



COUNCIL: 26 February 2020

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation & Resources

Contact for further information: Mrs J Denning (Ext. 5384)
(Email: jacky.denning@westlancs.gov.uk)

SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2020/21 AND APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL & PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), agree the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2020/21 and to note and endorse the Membership of the IRP.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the IRP's report for 2020/21, attached at Appendix 2, be received and taken into account when considering the recommendation at 2.2 and 2.3 below.
- 2.2 That in accordance with paragraph 10 of the IRP's report, a Members Allowance Scheme be made, effective from 1 April 2020 incorporating a Basic Allowance of £4,842 (no increase), provision for SRA payments, as detailed on the Schedule attached as Appendix 1 (no change), including an increase to the Childcare and Dependent Carer's Allowance to be set at the same level as the Living Wage (currently £9.30 per hour) and an allowance of £250 for the year for the two newly elected Parish Council representatives on the Standards Committee.
- 2.3 That the Corporate Director of Transformation & Resources update and publish the Members' Allowances Scheme for the period commencing 1 April 2020, such scheme to be incorporated into the Constitution and subsequently published.
- 2.4 That the Membership of the IRP for 2020/21 and the respective terms of office be noted and endorsed as follows:
- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Mrs G Stanley (Chairman) | 1 May 2021 |
| Mr J Boardman | 1 May 2023 |
| Mr I Thompson | 1 May 2022 |
- 2.5 That the appointment of Parish Councillors Justin Stopford and Linda Webster on the Standards Committee for a 3 year term of office ending in May 2023 be noted and endorsed.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council must establish and operate an IRP to consider and make recommendations on various issues relating to the matter of allowances to members of the authority. The Council is required to take into consideration any recommendation made by its IRP when making any new scheme of allowances, revising, or amending any existing scheme.
- 3.2 The Council currently has a scheme for the payment of a Basic Allowance to each Member plus a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for each of those Members holding a position of special responsibility. The Scheme also provides for the payment of travel and subsistence allowances and, in certain specific circumstances, Childcare and Dependent Carer's Allowance.

4.0 THE COUNCIL'S SCHEME FOR 2020/21

- 4.1 The IRP met on 23 October 2019 to consider the current position in relation to Members' Allowances and the Council's Scheme for 2020/21 and to agree to undertake a review. Details of the information considered as part of the review and the Panel's recommendations are contained in the report attached at Appendix 2, which also contains recommendations for an increase to the Childcare and Dependent Carer's Allowance and a payment of £250 for each of the Parish Council representatives.
- 4.2 At Annual Council on 15 May 2019 it was resolved to appoint 2 Parish Council representatives to serve on the Standards Committee. The procedure for the nomination and appointment of those representatives was agreed at the Standards Committee on 17 September 2019 and provided for Parish/Town Councils to submit nominations and subsequently vote on the nominees. Parish Councillors Justin Stopford and Linda Webster have been appointed for a 3 year term of office ending in May 2023.
- 4.3 Members of the IRP also meet to consider Parish matters as the Parish Remuneration Panel (PRP) and in this respect they did not receive any requests to make amendments to the previous report, the Panel considered there was no need to issue a new report.
- 4.4 The Scheme commences on 1 April in each year in accordance with the legislation, rather than the municipal year. Following the Council's decision, a new scheme for 2020/21 will be prepared, effective from 1 April 2020. A copy of the new scheme will be circulated to all members, incorporated in the Council's Constitution and as a consequence published on the Council's website.

5.0 THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 The IRP Membership is Mrs G Stanley, Mr J Boardman and Mr I Thompson. Terms of office are 3 years, with one position on the Panel being subject to re-selection each year. The Term of Office of Mr J Boardman expires on 1 May 2020.

The Council is required to adopt an appointments process that it considers is best able to provide an Independent Panel that is well qualified to discharge its functions and which is representative of the community. The Council's arrangements for appointing the Panel involved the placing of advertisements in the local press and then interviewing the candidates.

- 5.2 If the Council wished to appoint a replacement member, a full recruitment process would need to be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate Regulations, which would then be reported to Council for approval at a future meeting. Mr Boardman has indicated that he is prepared to serve for a further period of three years. Given the infrequency with which the IRP is required to meet, it takes some time to gain relevant experience and therefore it is sensible to maintain continuity of membership where possible. Mr Boardman has been a member of the Panel since January 2012. It is therefore recommended that Mr Boardman is appointed for a further 3 years.
- 5.3 Regulations provide for Allowances to be paid to IRP members and for 2020/21 each Panel member will be entitled to receive an allowance of £250, with the Chairman receiving an additional £50. These are included as part of the Council's scheme and provision is included in the current budget.
- 5.4 The Panel has also been appointed to serve as the PRP and in this respect considers and reports to the Parish Councils on issues relating to Members' allowances paid by those bodies.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The budget figures for 2020-21 contained elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting include provision to meet the costs of Basic and Special Responsibilities Allowances, together with employer's National Insurance (N.I.) contributions where appropriate.
- 6.2 Provision has also been included in the budget figures for 2020-21 to incorporate the IRP's recommendations to increase the Childcare and Dependent Carer's Allowance and payment of £250 for each of the two Parish Council representatives.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 to this Report).

Equality Impact Assessment

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees and stakeholders, however there is a direct impact on elected members. Therefore an Equality Impact Assessment is attached as an Appendix to this report.

Appendices:

1. SRA Payments
2. IRP's report for 2020/21

3. Equality Impact Assessment