

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL –  
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2017, TOWN HALL, ST ANNES**

Present: Mr David Cam, Chairman

Mrs Helen Hockenhull

Mrs Karen Eaton

Tracy Morrison, Director of Resources

Ian Curtis, Head of Governance

Katharine McDonnell, Democratic Services Officer (note taker)

Tracy welcomed everyone to the meeting. By way of introduction to the matter under consideration, she reminded the Panel members of the meetings held last year. She reminded them that the Panel had met to consider potential changes to member allowances, given the change of governance system and a representation from the Leader of the Liberal Democrats to allow for Special Responsibility Payments to Planning Committee members due to the workload of the committee. The Panel had recommended no changes to the allowance scheme last year. Following the brief update, Tracy asked Ian Curtis to present the report.

Ian Curtis presented the 2018/2019 Member Allowance Scheme report, of which a copy 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 2006 and 2016. The report also provided information regarding the different allowances, the annual budgeted amount for members' allowances and the Council's financial position. It also provided a detailed spreadsheet comparing the allowances paid by other Lancashire authorities and authorities who operated a committee system.

Ian advised the Panel that inflation had increased to 2.8%, and was likely to rise to 3%. He referred the Panel to Appendix 2 which showed the comparative payments made at other local authorities. He highlighted that the basic allowance paid to Councillors was below the average for Lancashire authorities, but that on a per resident basis, the cost of Fylde's basic allowance was the highest in Lancashire. Given these statistics, the Panel commented that this indicated that the numbers of elected members at Fylde was higher than average but went on to acknowledge that recommendations regarding the number of elected members was not within its remit.

The Panel thanked Ian for his report and discussed the questions posed in the report. In the course of their discussion the Panel considered index linked automatic uplifts to allowances, Councillors' workload and if that had changed with the change to governance system. The Panel also discussed the roles that attracted Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) and the time commitment for those roles. Consideration was given to the Council's financial position, the impact on the budget any decision may cause and the disparity in index linking allowances compared to the pay cap for staff salaries.

**The Panel recommended that there be no change to the allowance scheme for 2018/19, in making their decision, the Panel commented that they could not support index linking the**

**allowances for an annual uplift as the intention of the allowances were as an honorarium rather than a salary. The Panel commented that given the future uncertainties for the Council's funding, they did not wish to add a further burden on the Council's budget.**

**The Panel requested before the next meeting, next year, for officers to speak to members regarding workload and allowance levels, as it would be inform discussions.**

Mr Cam thanked the other Panel members for their attendance and consideration of the matters at hand, and thanked the officers for their work and advice.

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