

Full Council

3 September 2020

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – Dorset Council Scheme of Members' Allowances

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr S Flower, Leader of the Council

Local Councillor(s):

Executive Director: Jonathan Mair, Corporate Director, Legal & Democratic

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Report Status: Public

Recommendation: That the attached report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, in respect of the Dorset Council Scheme of Members' Allowances, be considered by Full Council.

An extract from the report setting out a summary of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel is set out below:

1. Summary of recommendations

1.1. In view of the changes in the constitution of the Council, the Panel recommends that:

- (i) the basic allowance should be set at £13,500 per annum;
- (ii) a new special responsibility allowance be awarded for Lead Members;
- (iii) the special responsibility allowance for Lead Members be set at £10,000 per annum;

- (iv) special responsibility allowances be awarded to the chairs of the Scrutiny Committees of £10,000 per annum;
- (v) special responsibility allowances be awarded to the chairs of the Overview Committees of £10,000 per annum; and
- (vi) the special responsibility allowance for school appeal members should be discontinued.

1.2 The Panel recommends that otherwise the present Scheme of Members' allowances should remain unchanged.

Reason for Recommendation: To enable Full Council to consider recommendations on the scheme of allowances following a review undertaken by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

1. Executive Summary

Under the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Dorset Council is required to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to the Council in respect of its Scheme of Members' Allowances. When setting a scheme of allowances, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

When the current Scheme of Members' Allowances was agreed by the Shadow Dorset Council in February 2019, it was agreed that the scheme of allowances would be reviewed after one year of operation of the new Dorset Council.

The Independent Remuneration Panel has concluded their review of the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances and their report and recommendations are presented at appendix 1 for Full Council consideration.

The review has taken into account, changes agreed by Full Council in February 2020, following a review of the Council's governance arrangements. The review particularly focused on the introduction of lead members to support the Council's executive arrangements and changes to overview and scrutiny arrangements. The Independent Remuneration Panel also undertook a general review of the whole scheme of allowances.

Any changes to the Scheme of Members' Allowances will take effect from the date of this meeting of Full Council, 3 September 2020.

2. Financial Implications

The allowances recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel represent an annual increase in the budget for members' allowances of £101,000.

3. Climate implications

None directly arising from this report.

4. Other Implications

None directly arising from this report.

5. Risk Assessment

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

At the time of the setting of the current scheme of allowances (February 2019), an equalities impact screening had been carried out on the Panel's report and no issues were identified. Linked to this it was reported that, a general equalities impact assessment had been drafted as part of the work to inform the approach to be taken to the provision of support and development for the Dorset Councillors.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – Dorset Council – Scheme of Members' Allowances

8. Background Papers

Dorset Council Constitution – Part 5: Scheme of Allowances

<https://modern.gov.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=433&MId=4812&Ver=4&info=1>

Footnote:

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.