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# Recommendations of the West Berkshire Council Independent Remuneration Panel 2017

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**Committee considering report:** Council on 1 March 2018

**Portfolio Member:** Councillor Graham Jones

**Date Portfolio Member agreed report:** 1 February 2018

**Report Author:** Jude Thomas

**Forward Plan Ref:** C3408

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## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To adopt the recommendations of the West Berkshire Council Independent Remuneration Panel following their meeting on the 06 November 2017.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider and, if appropriate, agree the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## 3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** If Members are minded to adopt all the recommendations there would be an additional net cost to the Council of £3,700. The source of this funding would need to be identified.

The payment of Opposition Spokesman is already in the existing scheme but a decision was made at Council not to award these SRAs

SRA	Existing	Proposed	Impact
Deputy Leader	£9,247	£11,097	+ £1,850
OSMC Chair	£5548	£4,624	- £924
PC Chair	£0	£2,774	+ £2,774
Total			+ £3,700

- 3.2 **Policy:** The West Berkshire Council Members' Allowances Scheme (Part 14 of the Constitution) and any associated guidance will need to be amended as a result of any changes agreed by Council.
- 3.3 **Personnel:** None
- 3.4 **Legal:** None

3.5 **Risk Management:** None

3.6 **Property:** None

3.7 **Other:** Any increases to Members Allowances are likely to be the subject of scrutiny by both resident and Council employees.

#### 4. **Other options considered**

4.1 Not to make any changes to the Scheme.

## Executive Summary

### 5. Introduction / Background

- 5.1 All Councils are required to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their Members' Allowances Scheme. The Council must 'pay regard' to their Panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Scheme.
- 5.2 A copy of the report of the IRP is attached at Appendix B to this report. Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to publish the recommendations of the Panel and will be required to publish the new Scheme of Allowances (Part 14 of the Constitution) when it is agreed.
- 5.3 The membership and Terms of Reference of the 2017 West Berkshire IRP were agreed at the Council meeting on the 14 September 2017. The Panel comprised David Danielli (Chairman), Tim Renouf and Jonathan Hobson. The Panel met on the 6 November 2017.
- 5.4 The Panel received briefings from Officers (Moir Fraser and Andy Day) and representations from the following Councillors: Emma Webster, Lee Dillon, Pamela Bale, Graham Jones and Hilary Cole. Councillor James Cole, Chairman of Governance and Ethics Committee, was unable to attend but his written submission was given specific consideration. All Members were sent a questionnaire and ten Members opted to provide a response.

### 6. Proposals

- 6.1 The Panel proposed the following:
  - The Basic Allowance remains unchanged but that the Independent Remuneration Panel meets again in May 2020 after the implementation of the Boundary Review to review the impact of the changes.
  - The Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Deputy Leader be increased from 50% of the Leader's Allowance (£9,247) to 60% (£11,097) of the Leader's Allowance to reflect the additional responsibility of this role when compared to other Executive Members.
  - The SRA paid to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission be decreased from 30% of the Leader's Allowance (£5,548) to 25% (£4,624) to reflect the introduction of the new scrutiny model.
  - The SRA paid to the Planning Committee Chairman be retained but in the event that, in the future, the number of committees be reduced to just one, the level of remuneration is increased to 30% of the Leader's Special Responsibility Allowance.
  - An SRA be introduced for the Chairman of the Personnel Committee. This SRA to be set at 15% of the Leader's Allowance to reflect the impact of the decisions made by this Committee and, therefore, the significant responsibility of the Chairman.

- All Opposition Spokesman to be paid an SRA. Should the Council decide that this is not appropriate the two Main Opposition Group spokespersons each be awarded an SRA, with the Leader of the Main Opposition Group to decide who should receive an SRA..
- The Subsistence, Travel and Dependants' Carer's Allowances remain unchanged although reference to the a specific level of Living Allowance be removed in order to future proof the document and the reference to the subsistence allowance being linked to staff allowances be removed to reflect existing practice.
- The guidance around when claims can be submitted be amended in order to provide greater clarity for Members.

6.2 Should Members be minded to accept the recommendations of the IRP, this would create a budgetary pressure and the source of the funding would need to be identified.

## 7. Conclusion

7.1 The Panel, in arriving at its recommendations, took into account the views, written and oral, of Members; the scope and level of allowances paid in similar councils in Berkshire; and the current and future financial challenges. The changes proposed are not significant and the Panel, therefore, recommended that the Council accept the recommendations of the IRP.

## 8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.2 Appendix B – Report of the West Berkshire Council Independent Remuneration Panel 6 November 2017

## Appendix A

### Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- “(1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:***
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;***
  - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; this includes the need to:***
    - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;***
    - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;***
  - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.***
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.***
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.”***

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

<b>What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Council to make:</b>		To assess the level of remuneration paid to West Berkshire Councillors.	
<b>Summary of relevant legislation:</b>		In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel before making or amending their Scheme of Allowances.	
<b>Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?</b>		No	
<b>Name of assessor:</b>		Jude Thomas	
<b>Date of assessment:</b>		22 November 2017	
<b>Is this a:</b>		<b>Is this:</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>New or proposed</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Already exists and is being reviewed</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Function</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Is changing</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Service</b>	<b>No</b>		
<b>1 What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?</b>			
<b>Aims:</b>		To consider the Basic Allowance and level of Special Responsibility, Subsistence, Travel and Dependants' Carers' Allowances awarded to elected Councillors	
<b>Objectives:</b>		To ensure that the Council complies with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, and to minimise as far as possible barriers associated with becoming an elected councillor.	
<b>Outcomes:</b>		A Members' Allowances Scheme that takes into consideration barriers to becoming a councillor, the level of public service discount that should be applied and reflects the workload and responsibility of councillors.	
<b>Benefits:</b>		The Scheme will benefit existing councillors and future candidates.	

**2 Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.**

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)	
<b>Further Comments relating to the item:</b>	
<b>3 Result</b>	
<b>Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?</b>	<b>No</b>

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the [Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template](#).

<b>4 Identify next steps as appropriate:</b>	
<b>Stage Two required</b>	No
<b>Owner of Stage Two assessment:</b>	N/a
<b>Timescale for Stage Two assessment:</b>	N/a

Name: Jude Thomas

Date: 21 November 2017

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Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) ([rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk)), for publication on the WBC website.