

**15<sup>th</sup> May 2019**

**Annual Council**

**Members Remuneration Report 2019/20**

**Report of:** *Jacqueline Van Mellaerts – Interim Chief Finance Officer*

**Wards Affected:** *All Wards*

**This report is:** *Public*

**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Council operates a Members' Allowances Scheme which is reviewed annually by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The Members' Allowance Scheme is Chapter 6 of the Council's Constitution, the IRP have reviewed the current scheme and have made recommendations for the 2019/20 Municipal Year and is attached in Appendix A.
- 1.2 Following the IRP meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November, The IRP report has recommended to increase the Member Allowances by 1% which is also in line with Employees and has been included within the Council's MTFP 2019/20. The Mayor allowance was also considered and proposed to increase inline with the Mayor's Expenditure.
- 1.3 The IRP reviewed Parental Leave and Carer Allowance proposals to be included within the Members Allowance Scheme following a cross party meeting with group leaders.
- 1.4 The newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party asked for the IRP to be consulted to also increase the Deputy Mayor Allowance which was reviewed, and proposed increase agreed.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 **That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel at Appendix A be noted.**
- 2.2 **Following the IRP recommendation, the Members Allowances 2019/20 attached in Appendix B is approved.**

- 2.3 That the Mayor and Deputy Mayor allowances 2019/20 attached in Appendix B are approved.**
- 2.4 Following the IRP recommendation, the Member Parental Leave Policy included in the IRP report (Appendix 1) is approved.**
- 2.5 Following the IRP recommendation, the Member's Allowances Scheme includes Carers Allowance conditions as set out in the IRP report (Appendix 2) is approved.**
- 2.6 Delegated authority is given to Monitoring Officer to amend the constitution with the above amendments.**

### **3. Introduction and Background**

- 3.1 The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require councils to establish an *Independent Remuneration Panel*. The Council cannot alter or update its existing Scheme of Members Allowances without first considering a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 3.2 Local authority elected Members are entitled to receive allowances to compensate them for the role that they do and the responsibilities they assume on behalf of the communities they serve. A 'Basic Allowance' is paid to all Members of the authority to reflect the roles that they undertake. A 'Special Responsibility Allowance', is paid to those Members that have particular responsibilities within the Council's constitutional arrangements.
- 3.3 No additional subsistence or travel allowances are paid. However, Annual Council 2013 resolved that 'reasonable expenses' for external training and conferences are reimbursed, as required, and only with advance agreement of the Head of Paid Services.

### **4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options**

- 4.1 The IRP held a meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018 to discuss the Member's Allowance Scheme which is reviewed annually and set out in Chapter 6 of the constitution.
- 4.2 The meeting was held earlier the normal, so any proposals can be in line with the budget cycle.

- 4.3 The analysis of options by the IRP is set out in detail in Sections 10 to 20 of their report as attached at Appendix A.
- 4.4 It was discussed to Increase members Allowances by 1%, as they have not been increased since 2014/15. The increase is also in line with Employees for 2019/20 and has been included within the Council MTFP.
- 4.5 The Mayor Allowance was also discussed, as this continually reports not to be remunerated sufficiently to cover their expenses. It was decided to increase the Allowance in principle once the Mayor s Expenses had been reviewed.
- 4.6 Following the meeting, a report was presented to Policy, Projects and Resources Committee and was recommended a cross party meeting took place with group leaders to review a Parental Leave Policy for Elected Members.
- 4.7 This meeting took place in April. Group Leaders were presented with a draft Parental Leave Policy by officers and discussed the detail. Following this, it was decided to recommend proposals to adopt the Parental Leave Policy to the IRP for consideration along with proposals of including a Carer Allowance within the Member Scheme which the IRP had also discussed in November.
- 4.8 Officers drafted conditions for including a Carer Allowance within the Scheme and put forward these proposals to the Group Leaders and consulted further with the IRP.
- 4.9 Following the consultation, and the conditions slightly amended, the final Parental Leave Policy for Elected Members and Carer Allowance Conditions have been included within the IRP report (Attached as Appendix A) as Appendix 1 & 2 retrospectively.
- 4.10 Following recent conversations with the current Mayor, the IRP have been consulted that the Mayor's yearly expenditure is under remunerated. It was agreed that £4,500 is more reasonable. The IRP agreed that this will be continually monitored.
- 4.11 The newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party requested that the IRP were also consulted with the increase in Deputy Mayor Allowance by £500 so it was more in line with the Mayor's increase. The IRP have accepted this increase, but due to timing this is not included within their report.

- 4.12 The newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party has amended the Committee Structure for the Municipal Year 2019/20. The structure has been consulted with the IRP to inform them of the changes. There is no financial pressure with the new Committee Structure.
- 4.13 The final proposed Member Allowances and Mayor and Deputy Mayor Allowances are include within Appendix B

## **5. Reasons for Recommendation**

- 5.1 The Local Authorities (members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require that before Council can determine its Members Allowances for the forthcoming Municipal Year, it must consider a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel held a meeting in November 2018 with Officers and the Group Leaders. The meeting was minuted and considered a series of contextual information which is set out within their report.

## **7. References to Corporate Plan**

None

## **8. Implications**

### **Financial Implications**

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- 8.1 Following the meeting with the IRP on 7<sup>th</sup> November, it was agreed to increase Member Allowances by 1% which is also in line with Employees. As the meeting took place in November, this has been included within the Council's MTFP 2019/20, so this increase would not cause an additional pressure.
- 8.2 Parental Leave and Carers Allowance, may cause additional financial pressure, depending on how much it is utilised. A budget has not yet been provided, but they will be monitored through budget Monitoring and reported back to IRP and Members.

- 8.3 The Mayor's Expenditure was reviewed after the MTFP was agreed, and so the proposed increase of £1,000 has not been included within the budget and will present a small in year pressure on the Council's working balances. The IRP and Leader of Conservative Party have been notified.
- 8.4 The newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party has amended the Committee Structure, and therefore the make up of the Special responsibility allocations are slightly different. This has not affected the overall cost of the Members Allowances Scheme.
- 8.5 The newly elected Leader of the Conservative Party requested that the IRP were consulted with the increase in Deputy Mayor Allowance by £500. Previously a £500 contingency budget was set aside for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor duties. This has been underutilised, so it has been suggested to use this provision and provide it directly to the Deputy Mayor, so there is no further pressure.

#### **Legal Implications**

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- 8.6 The recommendations set out within this report are lawful and within the Council's powers and duties.

**Other Implications** (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

None.

#### **9. Background Papers**

- 9.1 Annual reports of the Independent Remuneration Panel to Brentwood Borough Council are publicly available at [www.brentwood.gov.uk](http://www.brentwood.gov.uk)

#### **10. Appendices to this report**

- Appendix A – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel 2019/20 (Including Appendix 1 & 2)
- Appendix B – Schedule of proposed Members Allowances for 2019/20.

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