

## Report to Council

28 April 2021

By the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and  
Monitoring Officer

### DECISION REQUIRED

Not Exempt



**Horsham  
District  
Council**

## Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

### Executive Summary

When deciding the allowances payable to Members, the Council is required to seek recommendations from an Independent Remuneration Panel. Although not obliged to follow those recommendations the Council must have regard to them. The Panel have now completed their review. Their findings and recommendations are set out in the attached report.

Council is requested to consider the Panel's recommendations and decide on the level of Member allowances. Members can decide to accept, reject or amend the recommendations.

### Recommendations

The Council is recommended:

- i) To note the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and the recommendations of the Panel at appendix 7 of their report;
- ii) To agree a Members' Allowance Scheme for Horsham District Council effective from the 2021/22 municipal year, amending Part 6 of the Constitution accordingly, and authorise a supplementary estimate for any additional costs, as determined by the Director of Corporate Resources.

### Reasons for Recommendations

- i) There is a legal requirement that the Council has regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel when agreeing the level of Allowances paid to Members.
- ii) It is a function of Full Council to agree the level of Member Allowances.

**Background Papers:** None

**Wards affected:** All

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## **Background Information**

### **1 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required to agree a Member Allowance Scheme setting out the level of remuneration for Members. Legislation requires the Scheme to set out the level of Basic Allowance payable to Councillors and may include a Special Responsibility Allowance for Members occupying particular positions within the council structure such as Chairmen of Committees and Cabinet responsibilities. The Scheme may also provide for other allowances such as Dependent Carers' Allowance and Travelling and Subsistence Allowance.
- 1.2 When agreeing the level of Member Allowances the Council must have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel. Therefore, the Council can agree the recommendations of the Panel in full, in part or it can devise its own level of Member Allowances as long as it has considered the recommendations of the Panel.

### **2 Relevant Council policy**

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires each local authority to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel. The scheme of Members' Allowances is set out in Part 6 of the constitution.

### **3 Details**

- 3.1 On 14 October 2020 Council resolved to delegate to the Chief Executive to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel to review the level of Member Allowances. The Panel comprising Ian Dewar, Alan Ladley and Martin Loates was duly appointed and first met to commence their review in late November 2020.
- 3.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel have completed their review and their report is attached describing the process they followed in completing the review and their recommendations in relation to the Member Allowances.
- 3.3 The legislation provides that when agreeing the level of Member Allowances Council must have regard to the report of the Panel. The words 'have regard to' do not mean that Council must follow every recommendation or indeed any recommendation of the Panel. However, Council must consider the Panel report when agreeing the level of Member Allowances.
- 3.4 After agreeing the level of Member Allowances the Panel will remain in place until they are changed by further Council resolution. The legislation provides that a review of Member Allowances should take place within four years. The Independent Remuneration Panel recommend that they meet at least once per year over the next four years.

## **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 To agree the level of Member allowances for Horsham District Council having regard to the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and their recommendations.

## **5 Other Courses of Action Considered but Rejected**

- 5.1 The legislation requires that an Independent Remuneration Panel be established. The Council cannot alter or update its Member Allowances without first considering a report from its Independent Remuneration Panel.

## **6 Resource Consequences**

- 6.1 If Council agrees all the recommendations in the Independent Remuneration Panel Report it will result in an additional full year spend of £14,992.50 or 4.2% increase of the full year budget for Member Allowances.
- 6.2 A supplementary budget estimate will need to be agreed by Members as the current year budget does not allow for any increased costs.
- 6.3 Costs for the 2021/22 financial year will be effective from the start of the municipal year on the 27 May 2021.

## **8 Legal Considerations and Implications**

- 8.1 The Council is required to adopt a Scheme of Allowances under the Members' Allowances (Local Authorities)(England) Regulations 2003 and the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel when making or revising a scheme of allowances. Any decision not to follow the Panel's recommendations must be published. Consequently, Full Council should consider the Panel's recommendations, but it is for Council itself to agree its own scheme.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 The Council must have a current approved Members' Allowance scheme in order for allowances to be claimed by and paid to both elected Members and co-optees.

## **11. Equalities and Human Rights implications / Public Sector Equality Duty**

- 11.1 Public sector equalities duties have been considered by the IRP as part of their deliberations.

## **12 Environmental Implications**

Not applicable.

## **13 Other Considerations**

13.1 None.