



Member's Allowances – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2006/07

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To accept the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Appendix 2.
- 1.2 To introduce a Special Responsibility Allowance of 12.5% for the Vice Chair of the Planning Control Committee.
- 1.3 To continue to link increases in Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to the average salary award for local authority employees.
- 1.4 To amend the Members' Allowances Scheme accordingly.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has reviewed the Members' Allowances Scheme and its report is attached as Appendix 2. It contains recommendations relating to:
 - introducing a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Vice Chair of the Planning Control Committee
 - indexing Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances
- 2.2 The Council is asked to consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and approve the Panel's recommendations with or without amendment.

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Background papers: None
List of appendices: Appendix 1 – Implications
Appendix 2 - Tenth Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. The additional Special Responsibility Allowance for the Vice Chair of the Planning Control Committee will cost £3416.87 a year at 2005/06 allowance levels. Provision has been made in the draft Revenue Budget 2006/07 for overall increases to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in accordance with the likely pay award for local authority employees.

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.

Personnel

3. None directly arising.

Equalities Impact

4. None directly arising.

Corporate Themes and Priorities

5. None directly arising.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

TENTH 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:
 - Professor Mary Carswell, Director, Derbyshire Business School, University of Derby (Vice Chair)
 - Sue Holmes, Chief Executive, Derby Law Centre
 - Shameem Malooq, Derby City Partnership
 - Ian Samways, Individual Member (Chair)
 - Nigel Sutherland, Director, Brigdens Ltd
3. The Panel met on 1 February 2006 to consider the recommendations it should make to the Council in respect of Members' Allowances for 2006/07. The three political group leaders had been invited to attend the Panel meeting to make representations. The Panel had also undertaken to review whether a Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid to members of the Planning Control Committee; the current chair of that committee, Councillor Baxter, made a submission to the Panel on this point.
4. For the Labour Group, Councillor Williamson highlighted the following areas where he felt there were growing demands on the time and commitment of Members:
 - the emerging national and local neighbourhood agenda and the emphasis on partnerships
 - constitutional reforms including additional meetings
 - Government initiatives which envisage an increased role for local authorities, for example the Welfare Reform Green Paper, the Education White Paper and the reform of Primary Care Trusts.
5. For the Liberal Democrat Group, Councillor Jones's submission focussed on the following areas:
 - the need to recognise the continuing responsibilities of members involved in licensing and appeals hearings. Although the liquor licensing workload had declined, the Gambling Bill was on the horizon and employment/taxi hearings could involve a lot of reading and some emotional stress
 - the heavy workload of members of the Planning Control Committee, particularly the Vice Chair
 - a perceived anomaly in the rate of Special Responsibility Allowance applied to the Chair of the Audit and Accounts Committee
 - the increased workload potentially arising from attendance at meetings of individual Cabinet members. Councillor Jones acknowledged that it was too early to make a judgement on this
 - the need to continue to index-link the Basic Allowance
 - concern over the high levels of certain Members' travel claims
 - the need to ensure that the Dependant Carer's Allowance kept pace with childcare costs

- certain administrative matters relating to claim forms. The Assistant Director – Democratic Services undertook to investigate these.
6. No representations were received from the Conservative Group.
 7. Councillor Baxter gave a detailed description of the duties and responsibilities of members of the Planning Control Committee. He said that there was a particularly strong argument for giving a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Vice Chair of the Committee.
 8. The Panel considered the levels of allowances paid by Nottingham, Leicester and Stoke-on-Trent City Councils, where relevant, and concluded that they were broadly in line with those paid in Derby.

Conclusions

9. The Panel considered all the evidence before it together with the statutory guidance on members' allowances. It concluded that...
 - a) The Special Responsibility Allowances paid to members of the General Licensing Committee and Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee should remain as they are and be reviewed again in November 2006.
 - b) The Vice Chair of the Planning Control Committee should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance of 12.5%.
 - c) Increases in the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances should continue to be linked to the average salary award for local authority employees.
 - d) Travel and Subsistence Allowances should remain at the present levels and be reviewed again in November 2006 with the benefit of comparative information from other similar organisations.
 - e) Given the low level of claims, the Dependant Carers Allowance should remain at its present level.
 - f) The Council should not introduce a Co-optees Allowance at the present time.

Recommendations

10. The Panel formally recommends the Council...
 - a) To introduce a Special Responsibility Allowance of 12.5% for the Vice Chair of the Planning Control Committee.
 - b) To continue to link increases in Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances to the average salary award for local authority employees.

Ian Samways

Chair of the Independent
Remuneration Panel

Michael Foote

Secretary to the Independent
Remuneration Panel

February 2006