

MEMBER SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES 2016/17

EXECUTIVE MEMBER:	Councillor David Moore
LEAD OFFICER & REPORT AUTHOR	Lindsay Tomlinson, Democratic Services Manager & Monitoring Officer

Why has this report come to the Council?

The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel has reviewed the scheme of allowances and the salary of the Mayor in accordance with the recommendation of Council on 26 February 2015.

Recommendation: That the following recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be approved:

1. That the Elected Mayor Salary be increased to £50,000.00
2. That the following Special Responsibility Allowances be paid:
 - a. Deputy Mayor allowance of £15,000.00 (with no opportunity to accrue additional special responsibility allowances as part of the executive, regardless of portfolio holding)
 - b. Executive membership allowance to remain at £6,358.68
 - c. That the following allowances be paid to Political group leaders depending upon the size of the group:
 - i. 5 - 9 members £2,000.00
 - ii. 10 - 14 members £3,000.00
 - iii. 15 or more members £4,000.00
 - d. Independent Chair of Audit & Governance committee - £400.00
 - e. Chairman of Council £2,000.00
 - f. Deputy Chairman of Council £500.00
3. That the Basic Allowance payable to all councillors be increased by 1% to £3,093.87
4. Travel and Subsistence
 - a. Allowances in accordance with HMRC guidelines for mileage rates, with the exception that no claim can be made for passengers
 - b. A breakfast allowance of £5.00 taken before 1100hrs.
 - c. A lunch allowance of £7.00 taken between 1200hrs and 1400hrs.
 - d. A tea allowance of £2.00 taken between 1500hrs and 1800hrs.
 - e. An evening meal allowance of £ 10.00 taken after 1900hrs.
 - f. Absent overnight from their usual place of residence, an upper limit of £100.00 be payable and when a member is absent overnight in London or attending an annual conference of a Local Government Association (LGA) the upper limit be increased to £115.00.
 - g. Conference allowance of £32.00 to be withdrawn.
 - h. Broadband allowance set at £18 per month per councillor.
5. Children and Dependants Allowance - Provided at 100% of cost, weekly cap of 8 hours care per week.
6. Pension Arrangements - no member pension scheme to be established.
7. No co-optees allowance to be paid
8. The IRP to review allowances on an annual basis

In addition, Council is asked to determine whether it wishes to request the Independent Remuneration Panel to conduct a separate review of committee chairmen's allowances as detailed in paragraph 19 of its report.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Council by law is required to consider the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in making decisions on its scheme of allowances.
- 1.2 The IRP comprises three members, listed below, who were all appointed following a recruitment exercise in October 2014:
 - Mr Richard Askew
 - Mr Phillip Robinson
 - Rev. Keith Teasdale
- 1.2 The Panel met during January 2016 and interviewed the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Political Advisor and members of the Corporate Leadership Team.

2 Member Scheme of Allowances 2016/17

- 2.1 In coming to its recommendation the Panel looked at the current scheme of member allowances and previous schemes going back over a number of years. They also considered the current and anticipated future financial position of the Council. The schemes of allowances of other comparable authorities were studied in a benchmarking exercise.

The Panel has concluded that an increase to the basic allowance of 1% is appropriate given that there has been no increase to the basic allowance since 2008/09 and in reflection of the work necessarily undertaken by elected members.

3. Salary for the Directly Elected Mayor

- 3.1 In February 2015 the IRP recommended that the elected mayor, once in office, should be awarded an annual salary of £50,000. This was rejected by Council and a salary of £30,000, a similar figure to the allowances paid to the former Leader of the Council, was agreed. Council also agreed that the Mayor's salary should be reviewed in 12 months' time.
- 3.2 The IRP Panel has reviewed the responsibilities of the Mayor since him taking office in May 2015 and noted in particular the CLT restructure in December 2015 and the additional responsibilities that have been placed on the Mayor as a result of these changes. In recommending a salary of £50,000 the Panel was mindful of the expectation that is placed on the Mayor, and the responsibility that lies with the role.

2. Special Responsibility Allowances

- 2.1 The Panel recommends a flat rate allowance for the Deputy Mayor of £15,000, with no other Executive responsibility allowance payable.
- 2.2 The allowances for the other Executive members is not recommended to change from the current agreed amount of £6,358.68.

- 2.3 The Panel has proposed that the allowances for the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Council remain at £4,000 and £500 respectively and that an allowance of £400 continue to be paid to the Independent Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee.
- 2.4 The current scheme provides an allowance for the leader of the main political opposition group of £4000. Currently there is no opposition group and therefore this allowance was not paid in 2015/16. The panel has suggested that a sliding scale of allowances for group leaders be introduced, with allowances dependant on the numbers within their groups. Therefore group leaders with between 5 and 9 members would receive £2000, those with 10 to 14 members would receive £3000 and those with 15 members or more would receive £4000.
- 2.5 CBC currently makes no payment to its committee chairs, other than the Independent Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee. Given that the other Cumbrian authorities make a payment to their committee chairs, the panel is of the view that some level of allowance for the respective chairmanship roles is appropriate and would be prepared to review the roles and make recommendations independent of this report if so required by Council.

3 Travel and Subsistence

- 3.1 Councillors do not currently receive an allowance for provision of broadband. Previously, broadband services were provided to those councillors who required it, at the cost of the authority. The Panel recommends that an allowance of £18 per month be paid; this reflects the fact that the authority no longer publishes paper copies of its agendas to councillors, and that they therefore require broadband connection in order to receive their agendas and other correspondence electronically.
- 3.2 For clarification, paragraph 44 of the IRP report that states “Where a member of an authority is a member of another authority also, the member shall not receive allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same duties” refers to subsistence and travel claims, and not to payment of basic or special responsibility allowances.

4 Budgetary Context

The Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) has advised that additional contingency provision of £45,000 has been made in the event of all IRP recommendations being implemented.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has undertaken a review of the Member Allowance Scheme, as agreed by council in 2015, having undertaken a benchmarking exercise and interviewed a number of member and officers, and has made its recommendations to Council. The Panel is keen to continue with an annual “light touch” review of the Member Allowance Scheme.

Consultees: Head of Paid Service; Section 151 Officer; Lead Executive Member

Monitoring Officer comments: Included in report

S151 Officer comments: Included in the report

EIA comments: