

## **INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Offices, Narborough

**WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2023**

### **Present:-**

Stephen Knott

Anne Senior

### **Officers present:-**

Louisa Horton	- Executive Director - Communities and Monitoring Officer
Katie Brooman	- Elections and Governance Manager
Sandeep Tiensa	- Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer

### **Also in attendance:-**

Cllr. Terry Richardson – Leader of the Council and Conservative Group  
Cllr. Nick Brown – Leader of the Labour Group

### **Apologies:-**

Luke Pulford

## **1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

In the absence of the Chairman, the Senior Democratic Services & Scrutiny Officer invited nominations from the Panel Members for the election of the Chairman for this meeting only.

### **DECISION**

That Anne Senior be elected as Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel for this meeting only.

## **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2023 as circulated, were approved and signed as a correct record.

## **3. TO CONSIDER ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM COUNCILLORS**

Members considered representations from Cllr. Terry Richardson (Leader of the Council and Conservative Group) and Cllr. Nick Brown (Leader of the Labour Group).

The Panel also considered three written representations received from:

- Cllr. Luke Cousin – on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group
- Cllr. Matt Tomeo – Equalities Champion
- Cllr. Les Phillimore - Housing, Community & Environmental Services Portfolio Holder

#### **4. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

An invitation was sent to all Councillors inviting them to provide any representations for the Panel to consider. Two verbal representations were provided to the Panel as well as 3 written representations.

General Representations:

- Commitment required in terms of time and responsibility, combined with volume of work load has increased hugely over the last 10 years for Cabinet members.
- Almost impossible to have good succession planning
- Councillors should be compensated, but they are having to give up earning/working.
- Current Cabinet now 5 instead of 6 – lack of people who can do the role due to the commitment and impact of that. Need to treat it as a job, no longer a wellbeing volunteer.

Representations given on the SRA:

- The level needs to compensate for doing the job to make it possible for them to do the job. Affordability not MP's
- Is subject to Tax
- Massive disparity between County and District Councils
- Reduced to 36 members and number of residents increased to 2400-2800- per councillor
- Struggling to find new Councillors - Is it due to remuneration?
- Not about money but compensation for what Members give up
- Cost of living also impacts on Councillors
- The Basic Allowance is not far from the average paid
- Two Group Leaders expressed the view that the current Leader of the Council role remuneration was very low for the amount of work and responsibility. Both recommended an allowance in the region of £20,000 plus
- That the Deputy Leader allowance should be increased
- Different views expressed on the Leader of Opposition allowance ie: if over 5 members or only if registered with the Electoral Commission
- Different views on number of SRA's – from unlimited to 2 SRA limit to ensure one person doesn't get all jobs, to test capabilities of people.
- Chair of Licensing allowance not required
- Allowance for Chair and VC may need to be looked at
- Champions do have different roles/responsibilities - Youth well defined others less so, Equality and Diversity should be a more active role.
- Consider an allowance for Whip.
- Should note that all Cllrs are subject to being sacked by electorate, degree of uncertainty for those in work

## **DECISIONS**

That the following amendments to the Members' Allowance Scheme, including any Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) be recommended to Council:

1. That the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance be increased to £20,000 a year.
2. That the Deputy Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance be increased to £13,000 a year.
3. That the Cabinet Executive Member (excluding the Leader and Deputy Leader) Special Responsibility Allowance be increased to £8,000 a year.
4. That no changes be made to the Chairman of Scrutiny Commission, Commissioners, Chairs or Vice Chair allowances.
5. That no changes be made to the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Council allowance.
6. That an attendance allowance be paid to those involved in Licensing/Regulatory Sub Committee's on the same basis as Planning Committee.
7. That Member Champions be re-branded (Cabinet Support or equivalent) to be tiered role – (LEAD Role attracting £1,500 SRA and CHAMPION Role attracting £750 (Council determine which roles).
8. That no change be imposed on the number of SRA's to be claimed (currently 2 – no change to current policy)
9. That Opposition Group Leaders be paid a SRA if group consists of 5 or more Members. (Note - this will remove the SRA for the Green Group Leader).

Reasons:

1. The Panel considered the Special Responsibility Allowances and the views of Councillors and determined that changes should be made to the Allowances and the Scheme.
2. It is appropriate for the Independent Remuneration Panel to ensure that the Members' Allowances Scheme is reviewed on a regular basis and that the allowances payable to Members are appropriate.

**THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 7.40 P.M.**