
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report contains the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding Members' allowances for 2008/09.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require that each Council sets up an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations about the level of allowances for Members.
- 2.2 The Council has to have regard to the advice of the Panel, except in the area of pensionable allowance where the view of the Panel is binding if it does not recommend implementation. The Panel has not recommended that any allowances should be pensionable.

3 DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel is attached at Appendix 1. The Panel have adopted the same approach as in 2007/08 by setting the basic allowance and then building all other special responsibility allowances as multiples of the basic.
- 3.2 In summary, the main recommendations from the Panel are as follows:-
- Basic allowance to be raised by just under 3% to be set broadly at the average for Essex (see paragraph 3.1 in Appendix 1).
 - In accordance with the policy of the Panel to bring the remuneration of the Leader of the Council and Deputy Leader of the Council towards the Essex average, it is proposed that the special responsibility allowance for the Leader should increase from 150% of the basic to 200% and for the Deputy Leader should increase from 50% to 100% of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.2 of Appendix 1). These allowances would still be below the Essex average.
 - Chairman and Vice Chairman's allowances to remain at the existing multiples of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.3 of Appendix 1).
 - Executive Board Members allowance to remain at the existing multiple of the basic allowance plus additional payment (paragraph 3.4 of Appendix 1).
 - Review Committee Chairman's allowance to remain at the existing level, equivalent to that of an Executive Board Member (paragraph 3.5 of Appendix 1).

- Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman's special responsibility allowances to remain at the existing multiples of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.6 of Appendix 1).
- Sub-Committee Chairman's special responsibility allowance to remain at the existing multiple of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.7 of Appendix 1).
- Member Champion special responsibility allowance to remain at the existing multiple of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.8 of Appendix 1).
- Opposition Group Leader's allowance to remain at the existing multiple of the basic allowance (paragraph 3.9 of Appendix 1).
- Dependant Carer's allowance scheme to be retained, with an increased rate for childcare allowance and retention of existing rate for dependant care allowance, claims to be based on actual expenditure incurred (paragraph 3.10 of Appendix 1).
- Travel rates to remain at current levels, with subsistence allowances up-rated in line with officer rates (paragraph 3.11 of Appendix 1).
- Allowance for Independent Members of Standards Committee and Remuneration Panel to be retained at existing level with no inflationary increase applied (paragraph 3.12 of Appendix 1).

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 To minimise reputational risk the Council needs to have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of the remuneration scheme is estimated at around £240,000. Any claims made for reimbursement of childcare or dependant care costs would be in addition to this, but based on experience this is likely to be minimal. These costs have been built into the 2008/09 budget strategy.

6 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has a role in reviewing Parish schemes, and this year has reviewed the Great Woking, Hockley and Rochford Parish and Rayleigh Town Council remuneration schemes at the request of these Councils. The Panel has also given initial consideration to the establishment of a common framework for parish/town remuneration.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Board **RECOMMENDS** to Council that it **RESOLVES** to adopt the remuneration scheme proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2008/09.

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Background Papers:-

Notes of meetings of Independent Remuneration Panel held on 22 October and 6 December 2007.

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