

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Council
Date: 10th July 2013
Report for: Decision
Report of: Chief Executive

Report Title

Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Summary

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 the Panel was convened to make recommendations to the Council in relation to amendments to the Scheme of Members' allowances.

The recommendations of the Panel and revised scheme are appended at appendix 1 and Appendix 2 to this report for consideration by the Council.

Recommendation(s)

1. The Council is asked to consider the recommendations of the Panel as set out in the report at Appendix 1 and the updated scheme at Appendix 2.
2. That the Acting Director of Legal and Democratic Services be authorised to make any revisions to Part 6 of the Constitution (Members Allowances Scheme) as a consequence of the decisions of the Council.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Peter Forrester
Extension: 1815

Background Papers:

Email to IRP Members – 24th April 2013
Email to IRP Members - 14th May 2013
Email to IRP Members - 11th June 2013
Email to IRP Members – 14th June 2013

Implications

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	N/A
Financial	The report recommends the Members' Allowances annual indexation link to staff pay is reintroduced.

	The Council's approved budget includes provision for this.
Legal Implications:	The Council is required to request an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations about allowances for Members. The Council is required to give notice of a receipt of a report from a Panel and that it is about to make or amend a scheme. Notice of the receipt of a report was given on the 27 th June 2013.
Equality/Diversity Implications	None
Sustainability Implications	None
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	None
Risk Management Implications	None
Health and Safety Implications	None

Report

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 the Panel was convened to make recommendations to the Council in relation to amendments to the Scheme of Members' allowances.

The independent panel comprised:

- Mr Bernard Knight, Chairman Trafford Housing Trust
- Sir Bill Moorcroft, Principal, Trafford College; and
- Mr Ralph Rudden, Chairman of Trafford Neighbourhood Partnership.

The Panel were informed that the current Members' Allowances Scheme came into effect on 1st April 2007 following a recommendation from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The scheme is based on an alignment of adjustments to Members' Allowances to any annual adjustment to staff pay.

The regulations around Members' Allowances state that Councils can rely on this annual adjustment of allowances for no longer than a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation from the IRP. However, as there has been no pay award since 2010, the index rule became dormant and there has been no need to call the panel to review the scheme since that date.

The position changed this year. The Council's budget report referred to a pay award of 1% being awarded for staff. The Council's current scheme which linked members' allowances to the annual NJC pay award has expired so if there was a pay award for staff this year, the members' allowances would remain fixed at current levels with no mechanism for their review for this and future years unless a review was carried out.

Given this the IRP was asked to review the matter and make recommendations to Council.

The initial stage was to establish if the Panel considered the matter and felt they could deal with the matter electronically as they are due to meet again in the early autumn to review the arrangements for Scrutiny Topic Group Chairmen. They concluded that:

- there is no reason to undertake a full review of the scheme at this time. To do so properly would be a lot of work and very time consuming.

- the link between the scheme and the NJC award is sensible and reasonable as it plays into a national view about what the sector can and should afford.
- the link was previously in the scheme and has simply become time expired.

The Panel has made recommendations to reinstate the annual adjustment for this year and for the period up to 2016/17. The report of the Panel is contained at Appendix A and the revised scheme has been updated to reflect the recommendations of the Panel.

The recommendation allows for an automatic uplift to the Scheme in accordance with national agreements as has been the practice in previous years. This saves the Council having to consider the matter on an annual basis. However, Members may still determine whether they wish to accept any rise regardless of this.