



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

COUNCIL  
21 NOVEMBER 2007

DOCUMENT 14

Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Social Services

## Members' Allowances – Dependant Carers' Allowance

### RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To accept the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Appendix 2.
- 1.2 To raise the Dependant Carers Allowance for Members to £6 an hour up to a maximum of £50 a day effective immediately
- 1.3 To note that the Panel will review this in February 2008, particularly in regard as to whether to introduce different rates for Childcare and Dependents Allowances
- 1.4 To amend the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly.

### SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the request of the Members' Services Working Party, the Independent Remuneration Panel has reviewed the level of the Dependent Carers' Allowance
- 2.2 The Council is asked to consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and approve the Panel's recommendations.

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<b>Background papers:</b>	Agenda and reports of the Independent Remuneration Panel Appendix 1 – Implications
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 2 – Twelfth Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. It is not possible to estimate the financial effect of the proposed change in the Dependant Carers' Allowance as this depends on the level of claims.

**Legal**

- 2.1 Members' Allowances are governed by the Local Government Acts and associated regulations.
- 2.2 Before making or amending its Members' Allowances Scheme, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel although, with the exception of pensions, it is not bound to accept them.
- 2.3 The Council must make a Members' Allowances Scheme before 1 April each year and may amend the Scheme at any time.

**Personnel**

3. None directly arising.

**Equalities Impact**

4. None directly arising.

**Corporate Themes and Priorities**

5. None directly arising.



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## **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

### **TWELTH REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

1. Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003, (the '2003 Regulations') local authorities must establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of this panel is to make recommendations to the authority:
  - a) as to the amount of Basic Allowance that should be payable to its elected members
  - b) about the roles and responsibilities for which a Special Responsibility Allowance should be payable and as to the amount of each such allowance
  - c) as to whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants, and if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
  - d) about the duties for which a Travelling and Subsistence Allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance
  - e) as to the amount of a Co-optees Allowance
  - f) on whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year
  - g) as to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run
  - h) as to which members of an authority are to be entitled to pensions and as to treating basic allowance and special responsibility allowance as amounts in respect of which such pensions are payable.

The Council and the Panel must have regard to statutory guidance in considering the provisions of the Members' Allowances Scheme. The Council must consider recommendations from the Panel before making or amending a Members' Allowances Scheme.

2. Derby City Council's Independent Remuneration Panel comprises:

- Helen Foord, Senior HR Business Partner, Derby City Partnership

- Martyn Holden, Human Resources Director, University of Derby
  - Sue Holmes, Chief Executive, Derby Law Centre (Vice Chair)
  - Ian Samways, Individual Member (Chair)
  - Nigel Sutherland, Director, Brigdens Ltd
3. The Panel met on 6 November 2007 to consider the recommendations it should make to the Council in respect of Members' Allowances for 2007/08.
  4. The Members' Services Working Party had raised the issue of Dependant Carers Allowances at their meeting of 25 September 2007. It was felt that the current figure of £40 a day was not adequate as if, for example, 8 hours care was needed then the equivalent hourly charge would be less than the minimum wage. This had also been raised in the Councillors Commission, a body set up by the Government to review issues relating to councillors. It had been identified as a barrier to entry for new councillors, and a barrier to existing Members performing their duties. The Members' Services Working Party had suggested that the Independent Remuneration Panel consider introducing an hourly rate for Dependant Carers Allowance.
  5. The Panel considered information from Councillor Williams, which also highlighted issues for Members with children. These included:
    - the problem of finding registered childcare after 18:00
    - the inflexibility of nursery and childcare provision in terms of both availability and cost
    - the potential need for crèche facilities at the Council
  6. The Panel considered background information on childcare costs in Derby City. This was found to be between £2-£6 an hour, with an average charge of £3.17 an hour, per child. However, it was recognised that most carers looked after more than one child.
  7. The Panel considered figures on the 'going rate' for professional domiciliary care for elderly and disabled people in Derby City. These charges could vary from £7 an hour to £30 an hour depending on the level of service required. The average charge was £12 an hour.

## Conclusions

9. The Panel considered all the evidence before it, together with the statutory guidance on members' allowances, and came to the following conclusions:
  - (i) that the current rate of £40 per day was inadequate as it would pay less than the minimum wage for an 8 hour day
  - (ii) that a change to an hourly rate would be preferable as it would help reduce barriers for people with dependants wanting to become, or remain as, councillors
  - (iii) that an hourly rate would need to be a middle-ground figure between the current charges for child-care and dependant care in the city
  - (iv) that a cap should be applied to the amount that can be claimed in one day

## **Recommendations**

10. The Panel formally recommends the Council ...
  - a) to raise the Dependant Carers Allowance for Members to £6 an hour up to a maximum of £50 a day effective immediately
  - b) to note that the Panel will review this in February 2008, particularly in regard as to whether to introduce different rates for Childcare and Dependants Allowances

Ian Samways

Chair of the Independent  
Remuneration Panel

Steve Dunning

Secretary to the Independent  
Remuneration Panel

November 2007