

Item no.

Report to: **District Council of Easington**
Date: **1 December 2005**
Report of: **Head of Democratic Services and Administration**
Subject: **Independent Remuneration Panel**
Ward: **All**

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider the payment of an allowance to Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

2. **Consultation**

- 2.1 In preparing this report I have consulted with the Leader of the Council and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

3. **Background**

- 3.1 In accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 the Council was required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council as to the payment of allowances to Members.

- 3.2 Accordingly, the Panel was established in September 2001 and is made up of the following membership:-

S Allen – former Director of Finance, Durham City Council
Professor R Hudson – Durham University
Canon K Woodhouse – Houghton-le-Spring
H. Patterson – former Public Relations Officer, ASDA

- 3.3 To date, the Panel has met on a number of occasions and made recommendations in relation to the payment of basic allowance, special responsibility allowance, childcare and dependent carers allowance, co-optees allowance, travelling and subsistence and pensions. It has also made recommendations as to the payment of basic allowance and travelling and subsistence to Parish/Town Council Members.

- 3.4 More recently, it was asked to consider the payment of special responsibility allowances to the Council's Licensing Committee and Sub-Committee Members following the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003. It next meets in February 2006 for the annual review of the levels of basic and special responsibility allowances for District Council Members.

4. **Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

- 4.1 Regulation 20(3) of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 allows the payment of an allowance to the Independent Remuneration Panel for carrying out its functions and the amount payable is at the Authority's discretion. The Council currently pays travelling expenses.
- 4.2 In recognition of their work and to reflect the time commitment of the Panel Members, it is felt that an allowance should be payable for their attendance at meetings of the Panel. If the Council is minded to agree, it is considered that an amount equivalent to that paid to the Council's co-optees would be appropriate. The current rate is £10.15 per hour (spinal column point 25 of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Spinal Column Range), and in line with the current Members Allowances Scheme a Panel Member would be able to forgo their entitlement if they wished.

5. **Implications**

5.1 Financial Implications

It is not envisaged that the annual cost of this proposal would exceed £500. There is provision within the Council's existing budgets for Members' Allowances.

5.2 Legal Implications

The proposals accord with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

5.3 Policy Implications

If agreed, the Members' Allowances Scheme will be amended accordingly.

5.4 Risk Implications

There are no implications.

5.5 Communications

There are no implications.

5.6 **Corporate Implications**

5.6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

There are no implications.

5.6.2 Procurement

There are no implications.

5.6.3 Equality and Diversity

There are no implications.

6. **Recommendations**

It is **RECOMMENDED** that

- (a) an allowance be payable to the Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel;
- (b) the amount payable be equivalent to that paid to the Council's co-optees;
- (c) the allowance be paid with immediate effect;
- (d) the Members' Allowances Scheme be amended accordingly.

Background Papers

Local Government Act 2000
Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003
Members Allowances Scheme

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