

Council

13 December 2019

Report of the Interim Monitoring Officer

Independent Remuneration Panel

Summary

1. This report introduces the final report of the Independent Remuneration Panel tasked with looking into Members Allowances.

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 periodically 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 for review of this index at least once every four years by an Independent Panel. (Local Authorities [Members' Allowances] {England} Regulations 2003)
3. The Independent Panel has made recommendations for changes to the scheme in respect of basic and special responsibility allowances, the changes are set out within the report and a summary of the recommendations is attached at Annex C to the IRP report.
4. Full Council must now consider the final report, have regard to the recommendations and decide whether to make any amendments to the existing scheme.

Options

5. Having considered the recommendations Council may:
 - a. Adopt the recommendations of the Panel in full

- b. Adopt the recommendations in part
- c. Choose not to adopt the recommendations

Analysis

- 6. The Panel have set out their rationale and justification within the report.

Implications

- 7. **Legal:** In accordance with the Local Authorities [Members' Allowances] (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is legally obliged to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel to review its members' allowances scheme. Any changes to the scheme or consequential changes to the constitution, must be approved by Full Council.

Financial: The total current budget for member's allowances is £652k per annum. If the Panel's recommendations are accepted, the budget will need to increase to around £770k per annum. The panel have also recommended that any changes are backdated to 22 May 2019 (Annual Council).

Equalities: Similar to previous years, the Panel noted its concern that those who may wish to stand for public office may be prevented from doing so for financial reasons and that the Scheme of Members Allowances should help to minimise this barrier.

Recommendations

- 8. Members are recommended to:
 - (1) Adopt the scheme of allowances now recommended by the Panel.
 - (2) Authorise the Interim Chief Executive to implement the changes and backdate to 22 May 2019 (Annual Council).
 - (3) 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 13/12/2019

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Appendix 1 - Independent Remuneration Panel Report 2019

Annex A - The Panel's Terms of Reference

Annex B - Benchmarking Information

Annex C - Summary of Recommendations