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FOR THE ATTENTION OF MEMBERS OF  
THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

I had not intended to raise any matter with the panel but I have read the contributions from others and would wish to respond.

I believe that there is an anomaly as pointed out by Councillor Jackson. It cannot be right for the Leader of the Opposition to attract a higher total allowance than the Deputy Leader of the Council. Despite the explanations made by Councillor Welsh, the responsibility and work load of being a Group Leader and Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission does not compare with that of the Deputy Leader, who has a demanding Finance Portfolio, and often represents the Council on many outside bodies, frequently on behalf of the Leader.

The point made by Councillor Welsh that his two roles are different and deserve the two allowances is interesting but is also flawed. The Leader of the Council gets an allowance as Leader, but only that. He is also a Group Leader, yet receives no allowance for that, he is also a Portfolio Holder yet receives no allowance for that.

The minority group leaders each have a deputy also with an allowance, neither group is large, indeed one is only four members strong, and the Leader of that group receives a sum not much less than the Deputy Leader of the Council.

I believe it would be fairer if the Leader of the Opposition was automatically Chairman of the Scrutiny Commission with one allowance, obviously lower than the Deputy Leader of the Council, which would mirror the principle under which the Leader of the Councils allowance is awarded. It would also seem logical to do the same for the other group leader.

Ernie White  
Leader of the Council