

County Council

- 26 April 2017

Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel

Cabinet Member: Cllr H Siggs - Cabinet Member for Resources (in relation to Members' Allowances)

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1. Summary

- 1.1. This report updates the Council on progress with the fundamental review of the Scheme of Members' Allowances which will lead to a new Scheme being recommended to Council for approval following the 2017 elections. The principles and guidelines for a fundamental review have been introduced to the Council in previous reports including to the November 2016 Full Council meeting.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. Council is recommended to note this report.

3. Background

3.1 Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (JIRP)

- 3.1 The fundamental review of the Members' Allowances Scheme previously reported to the Council is progressing well, and the Panel is on target to bring a revised Scheme of Members' Allowances to Council for approval in July 2017.
- 3.2 The Panel's approach is to provide reports or recommendations that are 'evidence-based' and to that end it has been gathering evidence in support of its work on the Schemes. It is vital that any recommendations that it makes take into account a range of evidence including views gathered from members of the Council as well as benchmarking information and best practice in the sector.
- 3.3 Members will be aware of the survey issued to all members in December gathering some general views on the Members' Allowances Scheme. This resulted in an unprecedented level of response with 44 responses from the 55 members. This level of response provides a statistically acceptable level of interpretation and a level of confidence for the conclusions that can be drawn from the information gathered.
- 3.4 The questionnaire has been followed by a series of informal Panel interviews with 16 members covering all Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) bandings and including some members who do not receive a SRA. These short sessions allowed the Panel to reach a level of detail not achievable through a general questionnaire. The Panel has asked me to

pass on its sincere thanks and gratitude to all members who have participated in the questionnaire and the interviews which combined have resulted in a level of response (and evidence) which is unprecedented locally and possibly even nationally. This information will be very useful in informing the Panel's recommendations to the new Council.

- 3.5 At this stage in its work the Panel is not in a position to bring forward any recommendations but it is confident that it will be able to bring forward a revised Scheme for consideration at the July 2017 Council meeting as planned. This target date gives the Panel time to consider any changes made by the new Council to the democratic arrangements in May 2017.

4. Implications

- 4.1. Legal: It is a legal requirement for the Council to appoint a Remuneration Panel and to consider its advice before agreeing a Members' Allowances Scheme or amendments to a Scheme.
- 4.2. Impact Assessment: The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions on the provision of services. There are no such decisions proposed in this report. There are no direct impacts on sustainability, health and safety, or community safety as a result of this report.
- 4.3. Financial: No impact
- 4.4. HR: No impact.

5. Background papers

- 5.1. None.