

DECISION ITEM

REPORT OF	MEETING	DATE	ITEM NO
HEAD OF GOVERNANCE	COUNCIL	2 OCTOBER 2023	12

INDEPENDENT PERSONS ALLOWANCES

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

RELEVANT LEAD MEMBER

This item is within the remit of Lead Member for Finance and Resources (Councillor Ellie Gaunt).

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

A joint meeting of the Fylde and Blackpool Independent Remuneration Panels was held earlier in the year, to consider the allowances of the Standards Independent Persons. The three Independent Persons (IP's) serve both Fylde and Blackpool Council with respect to standards matters and the handling of allegations of elected member misconduct.

The Audit and Governance Committee is to consider the matter at its meeting on Thursday 28 September 2023. The committee's recommendations, if different to below, will be reported at Council.

RECOVERABILITY

This decision is not recoverable because it relates to a recommendation to the council or to any other committee or sub-committee of the council.

RECOMMENDATION

The Audit and Governance Committee recommends to Council that the allowance for the Independent Persons be set at £1,000 per annum, backdated from 1 June 2023, with an annual uplift applied thereafter in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI), as agreed in 2021.

REPORT

1. Fylde Borough Council and Blackpool Council have shared arrangements in relation to the standards framework and have adopted substantially the same Code of Conduct for Members and arrangements for dealing with complaints of member misconduct. As part of these shared arrangements there is a shared pool of three Independent Persons.
2. At the joint meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel, the Panel heard how the respective roles of the independent persons worked at Blackpool and Fylde. The Panel also heard examples of recent meetings including hearings the independent persons had been involved with. The last review had taken place in September and a revised figure of £950 per annum was agreed with an annual uplift in line with the allowance scheme.

3. The current remuneration for this position was £966.62 per year with payment made per council on a 50/50 basis. After deliberations and an acknowledgement that remuneration for this position should reflect the time and responsibility needed and to recognise that there had been no cost of living rise last year for the role, it was considered appropriate that an uplift should be given. The Joint Panel agreed to recommend to both Blackpool and Fylde Borough Council that the remuneration for Blackpool and Fylde Independent Persons should be £1,000 per year, backdated to 1st June 2023.
4. Blackpool Council considered this matter at its meeting of full Council on Wednesday 28 June and agreed to the recommendation.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES	
Economy – To create a vibrant and healthy economy	
Environment – To deliver services customers expect	
Efficiency – By spending money in the most efficient way	√
Tourism – To create a great place to live and visit	

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The recommendations in this report would result in an increase of £90 for Fylde’s proportion of the increased allowance for 2023/24, with the cost rising by RPI annually thereafter. These costs can be met from existing revenue budget provision.
Legal	Each council must have an Independent Remuneration Panel which examines allowances and members must consider its recommendations
Community Safety	NA
Human Rights and Equalities	NA
Sustainability and Environmental Impact	NA
Health & Safety and Risk Management	NA

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS
The allowance for the Independent Persons was last reviewed in October 2021

BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM		
Name of document	Date	Where available for inspection
none		

LEAD AUTHOR	CONTACT DETAILS	DATE
Tracy Manning	Email tracy.manning@fyde.gov.uk & Tel 01253 658521	July 2023