

# County Council

17 September 2014

## Independent Remuneration Panel- Appointments to Panel



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### Report of Don McLure, Corporate Director, Resources Councillor Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

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#### Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to make appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

#### Background

2. Under The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("The Regulations"), the Council must make a Scheme of Allowances for Members each year.
3. The Regulations also provide that before the beginning of each financial year, the authority shall review the Scheme and before it confirms or amends the Scheme, it shall have regard to the recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel ("the Panel"). The Scheme may be amended at any time during the financial year.
4. Also provided for in the regulations is that the Authority shall establish an Independent Remuneration Panel which must consist of at least three members none of whom:-
  - (a) is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or
  - (b) is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.
5. Authorities are to have regard to guidance that was issued on the regulations and to ensure that their appointments process commands public confidence. The guidance states that the Panel should be:
  - truly independent,
  - well qualified to discharge the functions of the Panel; and
  - representative of the diversity of the communities in the local authority's area.
6. Local authorities may advertise for candidates in local newspapers or may ask particular stakeholders, for example that voluntary sector or local business community to put forward candidates. In all cases the local authority will need to ensure its appointments process is open to public scrutiny.

7. Guidance indicates that to maintain credibility of its Panel a local authority will need to consider the extent to which some if not all of its Panel members are recognised members of the local community. Political appointments and any appointments which are made through friendship or any other personal association with members of the Authority should always be avoided.

### **Independent Remuneration Panel**

8. In July 2009, full Council was advised that a new Panel of seven members had been appointed as the Independent Remuneration Panel, following resignation of the previous Panel to allow the new unitary Council to establish a new Panel. Delegation had been granted by Cabinet to the County Treasurer in consultation with the Leader to make arrangements to appoint up to seven people.
9. A Panel comprising no more than seven people provided for a good range of individual views whilst keeping the members on the Panel to a reasonable number. The current situation is that two vacancies have arisen, and there remain in office five members.
10. The seven members originally appointed and those remaining in office are as follows:-
  - Lady Ann Calman (resigned)
  - John Cuthbert
  - John Hitchman
  - Professor Ray Hudson
  - Gill Stephenson
  - Andrew Sugden (resigned)
  - Kate Welch
11. Authority is sought to appoint a new Panel of seven, offering positions to the existing five members if they would be willing to continue in this role, and to determine the length of office of members on the new Panel. Guidance suggests that appointments are made for several years, perhaps 3 to 5 years.
12. It is suggested that advertisements in the local press be made to seek candidates for appointment, and any appointments would be made by the Corporate Director, Resources in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, and any future vacancies that arise within the term of office of the Panel be appointed through the same procedure.
13. Panel members do not receive an allowance, however they are reimbursed for reasonable expenses.

## **Recommendations and reasons**

14. (i) That a new Panel of up to seven members be established, with the term of office of its members being for a five year period.
- (ii) That the Corporate Director, Resources in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council be given authority to:-
- make appointments to establish a Panel of seven, offering appointments to the five existing members if they would be willing to continue.
  - make arrangements to fill any vacancies that arise within the term of office of the Panel.

## **Background Papers**

The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

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**Contact: Colette Longbottom Tel: 03000 269 732**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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**Finance** – Advertising costs of seeking applicants.

**Staffing** – None specific within this report.

**Risk** - None specific within this report.

**Equality and Diversity/ Public Sector Equality Duty** – None specific within this report.

**Accommodation** – None specific within this report.

**Crime and Disorder** – None specific within this report.

**Human Rights** – None specific within this report.

**Consultation** – None specific within this report

**Procurement** – None specific within this report.

**Disability Issues** – None specific within this report.

**Legal Implications** – None specific within this report.