

**Blaby District Council
Council**

Date of Meeting	31 January 2023
Title of Report	Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel
	This is not a Key Decision and is not on the Forward Plan
Report Author	Corporate Services Group Manager
Corporate Priority	All Priorities: A Place to Live; A Place to Work; A Place to Visit; People Strategy; Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

1. What is this report about?

- 1.1 To advise Members of Council of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

2. Recommendation(s) to Council

- 2.1 That the Members Basic Allowance be increased for 2022/23 by 4.04%.
- 2.2 That the Special Responsibility Allowances be increased for 2022/23 by 4.04%.
- 2.3 That the Member Allowances Scheme be amended so that annual increases reflect the national average percentage pay award of the National Joint Council Staff Pay Award.

3. Reason for Decisions Recommended

- 3.1 The Panel considered applying the national average of the National Joint Council Staff Pay Award was appropriate for the 2022/23 financial year.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 This amendment will enable the Scheme to be applied where alternatives to a set percentage pay award are agreed in the pay award discussions with the National Joint Council.

4. Matters to consider

4.1 Background

The Independent Remuneration Panel was established under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on amounts to be paid under its Members' Allowances Scheme. Members of the Panel are appointed by the Council and are independent members of the community.

The Council is required to have regard to the Panel's recommendations in determining the Member Allowances Scheme. Additionally the Council must also publish the Panel's recommendations and conclusions, together with the approved scheme.

The Panel Members:

The Panel consists of the following Members:

- Luke Pulford – Chairman of the Panel
- Stephen Knott
- Anne Senior

Regulations stipulate that Members of the Panel must not be a Member of the Council, or of a Sub-Committee of the Council, or be disqualified from being a Member of an authority.

Scope of Work for the Panel:

1. Consideration of the 2022/23 Pay Award
2. To consider any amendments to the Members' Allowance Scheme from May 2023

Meetings of the Panel

25 November 2022

The Panel was provided with a briefing from the Corporate Services Group Manager and the Executive Director (S.151 Officer) on the Council's current budget position and the scope of work that the Panel were tasked with.

4 January 2023

The Panel met on 4 January 2023 and were supported by Officers of the Council.

To assist the Panel in its recommendations to Council, the Panel considered the following:

- Current Members Allowances Scheme
- Comparison of Local Authorities (benchmarked data) position regarding pay award if known
- Summary Comparison Document – Member Allowances
- Pay Increase Comparison
- Application of %age average increases
- Breakdown of expense claims

An invitation was sent to all Councillors inviting them to provide any representations for the Panel to consider. One verbal representation was provided to the Panel. No additional representations were received.

The Panel considered the 2022/23 increases in allowances and the wording of the Scheme as the Pay Award for Local Authority Staff which is linked to the Members' Allowances Scheme was agreed on the basis of a set £1925.00 pay award for all staff rather than a percentage increase.

It was felt by the Panel that applying the £1925.00 to the Basic Allowance and each Special Responsibility Allowance would be disproportionate and would have meant an increase in the Basic Allowance of 35% and depending upon the particular role in increase of between 14% - 160% on the Special Responsibility Allowances.

Next Steps

Members are required to have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel set out at paragraph 2 of this report.

Any recommendations approved by Council in respect of the Members' Allowances Scheme will be published as is required by the Scheme.

If any other proposals are put forward by Members, these may be submitted to the Panel for its consideration.

The Panel will now consider any additional amendments to the Members' Allowance Scheme including expenses and Special Responsibility Allowances and will report to the Council in due course with any recommendations arising.

4.2 Proposal(s)

Consideration of the 2022/23 Pay Award

The Panel recommend to Council that the national average pay award of 4.04% is applied to all Allowances for the 2022/23 financial year and Members receive the back pay accordingly.

Amendments to the Members' Allowances Scheme

The Panel recommend to Council that the Members' Allowances Scheme be amended to reflect the national average National Joint Council's staff pay award.

4.3 Relevant Consultations

All District Councillors were written to on 19 December 2022 to provide any verbal or written representations to the Panel to consider at its meeting on 4 January 2023.

4.4 Significant Issues

Legal implications:

It is a requirement of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 that an Independent Panel on Members' Allowances may decide to put forward recommendations for the Council to consider.

It is for the Council to decide on the Members' Allowances Scheme that is put in place, having regard to the Panel's recommendations.

5. What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?

- 5.1 The additional cost for 2022/23 is approximately £12,190.00 based on a full year.

6. What are the risks and how can they be reduced?

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Other options considered

- 7.1 None. Members are required to have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel when determining the Member Allowances Scheme.

8. Environmental impact

- 8.1 Not applicable.

9. Other significant issues

- 9.1 In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.
- 9.2 Significant issues relating to legal implications have been addressed at paragraph 4.4.

10. Appendix

10.1 None.

11. Background paper(s)

11.1 4 January 2023 – [Agenda of the Independent Remuneration Panel](#)

12. Report author's contact details

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