



Report to Council

Date: 16 March 2005

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Subject: Independent Remuneration Panel

The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has prepared a report to Members with regard to the level of members' allowances to be paid with effect from 1 April 2005.

The report of the Panel is attached for consideration by members.

It is **recommended** that:

Members consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and make a scheme of allowances for the year 2005 - 2006.

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

16 MARCH 2005

REPORT OF HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel reported in March 2004. The report followed a consultative exercise with members of the Council and made recommendations to increase the base level of the Basic Allowance, amendments to the duties for which a Special Responsibility Allowance ought to be paid, and a percentage increase to allowance levels.
- 1.2 Following the full review which was carried out last year, the Panel have concluded that it is not necessary to do so again such a short-time after that was done.

2. The Process

- 2.1 The Panel considered the structure of the Council and noted that there had been no substantial change except for the addition of the Licensing Act Committee and the creation of Licensing Panels to consider applications where objections have been received.
- 2.2 Evidence was considered by the Panel of allowances paid to members of Shire District authorities for comparative purposes.

3. Proposals

3.1 The Amount of Basic Allowance

The Panel noted that the allowances paid to members of the Council were generally in line with the averages for Shire District Councils.

- 3.2 We consider that as previously the level of allowances should be adjusted annually to maintain their value. We have previously recommended that the annual adjustment be made by reference to the pay award made to Council staff. We confirm our view that this is the most fair and transparent index to be used.

Recommendation 1

That Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance and Co-optees' Allowance be increased by 2.95% from 1 April 2005.

- 3.3 We have no reference data for the Licensing Act Committee and its sub-committees, the Licensing Panels, since they are not yet operating. It is likely that the Licensing Act Committee will not meet as a scheduled committee but

rather on an ad hoc basis. It is not possible at this time to predict what sort of work load the Licensing Panels will bear.

- 3.4 The Licensing Act Committee as a full committee with oversight of the licensing functions should however attract a Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance. Until such time as the Licensing Panels have been operating so as to provide evidence to the Panel, we do not recommend any Special Responsibility Allowance be considered for the Panel Chairs. We propose to reconsider this point in our next report.

Recommendation 2

That a Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to the Chair of the Licensing Act Committee.

- 3.5 Apart from these recommendations, we do not consider that any adjustment is required to the other elements of the Members' Allowance Scheme.