

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL AND SCHEME OF COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES 2018/19

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors Allowances and seek agreement to the proposed Scheme of Councillors' Allowances for 2018/19.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors Allowances be received.
- 2.2 That the revised Scheme of Councillors' Allowances, based on the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors Allowances be adopted to take effect from 1 April 2018.
- 2.3 That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its work.

3. Issues and Choices

- 3.1 Under the terms of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is obliged to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel to review, comment and advise on the level of allowances paid to councillors at least every four years. The Council last appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel in 2014.
- 3.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel met on a number of occasions concluding its work earlier this month. A copy of the Panel's report is attached at **Annex A** to this report.
- 3.3 The Panel interviewed a broad range of councillors including Group Leaders, Group Chairs, together with councillors representing the Cabinet and committee chairs representing Scrutiny and the quasi-judicial committees. Also a number of councillors accepted the Panel's invitation to either to meet the Panel or submit written representations. Additionally all councillors had the opportunity to complete a questionnaire seeking their views on allowances.
- 3.4 The Panel also reviewed benchmarking data from the Council's comparator authorities.
- 3.5 The Panel was advised by Paul Hanson from Northamptonshire County Council, who is experienced in this role.
- 3.6 The proposed Scheme of Allowances for 2018/19 is attached as **Annex B** to this report.

17 January 2018

3.7 The proposed scheme of allowances at **Annex A** reflects the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. The scheme is largely similar to the existing scheme adopted by the Council for 2017/18 at its meeting on 22 March 2017 (Minute CL120 refers). The differences between the schemes are as follows:

- (a) The Basic Allowance is increased by £500;
- (b) An annual indexation of 2% on all allowances to reflect the current staff pay award, although the indexation on the Basic Allowance is delayed until 1 April 2019 due to the increase recommended for 2018/19;
- (c) The creation of a Deputy Leaders' Allowance of £15,000;
- (d) The removal of the cap on Cabinet Special Responsibility Allowances; and
- (e) A minor clarification to the Approved Duties for which councillors may claim travelling and subsistence costs and dependent care.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

None

4.2 Resources and Risk

The increase in allowances as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel is likely to result in an increase in expenditure during 2018/19 of approximately £37,000 should all allowances be taken up.

X	Capital	✓	Revenue	X	Accommodation
X	IT	✓	Medium Term Plan	X	Asset Management

4.3 Legal

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 make it a requirement to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel and for the Council to adopt a Scheme of Allowances for the forthcoming year by 1 April each year.

Under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is required to take account of the recommendations of an independent panel before fixing its level of Councillors' Allowances.

4.4 Other Implications

None

✓	Equalities / Diversity	X	Sustainability	✓	Human Rights
X	E-Government	X	Stakeholders	X	Crime and Disorder

Background Papers: Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2017/18