

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL –
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2014, TOWN HALL, ST ANNES**

Present: Mr David Cam, Chairman

Mrs Helen Hockenhull

Mrs Mary Wilson

Tracy Morrison, Director of Resources

Ian Curtis, Head of Governance

Katharine McDonnell, Democratic Services Officer

Ian Curtis presented a report, of which a copy had previously been circulated to members of the Panel, regarding the current level of members' allowances, the forthcoming change in governance arrangements and the impact on special responsibility allowances, and comparison statistics for neighbouring local authorities.

Mr Curtis also asked the panel to consider continuing dependents' carers' allowances and the level of members' mileage rates. In regards to claims, Mr Curtis asked the panel to consider whether they wished to impose a deadline on members' for claims.

In considering the levels on member allowances the Panel took note of current scheme of allowances; the Council's financial position and the Government's policy on public sector funding; the levels of allowances since 2001 and the allowances adjusted for inflation; and the comparisons between allowance schemes operated by other authorities in Lancashire.

Following a detailed discussion, especially in regard to the forthcoming governance change, the Panel noted that -

- In common with other councils, the financial settlement for Fylde continued to be extremely challenging. The council continues to explore all opportunities to reduce expenditure through efficiency saving schemes. It was noted that some members do not claim travel allowances that they are entitled to.
- Councillors had not received an increase in their allowances for a number of years, however an increase could be politically unpalatable.
- The change in governance would place more responsibility on the Chairmen of the new programme committees.
- The Panel felt considerable responsibility to not further add to the Council's financial burden by recommending increases to members' allowances.

The following recommendations were made by the Panel -

- *Maintain the present level of basic allowance (£3,500) for 2015 – 16.*

- *To continue to pay travel and subsistence allowances, with an increase to the members' mileage rate to 45p per mile*
- *To place a time limit of three months on claims, i.e. claims must be made within 3 months of the meeting or travel occurring. Any claims made after 3 months would not be paid.*
- *To recognise the change in governance with the following changes to the Members special responsibility allowance:-*
 - *Leader of the Council - £6,000*
 - *Deputy Leader of the Council - £3,000*
 - *Chairmen of the Development Management, Finance and Democracy, Operational Management, Health and Housing, Tourism and Leisure, Audit and Standards Committees - £3250.00.*
 - *Vice-Chairmen of the above Committees - 50% of Chairmen's allowance - £1,625.00.*
 - *Chairmen of the Public Protection and Licensing Committees - £1,625.00.*
 - *Vice-Chairmen of the above Committees - 50% of Chairmen's allowance - £812.50.*
 - *Leader of each political group - £32 per group member.*
- *To continue to the payment of £250 per annum to the three Independent persons, who work with the Standards and Audit Committee and the Monitoring Officer*
- *To continue to pay dependents' carers' allowance at the current rate*

Mr Cam thanked the new panel members and thanked the officers for their work and advice.
