



COUNCIL: 22 February 2017

Report of: Borough Solicitor

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SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2017/18 AND APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP)

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 2017/18 and to note and endorse the Membership of the IRP.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the IRP's report for 2017/18, attached at Appendix 3, be received and taken into account when considering the recommendation at 2.2 and 2.3 below.
- 2.2 That in accordance with paragraph 4 of the IRP's report, a Members Allowance Scheme be made, effective from 1 April 2017 incorporating a Basic Allowance of £4,842 (no increase) and provision for SRA payments, as detailed on the Schedule attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 That it be noted that the Basic Allowance of £4,842 has been fixed for a 4 year period until 31 March 2020, as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the IRP's report, the Council being able to ask the IRP to consider an increase in any year and to give specific reasons for the request.
- 2.4 That the Borough Solicitor update and publish the Members' Allowances Scheme for the period commencing 1 April 2017, such scheme to be incorporated into the Constitution.
- 2.5 That the Membership of the IRP for 2017/18 and the respective terms of office be noted and endorsed as follows:
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|--------------------------|------------|
| Mrs G Stanley (Chairman) | 1 May 2018 |
| Mr J Boardman | 1 May 2020 |
| Mr I Thompson | 1 May 2019 |
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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 or revising or amending any existing scheme.
- 3.2 The Council currently has a scheme for the payment of a Basic Allowance to each Councillor plus a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for each member 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 2017/18

- 4.1 The IRP met on 15 December 2016 to consider the current position in relation to Members' Allowances and the Council's Scheme for 2017/18. The Panel's Recommendations are contained in their report attached at Appendix 2, which take into account the Council's decision on 19 October 2016 to reduce the rates currently paid to staff and Councillors for business mileage, to reflect the HMRC suggested rates with effect from 1 April 2017.
- 4.2 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, other than to refresh the current version. There has been no change to the Parish Scheme this year, other than to amend the relevant dates and to reflect the updated Travel Allowances Schedule at Appendix 3, from the West Lancashire Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme incorporating the change to mileage rates referred to in paragraph 4.1 above.
- 4.3 The Schemes commence on 1 April in each year in accordance with the legislation, rather than the municipal year. Following the Council's decision, a new Borough Scheme for 2017/18 will be prepared, effective from 1 April 2017. A copy of the 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 (IRP)

- 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 2017. 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 Mr Boardman has been on the Panel since January 2012 and 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 reappoint Members. If the Council wished to appoint a replacement member, a full recruitment process would be required to be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate Regulations, which would then be reported to Council for approval at a future meeting.

- 5.3 Regulations provide for Allowances to be paid to IRP members and for 2017/18 each 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 Parish Remuneration Panel and in this respect considers and reports to the Parish Councils on issues relating to allowances to those bodies.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The budget figures for 2017-18 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.

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 Appendix 4 to this report.

Appendices:

1. Schedule of Special Responsibility Allowances (No increase)
2. Schedule of Travel Allowances (amended in accordance with the decision of Council on 19 October 2016)
3. IRP report and recommendations
4. Equality Impact Assessment