



Council

21 November 2011

**Subject: Review of Members' Allowances for 2012/13**

Report by:

Rachel North  
Director of Strategy & Regeneration

Contact Officer:

Sue Harrison  
Governance & Democratic Adviser  
01427 676600  
sue.harrison@west-lindsey.gov.uk

Purpose / Summary:

To inform Members of Recommendations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) with regard to the Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2012/13.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

- (i) That Council considers the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and decides which, if any, to approve.**
- (ii) That subject to (i) above, the Council makes the necessary amendments to the Council's Constitution.**

**IMPLICATIONS**

**Legal:** None related to this report.

**Financial :** When comparing costs to budgets as per the estimates from last year’s budget setting proposals would achieve an approximate saving of £12K.

**Staffing :** None related to this report.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :**  
*NB: A full impact assessment **HAS TO BE** attached if the report relates to any new or revised policy or revision to service delivery/introduction of new services.*

**Risk Assessment :** N/A

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :** N/A

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**  
None

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

**Yes**

**No**

**Key Decision:**

**Yes**

**No**

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 West Lindsey District Council's Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), has carried out a review of the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances.
- 1.2 To inform the review, the Panel has considered a number of factors, including National Statistics, Government guidance and figures paid by neighbouring and comparative authorities. The evidence reviewed by the Panel indicates that the current Scheme of Allowances is robust and there is general agreement that, the Scheme is transparent, simple to administer and easily understood.
- 1.3 The Panel also met with the Leader of Council and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group and received written comments from an Independent Member. These written comments and comments made by the two Councillors during the discussions have been taken into account by the Panel when arriving at their final recommendations in this Report.
- 1.4 In addition, the Panel circulated a survey to all Members in an attempt to identify trends. The return rate was disappointing. However, before considering 2013/14 Allowances, the Panel will re-send the survey to selected Councillors for completion.
- 1.5 The Panel also received details of the Council's budget situation from the Financial Services Manager.
- 1.6 Members will recall that a decision was taken by Council last year for there to be no overall increase to Members' Allowances for 2011/12 with the exception of an increase in the SRA for the Chair of Planning Committee.
- 1.7 The Panel, whilst mindful of the need for caution in increasing allowances, are well aware of the dangers of remuneration failing to adequately compensate for the role.
- 1.8 The Panel, at its meeting on 15 June 2011 considered a Report by the Council's Governance & Democratic Adviser, which provided comparative details and relevant background information.
- 1.9 The Panel were also mindful of the recent changes to the Committee structure and have made certain recommendations to reflect these changes. The Panel will happily revisit these allowances in a year, in light of evidence of exceptional workloads.
- 1.10 In addition, the Financial Services Manager has written to the HMRC to seek to agree a tax allowance on behalf of Members for such things as the use of their homes as an office.

- 1.11 Finally the Panel would like to record its thanks to those Members and Officers who made themselves available to talk to the Panel.

## Panel Recommendations

### 1. Basic Allowance

The Panel were firmly of the view that, under normal circumstances they would have been recommending an increase in Basic Allowance, however, due to the current economic climate and in line with the 0% increase in salary for West Lindsey District Council Employees, the Panel regrettably recommends no increase to Basic Allowance.

### 2. SRA – Special Responsibility Allowances

|       |  | £                  |        |
|-------|--|--------------------|--------|
| i)    | Leader of the Council  | No Change          | 11,458 |
| ii)   | Deputy Leader/s  | No Change          | 3,646  |
| iii)  | Leader of the Opposition   | No Change          | 3,646  |
| iv)   | Deputy Leader of the Opposition  | No Change          | 750    |
| v)    | Minority Group Leaders<br>Per Group Member   | No Change          | 83     |
| vi)   | Chair & Vice Chair of Council<br>(this amount to be apportioned at year end to<br>whoever takes the chair)   | No Change          | 2,604  |
| vii)  | The Chairs of Policy & Resources and<br>Prosperous Communities Committees  | <b>Increase to</b> | 3,255  |
| viii) | The Chair of Development<br>Management Committee   | No Change          | 3,255  |
| ix)   | The Chairs of Governance & Audit &<br>Challenge & Improvement Committees   | No Change          | 2,604  |
| x)    | The Chair of Licensing & Regulatory<br>Committee (No payment to Vice Chair)  | <b>New Payment</b> | 1,250  |
| xi)   | Chairs of Chief Officer Employment Ctte, Taxi & General Licensing<br>Sub-Ctte and a Licensing Hearing to be paid on an hourly payment of<br>£20 per hour when chairing a meeting, up to a maximum of £200 per<br>day. <b>New Payment</b> |                    |        |
| xii)  | Vice Chairs of Committees<br>(Not Licensing & Regulatory or Chief Officer Employment Ctte)   | No Change          | 1,250  |

- xiii) No change to the SRA payments to representatives of the Standards Committee, noting that these payments shall cease at the end of the Standards regime as per the timescale to be included in the pending legislation.
- xiv) No change to the allowances for Co-optees, Dependent Carers or travel allowances, noting that the Car Allowance has already increased to 0.45 per mile in accordance with the tax efficient rate authorised by the Inland Revenue.
- xv) Subsistence – (Receipts must be provided for subsistence claimed and attached to the claim form).
  - a. Absence of more than four hours but no more than eight hours – only the cost of one meal can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £16. (Increase of £1)
  - b. Absence of more than eight hours but no more than 12 hours – only the cost of two meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £27. (Increase of £2)
  - c. Absence of more than 12 hours but no more than 16 hours – only the cost of three meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £35. (Increase of £2)
  - d. Absence of more than 16 hours but not including an overnight stay – only the cost of four meals can be reimbursed up to a maximum of £42. (Increase of £2)
  - e. Overnight – No Change – £83
  - f. Overnight (London or LGA) – No Change – £208