

County Council 11 December 2020

Item 8 – Independent Remuneration Panel Report

Amendment by Cllr Michael Jones

The Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group generally welcomes the report of the Panel and thanks the Panel for its work during its review of the Member Allowance Scheme. The Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group support the Panel's recommendations about sustainability as a move to reducing the County Council's carbon footprint, to support our climate change emergency.

The Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group welcomes the IRP's recommendation to freeze allowances in 2021/22 in view of the 'present economic environment in which Council services are being increasingly severely restricted, and constituents are suffering with furlough, loss of business income and possible looming unemployment' (paragraph 31). This is further re-enforced by the decision by the Government to impose a public sector pay freeze for public sector workers which includes all of the workers in services that the county council employs.

In light of this, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group recognises that recommendations (m) and (p) in the Panel's report may lead to reductions in the special responsibility allowance paid to some future postholders in the roles of senior advisers to cabinet members and minority group leaders.

However, the Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group have become concerned that there is an overall lack of consistency in the report relating to the treatment of special responsibility allowances. If it is appropriate to reduce the aforementioned allowances, then it believes it is also appropriate to apply a similar reduction by the same effective amount.

The Labour Group and the Liberal Democrat Group therefore puts forward the following amendment to the Governance Committee's recommendation, in the light of the severe financial pressures and in order to ensure consistency with all special responsibility allowances for councillors, which could save £88,290 compared to the current cost of special responsibility allowances. Combined with the potential reductions in minority group leader of £4,285 and senior adviser to cabinet members' allowances of £7,324, this could total £99,809.

'That the Independent Remuneration Panel's report and recommendations be approved, ***but the Council agrees to go further than the IRP's recommended approach to freeze allowances and thereby agrees to reduce the special responsibility allowances paid to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Leader, Cabinet Members, Committee Chairmen and Foster Panel members by 25% in May 2021. This would have consequential amendments to the IRP's recommendations (g)-(k).***

An extract from Schedule 1 of the Member Allowance Scheme is shown below, illustrating the effect of the proposed amendment.

Schedule 1

Special Responsibility Allowances

Appointment	Allowance per member £ per annum
Chairman of the County Council	16,247 21,663
Leader of the Council	25,387 33,849
Vice-Chairman of the County Council	6,462 8,616
Cabinet Member (and Deputy Leader)	18,278 24,371
Cabinet Member for Adults and Health	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Economy and Corporate Resources	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Environment	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Finance	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Fire & Rescue and Communities	16,247 21,663
Cabinet Member for Highways and Infrastructure	16,247 21,663
Leaders of Minority Parties with at least three members**	£5,000
Leaders of Large Minority Parties with at least 15 members*	12,995
Leaders of Medium Minority Parties (five to 14 members)*	10,640
Leaders of Small Minority Parties (three to four members)*	4,236
Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Fire & Rescue Service Scrutiny Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Planning and Rights of Way Committee	7,164 9,552
Chairman of the Regulation, Audit and Accounts Committee	7,164 9,552
Senior Adviser to a Cabinet Member	5,658
Adviser to a Cabinet Member*	4,397 3,640
Member of the Fostering Panel	2,730 3,640

*and** reflect the IRP's recommended levels.