

# REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL TO THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF TRAFFORD COUNCIL

## RECOMMENDATIONS IN RELATION TO AMENDMENTS TO THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

### 1 Introduction

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 the Panel was convened in April 2013 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 as set out below:-

#### **Annual Adjustment**

*10 (1) The Members' Allowance scheme, including the Dependants' Carers' Allowance, will be adjusted annually before the start of each year and the allowances (excluding travelling and subsistence allowance) will be increased by the amount of the annual pay award by the National Joint Council for Local Government Service*

*(2) The annual adjustment in 10(1) shall take place for the years commencing 1st April 2008, 2009 and 2010.*

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.

## 2. The Panel's Findings

The initial stage was to establish if the Panel wished to meet in person to carry out a review or whether they felt they could deal with the matter electronically. The Panel 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.

## 3. Recommendations

The Panel makes the following recommendations to amend the existing Scheme of Members' Allowances for Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.

Paragraph 1 be amended to read

*1 This Scheme may be cited as the Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme and shall take effect on 1st July 2013.*

And that paragraph 10 be amended to read

### **Annual Adjustment**

*10 (1) The Members' Allowance scheme, including the Dependants' Carers' Allowance, will be adjusted annually before the start of each year and the allowances (excluding travelling and subsistence allowance) will be increased by the amount of the annual pay award by the National Joint Council for Local Government Service*

*(2) The annual adjustment in 10(1) shall take place for the years commencing 1st April 2014, 2015 and 2016.*

#### **4. Declarations**

The Panel Members declared the following potential conflicts of interest, all of which are personal:

- Ralph Rudden is a member of the Diverse Communities Board of which elected Councillors are members.
- Mr Bernard Knight is Chairman of Trafford Housing Trust Board of which elected Councillors are members.
- Sir Bill Moorcroft is Principal of Trafford College of which one Councillor is on the Board. He is also Director of the Learning Strategic Partnership and is also Chair of the Children's Partnership Board of which elected Councillors are members

**Ralph Rudden**  
**Sir Bill Moorcroft**  
**Bernard Knight**

**Panel Members – June 2013**