

### **Notes of a meeting of the Lincolnshire County Council Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) held at County Offices, Lincoln on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021.**

#### **Present:**

Colin Childs, Peter Clay (chairman), Heather Lee, Aileen Lucas, Richard Quirk.

#### **Officers present:**

Devon Moore (minutes secretary), Nigel West

#### **Apologies:**

There were none.

#### **Background:**

The IRP had been tasked with carrying out a fundamental review of the Members' Allowances Scheme. As four years had passed since the last review of the Scheme's index-linking there was also a requirement for this element of the scheme to be re-considered.

The IRP had met informally on 19 October 2021, when it had been agreed to reach out to all councillors for any views they might have on the scheme, prior to the review starting on 11 November.

Councillors were offered a number of methods of engagement, including a short survey, interview via Microsoft Teams on 11 November, comments directly to the Chairman of the IRP and comments directly to the Panel via the Head of Democratic Services. In total there were five responses from councillors

In addition the IRP compared levels of remuneration in the LCC Members' Allowances Scheme to the levels of other county councils, where it showed that approximately half of the authorities paid more, while the other half paid less.

#### **Consideration of councillor comments:**

None of those who responded felt that there was a need for any marked increase in the allowances.

One member highlighted the extra time required to travel to meetings at County Offices in Lincoln for those who lived in the far reaches of the county, compared with those who were Lincoln-based. Panel members had previously considered this point and, having consulted councillors, the Panel felt that this would be difficult to administer and as members were entitled to a reasonable basic allowance and were entitled to make mileage claims, they would again not be recommending changes to take into account extra travelling time.

One of the survey responses had highlighted the disparity between the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Audit Committee and the Chairmen of two other regulatory committees at the Council, Planning and Regulation and Pensions. The Panel consulted councillors on this point and, after consideration of the changing nature of the workload of the Planning and Regulation Committee and Pensions Committee, agreed that this should be on a par with the Chairman of Audit (Band 4 from Band 6). Likewise, they felt the SRAs of the vice-chairmen of those committees should be lifted to Band 9 from Band 10.

One member, in a written response to the Panel, commented that they felt there was a case for a skills audit, record of time spent on public duties and basic performance measures. The Panel acknowledged this input, but felt that such ideas were outside the scope of the IRP, whose terms of reference were governed by the 2003 Regulations.

There was general discussion about the cross-party role of the Chief Whip and the Panel agreed to consider further representations regarding the role at a future meeting of the Panel.

Recommendations:

1. That the index to be applied to the LCC Members' Allowances Scheme should be the average % increase in pay covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services for the previous 12 months (usually referred to as 'Green Book ' employees).
2. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the roles of Chairman of Planning and Regulation Committee and Pensions Committee be included in Band 4.
3. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the roles of vice-chairman of Planning and Regulation Committee and Pensions Committee be included in Band 9.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_