

Council

17 December 2015

Report of the Monitoring Officer

Independent Remuneration Panel

Summary

1. This report annexes the final report of the Independent Remuneration Panel into the allowances which should be payable to Members.

Background

2. The Council is legally obliged to consider a report from its Independent Remuneration Panel before making any changes to its scheme of allowances. It is good practice to have the scheme reviewed from time to time to ensure that it reflects any changes in the Council's operation. Where the scheme allows for increases by reference to an index there is a requirement at least once every four years to seek a further recommendation from the Panel in respect of the application of that index.
3. The Independent Panel has made recommendations for changes to the scheme in respect of basic, special responsibility and dependent carer's allowances.

The Panel has recommended the removal of existing allowances in respect of telephone and internet provision and travel within the City.

The Panel has also noted the removal of the former provisions which permitted Members to join the local government pension scheme.

4. Full Council must now consider the annexed report, have regard to the recommendations contained therein and decide on what, if any amendments to make to the scheme.

Options

5. Having considered the recommendations Council may:
 - Adopt the recommendations of the Panel in full
 - Adopt the recommendations in part
 - Continue the existing scheme

Analysis

6. The Panel have set out the justification for their recommendations within the report. The Panel have identified key principles which underpin their recommendations.

Implications

7. Legal: Legal implications are set out within the body of the report

Financial: The total current budget for member's allowances is £546k. If the Panel's recommendations are accepted that budget will need to increase by £74K to £630K. If implemented from 1st January 2016 the part year effect would be an increase of £21K.

Equalities: Members are familiar with the Council's responsibilities under the public sector equalities duty. The Panel has identified its concern that those who might wish to stand for public office should not be prevented from doing so for financial reasons. The Panel feels that the City benefits from having a diverse and representative Council and would suffer a disadvantage if only the financially independent or the retired could afford to stand for office.

Recommendations

8. Members are recommended to:
 - (1) Thank the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel for their work.
 - (2) Adopt the scheme of allowances now recommended by the Panel.

- (3) Authorise the Director of Customer and Business Support Services to implement the changes with effect from 1st January 2016.
- (4) Ask the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential constitutional changes.

Reason: To enable the Council to adopt a revised scheme of allowances having regard to its statutory obligations to receive and consider a report on allowances from an independent panel.

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**Report
Approved**



Date 7/12/15

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annex - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel