

APPENDIX 1

Report of the Gedling Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of the 2026/27 year

Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel was established under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) to provide advice and recommendations to the Council on its Members' Allowances Scheme and amounts to be paid under it.
- 1.2 The panel received administrative support from the Democratic Services Manager.
- 1.3 The Panel's Terms of Reference are as follows:

The Independent Remuneration Panel will review, on an annual basis, the level and extent of allowance payments made to Borough Councillors having regard to:

- The role of Councillor and the importance of effective democratically accountable local government and community leadership; and
- The scale and complexity of the Council's operations and changes taking place in the various roles Councillors are expected to fulfil and the responsibilities attached to the various roles; and
- The time commitment required from Councillors to enable both the Council and individual Councillors to be effective in their various roles; and
- The importance of encouraging people from all backgrounds and circumstances to serve in local government without suffering financial loss because of their membership of the Council.

The Panel will also:

- Consider the level and extent of travel and subsistence allowances including dependent carers' allowance; and
- Review the payment of allowances and expenses payable in relation to attendance at seminars, conferences, and other council business.

The Panel's operation:

- The Panel is comprised of four Independent Members
- Panel members are recruited by public advertisement and should be of good standing in the community either as a resident and/or a stakeholder in the Borough. Ideally members should have sound knowledge of employment and financial matters with an understanding of the operations of a local authority.
- The Panel is advisory in nature and the recommendations it makes are not binding on the authority. However, the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) requires Council to "have regard" to the Panel's recommendations when setting its allowances.

Process

- 2.1 The panel have already carried out the annual review of the members remuneration for the 2026-27 year but were called on to complete a mid-year review following some recent representations and changes which related solely to the allowances for members mileage and the co-opted member of the Audit Committee.
- 2.2 The panel convened on 12 August, where 3 of the 4 members were present to receive some background on the reason for the meeting from the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer of the council.
- 2.3 They heard that there had been a recommendation from the Audit Committee for review of the allowance co-opted members are paid to sit on the committee. The current remuneration did not adequately reflect the role that the co-opted member was expected to undertake on the committee, given the volume of documentation he was expected to read, digest and effectively scrutinise. It was confirmed that the allowance was also less than what he was paid doing the same role at another neighbouring local authority. It was also noted that recruitment for an additional Co-opted member was underway and it was therefore timely to undertake a review.
- 2.4 Background was also given on the recent change to mileage rates for council staff, seeing these rise in line with the 2026/27 HMRC rate – 55p per mile for car journeys. The current rate payable to elected members, as per the agreed members allowance scheme, is the NJC employee rate – 45p per mile for car journeys - which hasn't yet been updated to reflect the HMRC rise.

Panel's Deliberations

- 3.1 The panel reviewed the information received about the co-opted member, as well as benchmarking of allowances paid by surrounding councils of varying size and political control. It was noted that some councils did not include the payment to their co-opted members in their members allowances scheme so not all of the information for all local councils was available for scrutiny and comparison. It was noted that Rushcliffe District Council paid £800.
- 3.2 The panel queried the volume and complexity of work required by the co-opted member and how this worked affected the work of the committee as a whole. It was noted that the expectation of the co-opted member of the Audit Committee was to read, understand and provide scrutiny and challenge on several pieces of complex financial information – sometimes resulting in hundreds of pages of information. The S151 Officer noted that the current members input and experience was highly valued and gives welcomed challenge to the officers on the council's financial position and decisions. It was also explained that the Audit Committee were currently recruiting a new Co-opted member and it was timely to review the allowance paid to ensure candidates would be attracted to the role. The person spec requires the candidate to demonstrates experience in accountancy and/or

legal practice and is considered to be a more specialised role than other co-opted roles.

- 3.3 Finally, the panel considered the allowances for mileage paid to all members. They noted the increase to the council officer rates and agreed that the same rate should be paid to elected members, in the spirit of fairness.

Recommendations

- 1) That the allowance for the Co-opted Member on the Audit Committee should increase to £800 per year; and
- 2) That the allowance for mileage should rise in line with officer rates; and
- 3) No other changes are made for the 2026/27 year.