies and recommend that this shall be a requirement of future arrangements.

Withholding and Repayment of Allowances

- 6.41 We recommend that the Council includes the power to withhold payment of allowances:
- where a member (or co-opted member) is suspended or partially suspended from his/her responsibilities or duties as a member of the Authority in accordance with Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under that Part;

- if a member (or co-opted member) ceases to be a member or co-opted member or ceases to be entitled to receive an allowance for a period.

6.42 Also where an allowance has already been paid, we recommend the inclusion of a provision enabling the Council to require repayment of such part of any allowance as relates to any such period within the Council's scheme.

Backdating

6.43 We also recommend that where a Councillor takes on duties entitling him/her to a new or different level of allowances, the new entitlement may be applied retrospectively to the date that such change took effect.

Links to Indices or Other Measures

6.44 The provision to index members' allowances and travel expenses and subsistence to a nationally recognised index is specifically included in the 2003 regulations. We recommend that the Council continues to link its Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to the annual percentage increase in NJC Staff salaries.

6.45 We recommend that the travel rates payable to members also continue to be linked to those approved for NJC Staff at the casual users rates

Pensions

6.46 We recommend that subject to them meeting the terms and conditions all members of the new Council be eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.

SCHEDULE 1

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL ALLOWANCES SCHEME
SEPTEMBER 2009

		£	Multiplier
BASIC ALLOWANCE	(74)	12,120	
SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES			
Chairman of Council/Deputy Speaker	(1)	9,090	(0.75)
Speaker/Vice-Chairman	(1)	9,090	(0.75)
Leader of Council (inc Group Leader)	(1)	24,240	(2)
Deputy Leader of Council + Portfolio Holder	(2)	15,150	(1.25)
Executive Members (Portfolio Holders)	(7)	12,120	(1)
Member Champions	(6)	1,515	(0.125)
Opposition Group Leaders	(1)	6,060	(0.5)
Chairman of Strategic Overview Scrutiny Panel	(1)	12,120	(1)
Chairmen of Service – Related Scrutiny Panel	(4)	12,120	(1)
Chairman of Strategic Planning Committee	(1)	9,090	(0.75)
Chairmen of Area Planning Committee	(3)	9,090	(0.75)
Chairman of Strategic Licensing and Safety Committee	(1)	3,030	(0.25)
Chairmen of Area Licensing and Safety Committee	(3)	3,030	(0.25)
Chairman of Audit Committee	(1)	3,030	(0.25)
Chairman of Pensions Committee or Vice-Chairman of Pensions Committee	(1)	3,030 1,515	(0.25) (0.125)
Chairman of Independent Standards Committee	(1)	3,030	(0.25)
Vice-Chairman of Independent Standards Committee	(1)	1,515	(0.125)

LIST OF APPROVED DUTIES

Approved duties are specified in Regulations as follows:-

- A meeting of the Executive
- A meeting of a Committee of the Executive
- A meeting of the Authority
- A meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority
- A meeting of some other body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations
- A meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee of a body to which the Authority makes appointments or nominations
- A meeting which has both been authorised by the Authority, a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Authority, or a Joint Committee of the Authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of a joint committee and to which representatives of more than one political group have been invited (if the Authority is divided into several political groups), or to which two or more councillors have been invited (if the Authority is not divided into political groups).
- A meeting of a Local Authority Association of which the Authority is a member.
- Duties undertaken on behalf of the Authority in pursuance of any Standing Order requiring a member or members to be present while tender documents are opened.
- Duties undertaken on behalf of the Authority in connection with the discharge of any function of the Authority conferred by or under any enactment and empowering or requiring the Authority to inspect or authorise the inspection of premises.
- Duties undertaken on behalf of the Authority in connection with arrangements made by the Authority for the attendance of pupils at a school approved for the purposes of Section 342 of the Education Act 1996.
- Any other duty approved by the Authority in connection with discharging the duties of the Authority or its committees or sub-committees.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON PANEL MEMBERS

Ciaran Martin - Panel Chairman

Ciaran chaired the former Shropshire County Council Independent Remuneration Panel from its inception until 1 April 2009. He was reappointed as chairman of the new Shropshire Council Panel following reorganisation of local government across the county. He is a Human Resources Director and is currently Director of Staffing and Talent Management (Europe) of a large multinational company. Ciaran is a Chartered Fellow of his professional institute, the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development.

Alan Weaver

Alan is the TUC's Regional Policy and Campaigns Officer for the Midlands, a role he has held for 12 years. Before joining the TUC Alan worked for a number of trade unions, including the GMB, Nalگو and UNISON. Alan first became a trade union shop steward when he worked for Nottinghamshire Library Service. Alan sits on a number of Independent Remuneration Panels, including Coventry City Council and Shropshire Fire Service.

Julia Baron

Since graduating with a Business degree, Julia has spent her entire career working in the voluntary sector (first in London, then in North Wales and latterly in Shropshire) across a variety of themed areas including children, ex-offenders, the environment and community development. She has been the Chief Executive of the Community Council of Shropshire since December 1999. The Community Council is a voluntary sector organisation employing 36 people and is the hub for many voluntary sector organisations and community groups (such as Parish Planning groups) in the county as well as individuals such as carers. In her role Julia works at a local, regional and national level. She is the chair of the West Midlands Rural Community Council Network, and currently chairs the Interim Board of the Voluntary Sector Assembly in Shropshire, representing the Assembly on the Leadership Board of the Shropshire Local Strategic Partnership.

James Parker

James is a director of the Enterprise Advisor Service, a company launched with a colleague in 2006, which delivers enterprise education and training to schools and FE Colleges across the North West. This has included work on employer engagement and education business links. He also runs his own business consultancy; Market Interface. Over the last ten years he has worked with food manufacturers, new media businesses, the farming sector and on urban regeneration projects and ethnic community support in the West Midlands. His business career included working for Unilever, Nestle, the NHS and the advertising industry.

John Thomas

John is a retired District Auditor and former member of the South Shropshire District Council Independent Remuneration Panel. He spent most of his working life with the former HM Customs and Excise before transferring to the Department of Health as an NHS Statutory Auditor in 1983. He became District Auditor in 1990 when the Audit Commission took over the audit of the NHS. In retirement, he has taken on a number of voluntary and other posts,

including lay chairman of an NHS complaints panel, board member of a housing association and voluntary tutor of adults with learning difficulties.

June Jones

Following retirement from teaching, June has been actively involved in social housing and is a Board Director of Severnside Housing. She is also a qualified counsellor (West Mercia Institute) and is Secretary of the Consortium of Shropshire Tenants (COST), having been a founder member of the organisation. June was formerly a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council, where the knowledge and experience she gained equipped her for her work on the Shropshire Council Panel. She is also the chair of the Shrewsbury branch of the Arthritis Research Campaign, which involves local voluntary work.

RESEARCH MATERIAL

Blueprint Design One Council for Shropshire
Constitution - Members Roles and Responsibilities
New Shropshire Council Political Structure
Councillors Commission - Representing the Future - the Report of the Councillors
Commission December 2007
Supply and Demand Economics - Non-Executive Director Fees
TDG Annual Report and Financial Statements
Spectris plc Annual Report and Accounts 2007
Aggreko plc Annual Report and Accounts 2007
Johnson Press plc Annual Report and Accounts 2007
A Tool Kit for Change : Preparing for the New Unitary Councillor Role - I & DEA
Members' Allowances - Day Rate (March 2008) - Local Government Association
Incentives and Barriers to becoming and remaining a Councillor - National Census of Local
Authority Councillors in England 2006.
West Midlands Learning and Skills Council - Chairman and Non-Executive Allowances
Northumbrian Water Group plc Annual Report and Financial Statement 2006/07
Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust - Remuneration for Non-Executive Directors
South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust Annual Report 2006/07
Cornwall NHS Remuneration Report 2007
Telford and Wrekin Members Allowances Scheme
East Riding of Yorkshire Allowances Scheme 2007
Herefordshire Council - Allowances Scheme 2007
Cornwall County Council -Allowances Scheme 2007
South Gloucestershire Council - Allowances Scheme 2007
South Gloucestershire Council - Management Structure