

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Council

**DATE:** 19 February 2015

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**WARDS:** All

### **PART I** **FOR DECISION**

#### **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS - INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the Report and Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel's (IRP) in respect of the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.

2. **Recommendations:**

- 2.1 The Council is asked to consider the Independent Remuneration Panel's Report (**Appendix A**) and its recommendations, a summary of which is set out in paragraph 5.5 of this report, and Resolve what action should be taken in respect of these recommendations

3. **Community Strategy Priorities**

- 3.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme can help ensure that as many people from as wide a range of backgrounds, experience and skills as possible can serve as Councillors and that they are not barred from standing because they cannot afford to do so. Further the Scheme ensures that they are not financially disadvantaged by serving as Members. By attracting and enabling people of the right calibre to stand for election the Council will be able to further its key priorities more effectively.

4. **Implications**

**Legal**

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the 2003 Regulations) require local authorities to make a Scheme of Allowances for their Members and to establish and maintain an Independent Panel to make recommendations to the Council about the Scheme in respect of which it must have regard before amending the Scheme.

**Financial**

- 4.2 The proposals set out in the report with regard to the Members' Allowances Scheme, if agreed, result in a modest saving overall. The savings identified within this report will go some way to mitigating the pressure on this budget (circa £10k) resulting from

the recent 2.2% indexation uplift (from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015) which was unfunded and is being absorbed within the Democratic Services cost centre.

## **Staffing and Human Rights**

- 4.3 There are no human rights implications and there are no significant staffing implications other than amending the Members' Allowances Scheme and implementing any resultant changes to allowance payments made to members.

## **5 Supporting Information**

### **Background**

- 5.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council convened its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in 2010 to conduct a comprehensive review of the Members' Allowances Scheme and the Scheme was agreed by the Council at its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2010.
- 5.2 The Panel met again in 2012 and made recommendations to the Council on a number of matters that needed review arising from the revised Standards regime, the newly constituted Audit and Risk Committee, co-optees allowances and the remuneration of the Council's Independent Person.
- 5.3 The Panel has now been reconvened under the 2003 Regulations which state that
- Where an authority has regard to an index for the purpose of annual adjustment of allowances it must not rely on that index for longer than a period of **four** years before seeking a further recommendation from the independent remuneration panel established in respect of that authority on the application of an index to its scheme.
- 5.4 It is under the requirement of the '4 year rule' that the IRP has undertaken this (eighth) review of Members' allowances for Slough Borough Council. A full copy of the IRP report is attached at **Appendix A**.

### **Summary of Recommendations**

- 5.5 The recommendations contained within the IRP's report are set out below for ease of reference:
1. No change to the (2015/16) Basic Allowance (£7,329) payable in Slough Borough Council.
  2. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£19,055) for the Leader of Slough Borough Council.
  3. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£13,338) for the Deputy Leader of Slough Borough Council.
  4. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£10,480) for the other Cabinet Members (Commissioners).

5. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£6,671) for the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
6. Ratio utilised in arriving at the SRA for the Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny reduced from 1/3 to 20% of the Overview & Scrutiny Chair's SRA. SRA for the Vice Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should be £1,334 (2015/16).
7. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£2,858) payable to the Chairs of the 3 Scrutiny Panels.
8. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£4,764) for the Chair of the Planning Committee.
9. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,587) for the Vice Chair of the Planning Committee
10. Ratio utilised in arriving at the SRA for the Chair of Licensing reduced from 20% to 15% of the Leader's SRA. SRA paid to the Chair of the Licensing Committee should be £2,858 (2015/16).
11. Ratio (1/3 of Chair's SRA) utilised in arriving at the SRA for the Vice Chair of Planning retained for the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee. SRA for the Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee should be £952 (2015/16).
12. No SRAs to be paid to the Chairs or Members of the Licensing Sub Committee.
13. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,905) for the Chair of the Employment & Appeals Committee.
14. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£1,905) for the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee.
15. Ratio utilized in arriving at the SRA for the Chair of Standards Advisory Committee reduced from 10% of Leader's SRA to 5%. SRA for the Chair of the Standards Advisory Committee should be £953 (2015/16).
16. No change to the 2015/16 SRA (£5,716) for the Leader of the Opposition.
17. The Members allowances scheme be clarified so that as long as a Minority Group reaches the qualifying criteria then that group's Leader should be paid a Minority Group Leaders' SRA.
18. That for the SRA for Leader[s] of the Minority Group[s] to be payable the group must have at least 4 members. Subject the Group meeting the qualifying criteria the 2015/16 SRA for Leader[s] of the Minority Group[s] should be is £3,811
19. No change to the 2015/16 Co-optees' Allowance. £516 per annum (2015/16).
20. No change to the 2015/16 remuneration for the Independent Person. £1,239 per annum (2015/16).

21. That the current rates payable for the Travel and Subsistence Allowances and the terms and conditions by which they may be claimed be maintained.
22. That the Members' Allowances scheme is clarified to point out that where a Member is appointed to an outside body that has its own allowances schemes (e.g. the Local Government Association and Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority) or provision to pay travel and subsistence (e.g. the Thames Valley Police & Crime Panel) that they should claim travel and subsistence allowances directly from those bodies.
23. That the current rates payable for the Dependents' Carers' Allowance and the terms and conditions by which it may be claimed are maintained.
24. That Section 11 of the published Members' Allowances scheme is removed.
25. That the Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances, Co-optees' Allowances, the annual cap on the DCA and the remuneration of the Independent Person be Indexed to the annual percentage salary increase for local government staff (at spinal column 49) to be adopted from 1 April 2015 and to run for 4 years.
26. That Travel Allowances (Outwith Borough Only): be indexed as follows:
  - a. Mileage: indexed to the HMRC rates
  - b. Other Travel: actual costs subject to most cost effective provisions
27. That Subsistence and Overnight Allowances (Outwith Borough Only) be Indexed to the maximum rates payable under the South East Employers Subsistence scheme.
28. The Panel further recommends that its recommendations are implemented as follows:
  - Indices: from 1 April 2015.
  - Other recommendations: from 19 May 2015, date of annual meeting of the council.

## 6. **Conclusion**

- 6.1 The Council is asked to consider the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel set out in the attached Report (**Appendix A**) and agree what action should be taken in respect of them.

## 7. **Appendix**

- 7.1 Appendix A – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## 8. **Background Papers**

None.