

## **COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** Cllr Mike Ashbrook, Deputy Leader  
**LEAD OFFICER:** Martin Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
**REPORT AUTHOR:** Tim Capper

**Summary:** Sets out proposals for reviewing the current scheme of Members Allowances

**Recommendation:**

- (a) That the present position in respect of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted and the proposed terms of reference of the Panel be approved; and
- (b) The Head of Legal and Democratic Services be delegated authority to appoint the members of the Panel in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group.

**Impact on delivering the Corporate Plan:** Q6/02 – Adequate remuneration for Councillors assists in continuing to attract and retain high quality individuals to local government service

**Impact on other statutory objectives (e.g. crime & disorder, LA21):** Contributes to local and national priorities on diversity by encouraging people from a wide range of age groups and backgrounds into local government.

**Financial and human resource implications:** None of this report, but financial implications could be significant, depending on final recommendations of the Panel.

**Project & Risk Management:** None

### **Key Decision Status**

- **Financial:** N/A  
- **Ward:** N/A

**Other Ward Implications:** None

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This report makes recommendations to the Council on the appointment of a new Independent Remuneration Panel in accordance with Regulations made under the Local Government Act 2000 to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council 2011. The 2000 Act provides that a local authority must take account of the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on the various categories of allowances when it makes or amends a scheme of members allowances. The Council needs to appoint a new Panel to make recommendations on allowances for the four years following the district council elections in May 2007.

1.2 The Regulations do not specify how Panel Members should be recruited or selected, but do state that the process must result in a Panel which is truly independent, well qualified to discharge its functions and is representative of the diversity of the Council's area.

- 1.3 To achieve this local authorities may advertise for candidates and/or approach particular stakeholders as each authority needs to determine the best combination to demonstrate independence. For this reason political appointments, or the selection of panellists through friendship or other personal association with any member of the Council need to be avoided.

## **2. APPOINTMENT OF PANEL**

- 2.1 The opportunity to serve on the Panel was advertised in the Whitehaven News on 1 September, with a closing date of 22 September. The three members of the Panel whose term of office expired in May 2005 have been asked if they wish to be considered for re-appointment to the new Panel. Two have indicated they are willing to do so, the third has declined. There are obvious advantages in terms of continuity and experience in at least some of the previous panel continuing to serve on the new one.
- 2.2 It is suggested that the Council delegates authority to appoint the new Panel to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition Group. This will enable the Panel to start its work by early October.

## **3. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 3.1 The proposed terms of reference of the Panel are attached at Appendix 'A'. These propose that the Panel should report to the Council by the end of the 2006 calendar year recommending a new scheme of allowances for the four years following the district Council elections in May 2007; and, as an interim measure, to report by 1 April 2006 on whether any change to the current scheme should be introduced for the 2006/2007 financial year.

### **List of Appendices**

Appendix A – Proposed terms of Reference  
Appendix B - <Appendix Title>

### **List of Background Documents:**

#### **List of Consultees:**

Chief Executive  
Head of Finance & Business Development  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services  
Deputy Leader