

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL- TERMS OF REFERENCE

A. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel (“IRP”) shall, on a 4 yearly basis or, if otherwise requested, propose recommendations as to any required amendments to the Members’ Allowance Scheme in relation to the following matters:-
 - the amount of basic allowance payable;
 - the roles and responsibilities for which special responsibility allowances should be paid and if so, the duties to which they should apply and the amount;
 - whether travelling and subsistence allowances should be paid and if so, the duties to which they should apply and the amount;
 - whether childcare and dependent carers’ allowances should be paid and if so, the duties to which they should apply and the amount;
 - Whether a basic allowance should be paid to co-opted members and if so, the amount;
 - whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated as permitted in law;
 - whether any roles should receive pensionable allowances, where permitted in law;
2. In making its recommendations at paragraph 1 above, the IRP shall undertake a full review of the Members’ Allowance Scheme as well as obtaining the views of officers and members of the Council to which it relates and having regard to the following general principles:
 - that councillors undertake their council work for the sake of public service and not private gain;
 - the varying demands placed upon councillors, dependent upon their roles and responsibilities;
 - the need to fairly and equitably compensate councillors, so far as the panel thinks appropriate, for the time and effort they can reasonably be expected to devote to their work as a councillor;
 - the need for the scheme to be economic, efficient to administer and effective;
 - the requirement for their report and recommended changes to the scheme of allowances to be easy to understand and adequately justifiable to the electorate;
 - That recommendations should confirm with existing legislation and anticipate likely future legislation so far as possible.
3. The IRP shall be required in reporting its recommendations to include guidance on what is to be encompassed by each relevant allowance so as to ensure that the Members’ Allowance Scheme is consistently applied.

B. PANEL MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT

1. The (“IRP”) shall be comprised of 3 members of the public (“IRP Members”)
2. IRP Members will be sought via advert in accordance with the Council’s standard recruitment arrangements.
3. As part of this a person specification shall be drawn up to ensure that candidates who are appointed:
 - are able to demonstrate a high degree of personal integrity;
 - are not members of any local authority and are not disqualified from being or becoming a member of a local authority;
 - have, if possible the appropriate level of skill, knowledge and understanding of setting remunerations;
 - have the necessary time and commitment for the role;
 - Are not affiliated to any political party – candidates must disclose the extent of their connections to a political party and whether these are such as to risk the effective discharge of the IRP’s functions were the candidate to be appointed;
 - A knowledge of local government is preferable however a lack of familiarity will not be a bar to appointment.
4. Recruitment should be by either public advertisement or direct approach to appropriate business and community/voluntary sector organisations who command local respect and public confidence and would be able to nominate persons who should have the necessary skills, integrity, independence and who are recognisable members of the local business and voluntary/community sectors within their respective areas.
5. IRP Members will be appointed by the Chief Executive, in consultation with group leaders.
6. The term of office of IRP Members will be three years each. The Constitution and Ethics Committee may remove an IRP Member in circumstances where:
 - the IRP Member is disqualified from being a member of an authority or is found guilty of any conduct which brings the office into disrepute e.g. being found guilty of a criminal offence, an act of dishonesty or other serious misconduct;
 - the IRP Member is considered to have demonstrated a serious lack of diligence or incompetence;
 - the member becomes an elected or co-opted member (or an employee) of the authority.
7. The IRP shall:
 - appoint its own Chairman at the first meeting of each municipal year;
 - require a quorum of 3 at all meetings;
 - meet a minimum of once per municipal year with additional meetings convened as necessary;
 - Otherwise devise its own rules for the conduct of meetings providing that they are consistent with legislative requirements and general good governance requirements.

8. In order to avoid any perception of personal gain involved with membership of the IRP, travel and subsistence allowances only will be paid to IRP Members, at the rate approved by the Council annually within the limits determined by the Secretary of State. No other allowances will be paid.

C. JOINT WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Where it is in the best interests of each partner authority to do so, every effort should be made to establish a Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (“Joint IRP”) with Cambridgeshire County Council and/or any neighbouring District Council whose Terms of Reference and Constitution will be as set out above save in respect of the following:

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. In fulfilling the requirements set out in Section A above, the Joint IRP may make collective or separate recommendations to each partner authority as appropriate.

PANEL MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT

1. Where one authority already has arrangements in place, subject to the agreement of the IRP Members, it shall be open to the partner authority to request the establishment of an Interim Joint IRP and subject to the correct approvals being given, utilise the persons already appointed for the remainder of their term. Once their term is completed or in any other circumstances the partner authorities will then arrange to jointly recruit and appoint a Joint IRP where possible aligning their reviews accordingly. The following provisions will then apply.
2. Each partner authority shall appoint 3 representatives to serve on the Joint IRP.
3. The quorum of the Joint IRP will be two thirds of its overall membership.
4. The partner authorities should jointly carry out the recruitment and appointment of IRP Members.
5. Where there is any disparity between this and the terms of reference of the partner authorities these should be resolved prior to entry into joint working arrangements and in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.
6. The removal of an IRP Member must be with the agreement of each partner authority with the decision having been taken in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.
7. In the event that a partner authority wishes to end its participation in the Joint IRP or Interim Joint IRP, notice must be given in writing no later than 3 months before the end of the financial year to take effect from the start of the next financial year.

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