

Council

Members' Allowances - 2010/2011

22 February 2010

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider and determine the levels of the allowances to be paid to Members for the forthcoming 2010/2011 financial year following the submission of the report of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel on the review of the 2009/2010 Members' Allowances Scheme.

This report is public

Recommendations

Council is recommended:

- (1) To consider the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommended levels of allowance to be included in the 2010/11 Members' Allowances Scheme, (that is recommending no change to the levels agreed for 2009/10) and whether these recommendations should be adopted or modified in any way.
- (2) To authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare an amended Members' Allowances Scheme, in accordance with the decisions of the Council for implementation with effect from 1 April 2010.
- (3) To authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to take all necessary action to revoke the current (2009/10) Scheme and to publicise the revised Scheme pursuant to The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).
- (4) To thank the Independent Remuneration Panel for its thorough and detailed report, to agree to recruit two panel Members prior to the commencement of work on the 2011/12 allowance scheme, and set a fee of £300 for IRP Panel Members for the work carried out in 2009/10 and propose the same level of fee for 2010/11.

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has met to review the current (2009/10) Members' Allowances Scheme and its report on the recommended levels of the allowance payments for the 2010/11 financial year has been submitted to the Council and is attached to this report.
- 1.2 The Council is required to have regard to the Panel's recommendations but is under no obligation to accept them if they are deemed to be inappropriate. It is open to the Council to revise the levels of the recommended allowance payments for 2010/11 (either up or down) as is considered appropriate.

Proposals

- 1.3 It is proposed that the level of allowances set for the 2009/10 period remain the same for 2010/11.
- 1.4 The Independent Remuneration Panel currently consists of three Members on the Parish Remuneration Panel and three Members on the District Remuneration Panel. The Chairman of the Panels has indicated that he intends to stand down this year, therefore it is recommended that in order to assist with quoracy the panel should be combined and that two further panel Members should be recruited. This would provide a panel of five (although one Member is not eligible to decide on parish allowances as he is a serving parish councillor).
- 1.5 Additionally a review has taken place of the fee that is paid to Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel. Previously this has been £700 per annum, due to the high level of work that was initially required. Over the years this volume of work has decreased as the Members Allowance Scheme has stabilised. Therefore it is proposed that this fee be reduced to £300 per Member of the IRP panel.

Conclusion

- 1.6 It is the view of the IRP panel that the proposals represent realistic and fair levels of allowance for 2010/11 and recommend adoption.

The following options have been identified. The approach in the recommendations is believed to be the best way forward

Option One To accept the Panel's recommendations

Option Two To modify the Panel's recommendations

Consultations

All Members of Cherwell District Council Comments have been considered by the Panel

All Parish Councils Comments have been considered by the Panel

Implications

Financial: Provision has been included in the draft 2010/2011 budget for Members' Allowances. There are principally three options available in terms of settling the levels of the allowances for the forthcoming financial year as follows:-

- (1) to adopt the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel including the increase in the basic allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances – the full year cost can be accommodated within the draft budget as mentioned above;
- (2) to alter the levels of the allowances over and above those recommended by the Panel although this would increase the provision included in the draft budget.

Comments checked by Karen Curtin, Head of Finance 01295 221551

Legal: It is a legal requirement of the Council to consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and to set the level of allowances.

Comments checked by Liz Howlett, Head of Legal & Democratic 01295 221686

Risk Management: There are no risks associated with the report other

than the possibility of exceeding the budget provision.

Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Wards Affected

All

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Report of IRP Panel
Background Papers	
None	
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