

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Council
Date: 24th May 2023
Report for: Decision
Report of: Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer

Report Title

Members' Allowances Scheme – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP)

Summary

To advise the Council of the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations and determine changes to the Council's Allowances Scheme in the light of the recommendations.

Recommendation(s)

1. That Council consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out at appendix 1 to the report and decide on one of the following options:
 - (a) To accept the Panel's recommendation in full;
 - (b) To partially accept the Panel's recommendation with compelling reasons for doing so; or
 - (c) To reject the Panel's recommendation in full with compelling reasons for doing so.
2. That the Governance Manger be authorised to make the necessary amendments (if approved) to the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.
3. That Council's thanks be conveyed to the Panel for the work undertaken and report produced.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: John Addison, Governance Manager

Background Information

Appendix 1 – Report from the Independent Remuneration Panel of May 2023.

Implications:

Relationship to Corporate Priorities	N/A
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	N/A
Financial	The Panel's recommendation would see an increase in the cost of Member's Allowances of approximately £200k per annum. This increase has been included in the Council's budget plans.
Legal Implications	It is statutory requirement that a local authority has regard to the recommendations of an IRP before it makes or amends a members' allowances scheme.
Equality/Diversity Implications	<p>The scheme as a whole is intended to assist the objective of overcoming any financial and other disincentive that an individual might experience in being a councillor and encourage persons from all sections of the community to become and remain councillors.</p> <p>The Panel has given consideration to the subject of equalities in its report.</p>
Sustainability Implications	There are no implications arising from this report.
Carbon Reduction	There are no implications arising from this report.
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management Implications	N/A
Risk Management Implications	N/A
Health and Safety Implications	N/A

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require the Council to have regard to the recommendations made to it by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) before it agrees its Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 1.2 The last review of the Council's Members' Allowances schemes was undertaken in 2020.
- 1.3 In accordance with regulation 20.2 (a) of the above regulations, an IRP comprising of a minimum of three members, was appointed and tasked with carrying out this review.
- 1.4 The Panel for this review comprised the following members:-
 - **Dr Declan Hall (Chair)** – an independent consultant specialising in Members' allowances and support and a former lecturer in local

government and politics at the Institute of Local Government, The University of Birmingham.

- **Kal Kay** - CFO Trafford College Group, a qualified accountant and professional background in the public sector and Chair of the Finance Committee at NHS Greater Manchester
- **Ralph Rudden** - A Trafford resident, a Royal Marine by professional background, Chair Stronger Communities Board and Chair Sale Response.

1.5 This covering report has been produced to accompany the detailed report of the IRP that is included at appendix 1. Reference should be made to that report for further information and detail.

1.6 The regulations require the Council to publicise the recommendations of the IRP, the agreed scheme and actual allowances paid to councillors each year. Arrangements are in hand for the required notice to be published in accordance with the regulations.

1.7 The Council is not obliged to follow the proposals of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

2 Terms of Reference of the IRP

2.1 The Trafford IRP was requested to review the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme in accordance with the requirement of the 2003 Members' Allowances Regulations (21. (1)), which state

An independent remuneration panel shall produce a report in relation to the authority or authorities in respect of which it was established, making recommendations —

- a) as to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following should be available:
 - Special Responsibility Allowance
 - Travelling and Subsistence allowance; and the duties for which a Travelling and Subsistence allowance can be paid
 - Co-optees' Allowance;
- b) as to the amount of such allowances and as to the amount of Basic Allowance;
- c) as to whether Dependants' Carers' Allowance should be payable to members of an authority, and as to the amount of such an allowance;
- d) as to whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated in accordance with regulation 10(6);
- e) as to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index

should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed.

3 Recommendations made by the Panel

- 3.1 Under the regulations the Council is required to have regard to the advice of their IRP. The phrase "...shall have regard to the recommendations made..." is used in the regulations. Should the Council wish to implement arrangements not fully in accordance with the Panel's recommendations they will need to give compelling reasons for doing so. In addition, it should be noted that details of any variations between the Panel's recommendations and the Council's final decision must be detailed in a public notice.
- 3.2 The full recommendations of the Panel are detailed in their report attached as Appendix 1.

4. Recommendation

1. That Council consider the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel as set out at appendix 1 to the report and decide on one of the following options:
 - (d) To accept the Panel's recommendation in full;
 - (e) To partially accept the Panel's recommendation with compelling reasons for doing so; or
 - (f) To reject the Panel's recommendation in full with compelling reasons for doing so.
2. That the Governance Manger be authorised to make the necessary amendments (if approved) to the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme.
3. That Council's thanks be conveyed to the Panel for the work undertaken and report produced.