

North East Derbyshire District Council

Council

11 July 2016

Independent Remuneration Panel

Report of the Assistant Director Governance and Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

To commence a full review of the Members Allowance Scheme.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The Council has usually carried out a full review of its Members' Allowance Scheme every four years. Legislation requires that the Council can only rely upon an index that they link Members Allowances to for a maximum of four years. The index for the current scheme is effective until the end of March 2017 therefore arrangements are being put in place to undertake a review between now and that time.
- 1.2 Prior to making a new scheme members must have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) comprising at least three members who are not current elected or co-opted members of the Authority and who are not disqualified from becoming members of an authority.
- 1.3 Regulations do not specify how a local authority should go about finding members for its IRP. However, guidance published by Communities and Local Government states that members should be "independent, well qualified to discharge the functions of the panel and representative of the diversity of the communities in the local authority's area."
- 1.4 Officers have approached suitably qualified individuals and the following individuals are in the opinion of the Council's Monitoring Officer, suitably independent, qualified and representative of the local community:
 - Gordon Inglis, Headmaster of Bolsover School
 - Susan Ambler, Head of Financial Accounting and Control within the Finance department of the University of Derby
 - Joanne Hill, a former Independent Member of the Standards Committee at Bolsover District Council

- 1.5 All three individuals have been approached and have consented to being involved with the Panel.
- 1.6 The purpose of the IRP is to produce a report making recommendations to North East Derbyshire District Council on all matters required under Regulation 21 of Statutory Instrument 2003 No 1021 specifically with regard to:
- The level of basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, travel and subsistence allowance, co-optees allowance and dependent carers' allowance at the District Council for the year commencing 1 April 2017.
 - As to whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with Regulation 10(6) of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.
 - As to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years before its application is reviewed.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To set in motion a full review of members' allowances at the authority, as required by legislation

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 The Leader and Deputy Leader have been consulted in relation to this report. The Independent Remuneration Panel is likely to want to interview a selection of Members as part of the process.
- 3.2 No Equality Impact Assessment is required as there is no scope for discrimination in commencement of a review and the appointment of Members.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 The Council has a legal obligation to carry out a review of the Members Allowances Index.
- 4.2 The Council could seek to appoint alternative members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, but the candidates are recommended as they are considered suitable and qualified for the position.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 The full financial implications of the review will not be known until the IRP's report is drafted.

- 5.1.2 An allowance and travel and subsistence is payable to members of the IRP. However, it is proposed that the Council simply cover the cost of travel and subsistence.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out the statutory principles governing the creation of members allowance schemes and independent remuneration panels.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 Officer time in administering the panel, producing supporting information, advising and providing general support

6 Recommendations

That the Council:

- 6.1 Appoints Gordon Inglis, Susan Ambler and Joanne Hill to its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP);
- 6.2 Approves the IRP's terms of reference as set out at paragraph 1.8 of this report;
- 6.3 Agrees to the IRP members being reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses in connection with their work on the Panel.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is an executive decision which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Affected	None
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	None

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
	None
Background Papers None	
None	
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