

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
NOTE OF MEETING HELD ON 3 February 2023

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

Councillor Karen Buckley, Leader of the Council, attended for the start of the meeting.

*Mrs Eaton joined the meeting remotely, and rang off after several minutes due to connectivity issues.

Tracy Manning welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Councillor Karen Buckley in her role as Leader of the Council. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a level of allowance for the proposed role of Lead Members.

Councillor Buckley explained to the panel what she envisaged the Lead Member Role would look like with the new committee structure. A description of the Lead Member role had been circulated to the panel prior to the meeting together with an illustration from the current chairmen of the programme committees on the amount of time their commit to their roles.

Councillor Buckley considered the time input needed for the new Lead Members roles would be akin to the current programme committee chairmen.

Councillor Buckley clarified that the Lead Members would form part of the new executive committee. As members within a committee system, they would not have any individual decision-making powers, however they would champion and provide a political steer on specific areas and be the lead contact with officers on matters within the remit allocated to them. They would also be expected to attend the overview and scrutiny committees when required along with other forums such as Leadership Board and Budget Working Steering Groups.

The Lead Members would be appointed by the Leader and the number of roles would be with the gift of the Leader to determine, although it was anticipated to be between 4 and 6 roles.

In relation to any training requirements for the role, Tracy Manning responded that the specialist training e.g. leadership skills, would be provided as required.

Mr Cam thanked Councillor Buckley for her time and information, Councillor Buckley left the meeting.

Tracy Manning and Ian Curtis provided further information for the Panel on any points of clarification required. It was reported that any allowance set could be indicative, and could be re-visited, in light of experience gained in operating the governance system post May 2023.

The panel concluded that as the Lead Members were new roles, it was difficult to be precise in the amount of responsibility which would be attributed to the role. The Panel would also like to understand how the roles interplayed with the other respective Chairman and Vice-Chairmen as working practices became embedded.

It was therefore agreed to set an indicative rate of £4,823.75, the same as the proposed allowance for the chairmen, to be the subject of further review following a period of operation with a view to the allowance for 2024/25 being re-evaluated.

Before the meeting closed, Tracy Manning, canvassed the panels opinion on the Mayoral Allowance. She advised that the IRP do not normally review the Mayoral Allowances but that a policy on the operational of the mayoralty was held that stated that the mayoral allowance would increase each year in line with RPI.

The current allowance was £12,997 and increasing it in line with the Dec 2022 RPI would see a 13% uplift. This had been discussed at the Finance and Democracy Chairman's brief and the feeling was that an uplift of this magnitude seemed out of step with other increases. It had been requested to canvass the views of the IR Panel members in this regard.

Advice from Paul O'Donoghue, Chief Financial Officer, was to consider amending the policy to increase by the CPI levels instead of the RPI, with a cap of 2.5%.

The panel felt that the option of increasing the mayoral allowances by CPI levels, together with the setting of a cap, was a reasonable proposal. The Panel also indicated that they would be happy to consider the mayoral allowances in general in further detail if so desired going forward.

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.

Calculations

Table 3 – New Structure with new rates (inc Lead Members)

Allowance Type	Amount per allowance	Number of positions	Total Amount of allowance
Basic	£4,540	37	£167,980.00
Leader of the Council	£12,059.38	1	£12,059.38
Deputy Leader of the Council	£3,620.65	1	£3,620.65
Chairmen of Policy, Scrutiny and Planning Committees	£4,823.75	4	£19,295.00
Vice Chairmen of above	£2,411.88	4	£9,647.50
Chairmen of Audit & Standards	£1,957.88	2	£3,915.75
Vice Chairman of above	£981.78	2	£1,963.55
Chairmen of Public Protection and Licensing	£1,957.88	2	£3,915.75
Vice Chairmen of above	£981.78	2	£1,963.55
Chairman of Member Development Group	£2,411.88	1	£2,411.88
Lead Members	£4,823.75	4	£19,295.00
Leader of each Political Group	£38.59	37 max ¹	£1,427.83
Total			£247,495.84

¹ Calculation based on number of councillors

