

Report to: **Governance Committee**

Date: **1 March 2022**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title of report: **Review of Members' Allowances**

Purpose of report: **To consider the proposals recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**To recommend the County Council to approve:**

- 1) the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out in their report: and**
  - 2) the Scheme of Members' Allowances set out at Appendix 2 (subject to the pending increase in line with indexation provision) with effect from 1 April 2022.**
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### **1. Background Information**

1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel is required, by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, to make recommendations to the Council on allowances paid to Councillors. In 2017, the Council agreed that the Panel be asked to review the Scheme every 4 years in accordance with the Regulations unless the Assistant Chief Executive considers that there is a change in circumstances that justifies an earlier review or a request is received from a Group Leader.

1.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel was appointed by the Governance Committee in April 2019 and consists of three members, Daphne Bagshawe, Duncan Keir and Fiona Leathers.

1.3 As part of their review the Independent Remuneration Panel took into account information provided including comparative information from other County Authorities.

1.4 In order to capture the views of Members, all councillors were contacted regarding the review of the Scheme of Allowances and given an opportunity to submit written representations and/or to make representations in person to the Panel. A summary of the written comments received is attached to the Panel's report. A questionnaire was also sent to all councillors in order to gain some insight regarding the time spent on various activities related to the role of a councillor. As part of its deliberations, the Panel considered the responses received.

1.5 A copy of the Independent Remuneration Panel report is attached at Appendix 1. The proposed Members' Allowances Scheme is attached at Appendix 2. The proposed Scheme reflects current rates and as such are pending the outcome of staff pay award, so will increase for 2021/22 and 2022/23 in line with the index agreed by Council.

1.6 The Independent Remuneration Panel is required to review allowances based on the facts and information provided to it. The Governance Committee is asked to make recommendations to the County Council on whether to accept, reject or modify the recommendations. Councillors are required to give due consideration to the recommendations of the Panel but are not bound by them.

### **2. Summary of findings**

2.1 The Regulations allow for the Members' Allowances Scheme to make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to such index as may be specified by the authority. Where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel. For the last four years the allowances have been indexed to the percentage increase in the salaries of managers who are on locally negotiated pay. The Independent Remuneration Panel recommend that the annual increase in basic and special responsibility allowances continues to be linked to the pay award to LMG managers.

2.2 Having reviewed the level of basic and special responsibility allowances currently paid the Panel recommends that the level of these allowances remain unchanged.

2.3 In addition to Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA), the Panel considered other aspects of the allowances scheme including subsistence levels, travel and dependent carer's allowance.

2.4 In summary, the Panel are recommending:

- a) The continued use of an index to allow for annual increases in basic and special responsibility allowances for 2022/23 and beyond and that the index be the pay award for LMG managers
- b) The basic allowance should remain unchanged
- c) The SRA payable to the Leader of the Council should remain unchanged
- d) The SRA for the Deputy Leader and other Cabinet members should remain unchanged
- e) The SRA for Chairs of Scrutiny Committees, the Audit Committee, Pension Committee and Planning Committee should remain unchanged
- f) The SRA for the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council should remain unchanged
- g) All other SRAs should remain unchanged
- h) The basic mileage rate and supplement for passengers should remain at 45p and 10p per mile respectively and that the bicycle allowance remain at 20p per mile
- i) The dependent carers allowance should remain at the actual cost up to £15 per hour
- j) Co-optees should continue to be able to claim mileage for travel to meetings and continue to be able to claim dependent carer's allowance

2.5 The Independent Remuneration Panel recommends that the new scheme is effective from 1 April 2022.

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Local Members: All  
Background Docs: none