

DATE: 04 September 2008
MY REF:
YOUR REF:
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To Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Mr J.C. Dodd

Dr B.W. Kiernan

Mr B. North

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL** will be held in the Gloucester Room - Council Offices, Narborough at these offices on **THURSDAY, 4 SEPTEMBER 2008** at **4.30 p.m.** for the transaction of the following business and your attendance is requested.

Yours faithfully

Kris Johnston
Head of Administration and Legal Services

AGENDA

4. Review of Members' Allowances Scheme (Pages 1 - 2)

To consider the report of the Democratic Services Manager (enclosed).



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Agenda Item 4

Cllr. Phil Fox
67, Kingsway
Braunstone Town
Leicester LE3 2JN

Wednesday 3rd August 2008

Ref: For the urgent attention of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Sirs,

Acknowledging that I have already made a statement to the Panel, I now wish to respond to the two later submissions made by Cllrs. Jackson and E. White.

I refer to the alleged anomaly of The Deputy Leader of the Council re his allowances, and other comments.

It has been suggested that it is, per se, an 'anomaly' that Cllr. Hudson the Dep. Leader and Portfolio holder for Finance is under-rewarded. I disagree with this phrase. It is not an anomaly, but one that has been reviewed only recently by the Panel. Indeed I recall making a positive comment on the allowance of the Deputy Leader when I wrote before to the panel on this issue.

It is worth noting, is it not, that no submission has been made by the Deputy Leader himself re his allowances. Perhaps this signifies satisfaction?

The problem lies in the comparison theory used by Cllrs. Jackson and E. White. They disappoint when they suggest that changes are necessary to 'balance' the allowances for Cllr. Hudson (and by inference, Cllr. Jackson). I find no dispute with the idea that Cllr. Hudson should be remunerated fairly, according to his status on the council. As said before, I agreed. I further find no qualms with perhaps rewarding other councillors with added monies which identify their roles. What I do find remarkable and foolish, and unfortunately overtly political, is the suggestion that in order to enhance possible allowances for one, other recipients' awards should be reduced.

There may be a case, and I refer to my previous submission, for an over-all improvement to all councillors allowances, but it must be pointed out that the Ruling Group cannot have their cake and eat it every time.

This is the group who have secured, over the time allowances and speciality allowances came into being in Blaby District council, **the majority of all allowances**. By definition, there are two opposition leaders with a leaders' allowance. They are also Commissioners of the council, as defined by the constitution of the council, (as is one ruling group member).

Recently further allowances have been sanctioned by the Leader for two more Ruling group members, i.e. the Champions members awards. Increases have been made to other chairs, and vice-chairs, all of whom are members of the

Ruling group. Whilst it may be argued that they were necessary appointments and an allowance for them essential, it adds to the over-all cost to council. I would suggest that the main motive of both Cllrs. Jackson and E. White are tainted with a political stance.

This is the first time I have ever seen a comment in writing by Cllr. E. White about political groups and their roles. Is he out to stifle political differences and political views via this under-hand manner? On the one hand, he urges **further payment** to his own political colleagues, who he has appointed by favour, and on the other hand, where he cannot influence their selection, he advocates a lessening of allowances to actually demean their importance in council (where of course he can not, and does not, have such influence).

It also needs to be pointed out that virtually all appointments internal or to outside bodies are taken by the Ruling group. This monopoly of importance ensures that the Ruling group (even whilst maintaining their proportionality) restrict opposition groups in participating fully in our democracy.

We are all elected members of this council and therefore have a mandate from the electorate to participate fully in the council's affairs.

Cllr. E. White talks of his own allowances. He says that he does not receive a political Leaders allowance. Was it not assumed that his allowance as Leader incorporated such? If that is now not the case and his allowance is insufficient then he should openly submit a request for an increase and explain why he requires it. Not use already defined allowances as a ploy to either reduce them or enhance his.

Today I received a paper from council informing me of yet another appointment Cllr. Jackson has accepted. He seems to be accumulating positions in order to advance his claims for more allowances. Is this appropriate? If he feels over-stretched why has this position not been offered to others including the opposition members?

In only receiving a copy of the submission of Cllr. E. White today, I apologise for this late response.

I very much appreciate your kind reading of this submission and hope that you consider our views fairly.

Sincerely

Cllr. Phil Fox and the Labour group.