

## Report to Council

27 April 2022

By the Chief Executive



**Horsham  
District  
Council**

### **DECISION REQUIRED**

Not Exempt

## **Appointment to the Independent Remuneration Panel**

### **Executive Summary**

The Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) comprising at least three people every four years in order to consider Members' allowances. The current IRP completed a full review last year and their final report was submitted to Council in April 2021.

One of the current IRP has had to step down because he has become a member of staff at Horsham District Council and the role precludes applicants who are HDC staff.

Whilst a full review of Members' Allowance will not be required until 2025, the IRP recommended that they reconvene each year to carry out an interim review of current allowances and consider any appropriate changes.

Officers identified a suitable candidate who has been interviewed by three Councillors: Jonathan Chowen, Leader; Louise Potter, Leader of the Opposition at the time of the interview; and Lynn Lambert, Cabinet Member for Planning & Development. They all support her appointment to the IRP.

### **Recommendations**

The Council is recommended:

- (i) to delegate to the Chief Executive the approval of the appointment of Cinzia D'Amico to sit on the Independent Remuneration Panel;
- (ii) that the appointed Panel Members each be paid a sum, to be determined by the Director of Corporate Resources, proportionate to the work undertaken at the conclusion of an interim review and that any travelling and subsistence expenses should be paid at the current approved rate for Members.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- (i) To comply with statutory requirements, in particular (i) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and (ii) the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
- (ii) The IRP received £700 each at the conclusion of the full review in 2021, a sum benchmarked with other local authorities. It is reasonable to remunerate Panel Members for further work undertaken.

## **Background Papers**

Reports to Council: 14 October 2020 and 28 April 2021

**Wards affected:** All

**Contact:** Liz de Pauley, Senior Democratic Services Officer, 01403 215121

## **Background Information**

### **1 Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The Council is required to provide for Members' allowances to be considered by an Independent Remuneration Panel at least every four years.
- 1.2 Councils are obliged to appoint an IRP to consider the level of allowances that are appropriate for the various responsibilities that Members undertake, including a basic allowance for all Members.
- 1.3 One of the IRP members, Ian Dewar, became a member of HDC staff in October 2021. It is therefore necessary to replace him so that the IRP can carry out an interim review during the Municipal Year 2022/23.
- 1.4 The Monitoring Officer interviewed Cinzia D'Amico for a different role two years ago. The Monitoring Officer recommended her as a suitable candidate for the IRP. Councillors Jonathan Chowen, Louise Potter and Lynn Lambert interviewed Cinzia D'Amico on 14 March and they all consider her to be suitable for the role.

### **2 Relevant Statutory policy**

- 2.1 The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) Regulations 2003 require the Council to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel at least every four years to review Members' allowances. The Panel must comprise at least three people.

### **3 Details**

- 3.1 In October 2020 Council approved the appointment of a new IRP comprising Ian Dewar, Alan Ladley and Martin Loates. They completed a full review of Members Allowances in April 2021. In October 2021 Ian Dewar was recruited as a member of HDC staff and therefore his position on the Panel became untenable.
- 3.2 The IRP's recommendation to Council in 2021 included an interim review of allowances, to be undertaken during the Municipal Year 2022/23. It is therefore necessary to recruit a new IRP member to help carry out this review.

### **4 Next Steps**

- 4.1 Once the IRP is fully recruited, it will be able to undertake an interim review, as recommended and agreed at the Council meeting in April 2021.

### **5 Outcome of Consultations**

- 5.1 The Monitoring Officer and Director of Corporate Resources have been consulted.

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

- 6.1 The Council is required by statute to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel and, as such, there are no alternative courses of action that can be taken. Whilst a full review is not required for some time, having a fully appointed IRP will allow any interim reviews to be carried out.

## **7 Resource Consequences**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial consequences relating to the setting-up of the Panel but the Council has in the past paid a fee to each member of the Panel in recognition of their work. At the time of the last full review in 2021 this amounted to £700 for each Panel member. It is proposed that the IRP should be paid a proportionate sum upon conclusion of an interim review during 2022. The next full review is likely to take place in 2025 and the one-off payment for this will be determined at that time.
- 7.2 There may also, in due course, be financial consequences arising from the recommendations of the Panel.

## **8 Legal Considerations and Implications**

- 8.1 The appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel is required to comply with statutory requirements, in particular (i) the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and (ii) the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

- 9.1 If the Council does not appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel, its scheme of Members' Allowances would become ultra vires after four years of a full review.

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

- 11.1 The review of allowances will help ensure that a fair scheme of remuneration is in place for all Members to reflect their respective responsibilities.

## **12 Environmental Implications**

- 12.1 The proposal will have no impact in this respect.

## **13 Other Considerations**

- 13.1 The proposal will have no impact in respect of Crime and Disorder. Consideration will be given to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations.