

**Notes of a meeting of the Lincolnshire County Council Independent Remuneration Panel held at County Offices, Lincoln on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2022.**

**Present:**

Tony Lawlor (via Teams link), Aileen Lucas, Colin Childs, Richard Quirk,

**Officers present:**

Nigel West, Nicola Calver, Adam Hopley (via Teams link), Devon Moore (minutes secretary)

**Apologies:**

Heather Lee

**Introductions:**

Nigel West welcomed all members of the Panel to the first meeting since the fundamental review of the Members' Allowances Scheme for the period 2023 onwards.

**Election of Chairman**

Nigel West explained that Peter Clay had left the Lincolnshire Independent Remuneration Panel, having moved out of the county. Therefore, there was a need to elect a new chairman.

It was moved, seconded, and RESOLVED that Colin Childs be elected as chairman of the IRP.

**Members Allowances Scheme 2023/24:**

The chairman enquired as to whether there had been any requests for changes to the current scheme. Nigel West confirmed that there had been no issues raised and no changes requested.

Members of the Panel discussed the current scheme and made the following points:

**Mileage Allowance** – A member of the panel highlighted the fact that members carrying passengers who would otherwise be entitled to claim a mileage allowance for the same journey could claim a passenger supplement 5p per mile per passenger. It was felt by the IRP members that awareness of this should be raised among councillors.

**Childcare and Dependants' Carers' Allowance** – A member of the panel suggested that it might be difficult to employ carers at the current rate equivalent to the National Minimum Wage. He suggested this be raised to an hourly rate equivalent to the National Living Wage, plus £1. Panel members agreed that this proposal be recommended to Council.

**Index-Linking:**

IRP members were reminded that in November 2021 they had agreed to index-link the allowances to the average percentage increase in pay covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services for the previous 12 months (Green Book). The index link could be in place for up to four years at which time it must be reviewed, however it could be reconsidered at any time.

This year The National Joint Council for Local Government Services has agreed a pay award for Green Book staff (G1-16) of an uplift of £1,925 on all NJC pay points. Because of the nature of the award consideration had to be given to an appropriate percentage increase.

The Local Government Association (LGA) had highlighted that the increase to the national pay bill had been costed at 6.886%, but the cost to individual councils would vary according to the profiles of each individual council's workforce. (NB: Calculations carried out by finance officers indicate that the increase to the Lincolnshire pay bill would be 6.4%)

The Local Government pay agreement sets out new rates for staff allowances, such as overnight allowances for social workers, and these had been uprated by 4.04%.

Members of the Panel discussed the pay award for employees and considered several options:

- A) Increase the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances by 4.04%
- B) Increase the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances by 6.4%
- C) Increase the Basic Allowance by 6.4% and increase the Special Responsibility Allowance by 4.04%
- D) Calculate a 6.4% increase in the allowances budget and then divide the increase by the number of members and add this to the basic allowance, while freezing the Special Responsibility Allowances.
- E) Calculate a 4.04% increase in the allowances budget and then divide the increase by the number of members and add this to the basic allowance, while freezing the Special Responsibility Allowances.

Members of the Panel discussed these options at length and decided that it would not be appropriate to recommend Option D or Option E above, as members of the Panel felt that other options were closer to the original decision to link the annual average 'Green Book' pay increase.

Although the panel felt there was merit in Options A and B above they agreed to put forward Option C as their preferred index-linking for the 2023/24 Scheme.

The Panel considered using inflation rates, CPI (10.1%), and RPI (15.4%), but decided that these options would not be appropriate.

It was therefore RESOLVED to recommend to Council that for the 2023/24 Members Allowances Scheme the basic allowance be increased by 6.4% and the Special Responsibility Allowances be increased by 4.04%.