

COUNTY COUNCIL – 9 DECEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL ON MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Report by the County Solicitor & Monitoring Officer

Introduction

1. This report presents the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following a recent full review of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.
2. The last full review of the allowances agreed by Members was in January 2011. The Autumn 2013 review was more narrow, the Panel having been asked to consider the impact of the Governance changes. This was agreed by Council in April 2014. The Council has now asked the Independent Remuneration Panel to carry out a full review.

Panel Report

3. The Panel's recommendations are set out in Annex 1. The main changes are:
 - Increase to Basic Allowance
 - Increase to Special Responsibility Allowances for Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members
 - Increase to Special Responsibility Allowances for Chairmen of Scrutiny Committee and other Committees
 - Restoration of the Special Responsibility Allowance for Shadow Cabinet Members
 - Decrease to Special Responsibility Allowance for the Leader of the Opposition but break with the link to the Chairman of Performance Scrutiny Committee
 - Removal of the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Deputy Chairman of the Planning & Regulation Committee.
4. The provisions which the Council agrees in light of the Panel's recommendations will need to be incorporated in a new Scheme of Members' Allowances, with effect from 1 April 2015. The Council is also free to implement, or backdate, any changes to a point within the current financial year.

Financial Implications

5. The Panel have based their recommendations on a range of evidence and also with regard to county council comparators and local/regional pay rates. It is the Panel's role to recommend allowances appropriate to the roles; it is for the Council to determine the financial implications.

A summary of the financial implications of the Panel's recommendations (set out in the recommendation below) is in the following table. Currently the cost of the allowances scheme is £881,210. The table sets out the additional implications, if the recommendations were approved.

Allowance that the Panel is recommending for change	Yearly estimated additional costs if the Panel's recommendations are implemented £
Basic Allowance	1,623 x 63 = 102,249
SRA: Leader	3,869
SRA: Deputy Leader	3,246
SRA: Cabinet Member	3,435 x 7 = 24,045
SRA: Scrutiny Chairmen, Planning & Regulation Chairman, Audit & Governance Chairman and Pension Fund Committee	950 x 6 = 5,700
SRA: Chairman of the Council	123
SRA: Vice Chairman of the Council	31
SRA: Shadow Cabinet Member	2,500 x 7 = 20,000
SRA: Co-optees allowance – Audit & Governance Committee	950
	157,713
	Yearly estimated savings if the Panel's recommendations are implemented £
SRA: Deputy Chairman of Planning & Regulation committee	2,729
SRA: Leader of the Opposition	4,565
	7,294
Estimated total additional cost for the year	150,419
Total cost of the allowances scheme	1,031,629

Conclusion

6. Under the Members' Allowances (Local Authorities)(England) Regulations 2003, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel when making or revising a scheme of allowances. Any decision not to follow the Panel's recommendations must be

published. Consequently, Full Council should consider the Panel's recommendations but it is for Council itself to agree its own scheme.

7. Therefore, Council can:
- (a) Follow the Panel's recommendations in whole or in part
 - (b) Agree a revised scheme of allowances, either in whole or in part

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. (1) **The Council is RECOMMENDED to consider the following recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and in so doing agree a Scheme of Allowances:**
- (a) **the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors increase from £8,376 to £10,000**
 - (b) **in addition to the Basic Allowance, a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) be paid as follows:-**
 - (1) **Leader of the Council – increase to £29,000**
 - (2) **Deputy Leader of the Council – increase to £20,000**
 - (3) **Cabinet Members – increase to £16,000**
 - (4) **Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees – increase to £6,000**
 - (5) **Deputy Chairmen of Scrutiny Committees – no allowance**
 - (6) **Chairmen of Planning & Regulation Committee – increase to £6000**
 - (7) **Deputy Chairman of Planning & Regulation Committee – no allowance**
 - (8) **Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee – increase to £6,000**
 - (9) **Deputy Chairman of Audit & Governance Committee – no allowance**
 - (10) **Chairman of Pension Fund Committee – increase to £6,000**
 - (11) **Deputy Chairman of Pension Fund Committee – no allowance**
 - (12) **Chairman of Remuneration Committee – no allowance**
 - (13) **Deputy Chairman of Remuneration Committee – no allowance**
 - (14) **Chairman of the Council – increase to £8,500**
 - (15) **Vice-Chairman of the Council – increase to £2125**
 - (16) **Leader of the Opposition – reduce to £8,000**
 - (17) **Other Shadow Cabinet Members – restore allowance - £2,500**
 - (18) **Locality Meeting Chairman – remain at £500**
 - (19) **Police and Crime Panel member - remain at £1,515**
 - (20) **Police and Crime Panel Chairman - remain at £3,030**
 - (21) **Police and Crime Panel Vice-Chairman - £3,500**
 - (c) **the Council does not establish a general co-optees allowance;**
 - (d) **a co-optees' allowance continues to be payable to an independent co-opted member of the Audit & Governance Committee when the**

- co-opted member serves as Chairman of the Audit Working Group;
- (e) the Council's Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances and the Co-optees' Allowance to the Chairman of the Audit Working Group be amended annually by reference to the annual Local Government Pay Award for staff and that this should take effect from the date on which the award for staff similarly takes effect;
 - (f) that Child and Dependant's Carer's Allowances be paid on the basis that:-
Members with care responsibilities in respect of dependent children under 16: or dependent adults certified by a doctor or social worker as needing attendance, will be reimbursed, on production of valid receipts, for actual payments to a carer while the member is on Council duties, up to a maximum of £6 per hour for each dependent child or £17 per hour for an adult. Money paid to a member of the claimant member's household will not be reimbursed;
 - (g) the Council retains, for members, the travel and subsistence scheme that is applicable to officers. Overnight accommodation to be booked by officers where possible; when alternative accommodation arrangements are to be used, this should be approved by the relevant officer;
 - (h) claims made under the Council's travel and subsistence scheme be accompanied by receipts and/or any other relevant evidence of the costs incurred and that claims under the scheme be made, in writing, within two months of the relevant duty in respect of which the entitlement to the allowance arises;
 - (i) list of Approved Duties include the capacity for leaders of a political group to claim for attending formal meetings of the Council, Cabinet and Committees for the purpose of keeping themselves informed of business;
 - (j) the list of Approved Duties for the purpose of travel, subsistence and dependent care allowances continue and be agreed as set out in the attached Annex;
 - (k) the amounts for Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and Co-optees' Allowances be rounded to the nearest pound following the application of any index;.

(2) The Scheme of Allowances to apply from 1 April 2015.

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Background papers: Evidence Pack considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel

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