

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 9 November 2023**

Present: Mr David Cam DL, Chairman
Mrs Karen Eaton
Tracy Manning, Deputy Chief Executive & Monitoring Officer*
Ian Curtis, Head of Governance
Katharine McDonnell, Democratic Services (note taker)

*Mrs Manning joined the meeting remotely.

Ian Curtis welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared Helen Hockenhull's apologies.

Ian Curtis presented the 2024/2025 Member Allowance Scheme report, a copy of which had previously been circulated to members of the Panel.

The report covered the current level of members' allowances and the special responsibility allowances; dependent carers' allowance; and a comparison of allowances paid in 2001 to 2023. The report also provided information regarding the level of allowances adjusted to 2001 prices (the consumer price index); information regarding the different allowances, the annual budgeted amount for members' allowances and the Council's financial position.

The report provided a detailed spreadsheet comparing the allowances paid by other Lancashire authorities and authorities who operated a committee system.

Mr Curtis discussed the current Special Responsibility Allowances, and the ability of the Panel to set an allowance and link the allowances to an index. He explained that the allowances would then increase with the index but there would be a need to review the allowances every four years rather than annually.

The Panel considered their recommendations for the financial year 2024-25 regarding:

- The level of basic allowance payable to all councillors
- Which councillors were to receive special responsibility allowances
- The levels of special responsibility allowances
- Whether to continue to pay dependants' carers' allowance and, if so, whether to cap the rates payable; and
- whether to continue to pay travel and subsistence allowances and, if so, of how much

The Panel went through the report and discussed the current economic climate, specifically inflation. It was acknowledged that the current level of allowances seemed to be appropriate for the current financial year, but with inflation likely to continue to be a significant factor for the foreseeable future it was considered prudent to index link members allowances.

It was therefore agreed that the current basic and special responsibility allowances be increased from 1st April 2024 by a sum equivalent to the increase in the Consumer Prices Index since 1 April 2023 and that the allowances be increased by reference to the same index on 1 April in each of the subsequent years 2025, 2026 and 2027.

Mr Cam thanked everyone for their attendance and consideration of the matters at hand and thanked the officers for their work and advice.
