

**COUNCIL**

## **Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel Members**

**24 July 2024**

### **Report of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections**

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To enable Council to make two appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel following a recent recruitment exercise to add to the robustness of the Panel which is currently at the minimum membership to be quorate.

**This report is public**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- (1) That Council appoints Mr George Krawiec and Miss Monica Law to its Independent Remuneration Panel.**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 require the Council to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 1.2 An Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) must consist of at least three members, none of whom must be a member of the Council. The Panel is expected to review the Council's Councillor Allowances Scheme every year and carry out a thorough review in the year prior to elections. At the end of the review, the panel makes recommendations to the Council about the allowances to be paid to Members.
- 1.3 IRPs make recommendations about the level of basic allowance for Members; the level of Special Responsibility Allowances and to whom they should be paid and on whether dependants' carers' allowance, travel and subsistence allowances and co-optees' allowances should be paid and the level of those allowances. The Council must have regard to the recommendations of the Panel before making or amending a Councillor Allowances Scheme.

## **2.0 Quoracy of the Panel**

- 2.1 In years past, the Council sought to have a Panel of up to seven members, with a quorum of three. For the last full review of the Allowances Scheme, undertaken during 2022/23, the panel numbers had dwindled to three; the member minimum required to be quorate. The review was completed by those three members and the new scheme was approved for adoption from May 2023. The current panel members have been very accommodating with their availability for meetings, however it is not ideal to have only the minimum number of panel members to be quorate, as there may be occasions in the future when one or more panel members are away on holiday or otherwise unavailable. In view of this Democratic Support advertised for up to two additional panel members in May 2024.
- 2.2 A recruitment exercise was undertaken with the vacancies advertised on the council website and social media accounts. Two applicants met individually with the Senior Manager Democratic Support and Elections on 11 June 2024. These in-person meetings were to discuss the role of the IRP and their applications. A short biography of both candidates is provided below.
- 2.3 Jerzy (George) Krawiec is a retired local authority Chief Executive and Solicitor with over 20 years' experience as a Chief Executive at three different authorities. Before that he was Deputy Town clerk at Lancaster City Council in the mid 1980's. He retired in 2008 and has recently moved into the area. He is now a Governor at 2 schools in Lancaster and Morecambe. Before moving here, he was an independent member of his County Police and Crime Panel and an Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee of his then local District Council. He has significant knowledge of how Local Government works and understands both the varying workloads and pressures that being an elected member entails.
- 2.4 Miss Monical Law has direct experience of the work carried out by Independent Remuneration Panels. She currently serves on the IRP for both unitary authorities in Cumbria as the Chair of the Panel in Cumberland and a member of the panel in Westmorland and Furness and has been involved in the process of developing allowances schemes for Councillors at those newly formed authorities. Miss Law took up these positions in 2022 after retiring from a long career in Local Government in various positions with Liverpool City Council, latterly in Marketing and Promotions.
- 2.5 With their knowledge of local government and willingness to apply their skills to support Councils in the role of IRP member, both Mr Krawiec and Miss Law are considered to be eminently suited to the role and are recommended to Council for appointment.

## **3.0 Allowance**

- 3.1 In July 2020, Council resolved:

*That £1,500 per annum be allocated for remuneration for Independent Remuneration Panellists to be divided equally between serving panellists up to a cap of £300 each per annum.*

- 3.2 £1,500pa still covers five Panel Members at a rate of £300 allowance every

year.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Council is recommended to appoint Mr George Krawiec and Miss Monica Law to its Independent Remuneration Panel to boost capacity for future reviews of its Councillor Allowances Scheme.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

None directly arising from this report.

#### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Panel is required to be appointed by the Council, although it is independent of the Council. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 part 4, section 20 paragraph 3, allows for Council's to pay an allowances to its IRP members stating that it "may pay the members of the panel such allowances or expenses as the authority or authorities for which it makes recommendations may determine."

#### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

In July 2020, Council resolved:

*That £1,500 per annum be allocated for remuneration for Independent Remuneration Panellists to be divided equally between serving panellists up to a cap of £300 each per annum.*

£1,500pa still covers five Panel Members at a rate of £300 allowance every year. In addition, expenses are payable for attending meetings, however meetings of the IRP have been remote since the pandemic. This is easier for the Panel Members who work and/or live in other areas of Lancashire.

#### **OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

**Human Resources, Information Services, Property and Open Spaces:**

None

#### **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

#### **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

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