

COUNCIL

16 JANUARY 2020

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Report Title	APPOINTMENT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
Purpose of Report	To seek approval for the appointment of a new Independent Remuneration Panel to conduct a forthcoming review of the Scheme of Councillor's Allowances.
Decision(s)	<p>Council RESOLVES:</p> <p>1. To establish an Independent Remuneration Panel</p> <p>2. That the following be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of three years:</p> <p>Mrs Wynn Bartlett Mr Stewart Dove Mr Jason Jones Mr Graham Russell</p>
Consultation and Feedback	Group Leaders were consulted on the sharing of the panel members with Gloucester City Council.
Financial Implications and Risk Assessment	<p>There are no significant financial implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Lucy Clothier, Interim Accountancy Manager Tel: 01453 754343 Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Legal Implications	<p>Any legal implications are set out in the report.</p> <p>Patrick Arran, Interim Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer Tel: 01453 754369 Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Report Author	<p>Hannah Emery, Democratic Services and Elections Manager Tel: 01453 754383 Email: Hannah.emery@stroud.gov.uk</p>
Options	There are no alternative options, the Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of an IRP when agreeing a Scheme of Allowances and therefore must appoint a Panel.
Background Papers/ Appendices	Current scheme of members allowances

1. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Council is required, under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003 to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to make recommendations to the Council on a Scheme of Members' Allowances for Adoption.
- 1.2 The appointment and purpose of the Panel is to review the Members' Allowances Scheme and make recommendations to Council about the allowances to be paid to elected councillors. The Council must have regard to the recommendations of the IRP when making or amending its Scheme. The current scheme of allowances was agreed by Council in April 2016 and is now due for review.
- 1.3 The public perception of the independence of the IRP and the robustness of the review process is important. The regulations require that the Panel shall consist of at least three members, none of whom is formally connected with the Council. It is also essential for the Council to ensure the Panel remains representative and in touch with the issues and challenges face by those making decisions.

2. APPOINTMENT OF THE PANEL

- 2.1 The regulations state that a Panel must be established, but do not prescribe how a local authority should appoint IRP members. It is difficult to attract suitable candidates so following the approach of other Councils, it is proposed that this Council share panel members with Gloucester City Council. Group Leaders were informed that a joint recruitment exercise would be undertaken in order to take advantage of a potentially wider pool of applicants.
- 2.2 The regulations allow for shared IRP's to be created but members will please note that this is a joint recruitment exercise and utilisation of the same panel members and not a joint panel. Each council operates in a different way and the IRP members will consider each council separately and make recommendations appropriately.
- 2.3 Panel Member roles have been advertised by both local authorities, but unfortunately interest has been limited. In addition to the two remaining Panel Members appointed in September 2017 to Gloucester City Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (Mrs Wynn Bartlett and Mr Stewart Dove) two further applications were received. These individuals have been interviewed by the current panel members the Elections and Democratic Services Manager and the Policy and Governance Manager from Gloucester City Council to make an initial assessment of suitability for the role.
 - 2.3.1 Existing Gloucester City IRP Member – Mrs Bartlett has an extensive background in education and voluntary work within Gloucestershire.
 - 2.3.2 Existing Gloucester City IRP Member – Mr Dove is employed in a senior role at the University of Gloucestershire and is a member of a number of Boards in a voluntary capacity.

2.3.3 New member – Mr Jones has a background in the Armed Forces and recruitment, as well as experience of undertaking voluntary work in his local community.

2.3.4 New Member – Mr Russell has an extensive local authority background as a previous Head of Democratic Services and is an experienced Chair of IRP's across the South West.

2.4 The regulations allow for members of IRP's to receive some payment. The panel will be appointed on a voluntary basis and panel members will be reimbursed for travel and subsistence costs incurred.

3. FRAMEWORK OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

3.1 Subject to Council approval, the Panel will be able to commence its work immediately.

3.2 The IRP will consider the inclusion and level of the following different types of allowances:

- Basic (to be paid to all councillors)
- Special responsibility
- Dependents' carers
- Travelling and subsistence
- Parental leave
- ICT allowance

3.3 The panel will provide an opportunity for Councillors and other interested persons to make representations either in person or in writing. It will then prepare a report of its findings and recommendations to Council and the individual appointed as Chair of the Panel will be requested to present the proposals.

3.4 The Council will determine the types and amounts of allowances to be paid but the IRP will provide advice on those matters to which the Council must have due regard before making a decision.

3.5 The timetable for the process will be as follows:

Date	Action
16 January 2020	Appointment of IRP Panel
January 2020	Induction training/briefing First meeting of the IRP
February – March 2020	IRP to review the Scheme of Allowances Information gathering and interview with Members
April 2020	Full Council to consider IRP draft report and adopt new scheme of allowances
1 April 2020 (backdated)	New scheme of allowances comes into effect