



GA.29 13/14

Governance and Audit
Committee

21 November 2013

H

Subject: Review of Members' Allowances for 2014/15

Report by:

Jeanette McGarry
Interim Director

Contact Officer:

Alan Robinson
Head of Service Central Services
01427 676509
alan.robinson@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 2014/15.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) That Members consider the report of the Remuneration Panel and RECOMMEND to Council the Member Allowance Scheme 2014/15 for approval.**

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None related to this report.

Financial : FIN/49/14 Acceptance of the panel’s recommendations would result in an alignment of the Special Responsibility Allowance of the Planning Chair with that of other Committee Chairs saving £658 per annum.
An increase of 1% in the overall costs of the allowance scheme will total £2,785, therefore the cash value of the proposals would be £2,127 per year. This increase will be met from within existing budgets.

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 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 received details of the Council's budget situation from the Group Accountant (Services).
- 1.4 In order to gauge the views of Members, the 2013 Members Survey provided the opportunity for comments and also to meet with the Remuneration Panel.
- 1.5 The Panel met on 3 September 2013 and of the seven Members who has expressed a wish to attend the meeting four were available to attend in order to discuss their views. Comments made by the four Members during the discussions have been taken into account by the Panel when arriving at their final recommendations in this Report.
- 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 2013/14.
- 1.7 Whilst mindful of the need for caution in increasing allowances, the Panel are well aware of the dangers of remuneration failing to adequately compensate for the role. A 1% increase for staff, up to Band 13, from April 2013, was also taken into consideration by the Panel.
- 1.8 The following calculations are set out to support the Panel's recommendation of a 1% increase to Member's Allowances, taking into consideration what the levels of allowances would have been if Council had agreed the recommendations of the panel over the past 3 years or applied an appropriate financial index. The table below shows that the rate of allowance would have increased by £229.50 should the recommendations of the Remuneration Panel have been accepted. It also shows that the allowance would have increased by £751.88 if allowances had increased in accordance with the Consumer Price Index.

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Actual	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00
Applying CPI	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,288.70	£ 5,526.69	£ 5,692.49	£ 5,851.88
Panel Recommendation	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,329.50	£ 5,329.50	£ 5,329.50

1.9 The Panel would like to record its thanks to those Members and Officers who made themselves available to talk to the Panel.

Panel Recommendation I

Further to the Review of Members' Allowances for 2011/12, which recommended a 25% increase in the SRA of the Chair of Planning Committee, due to the number of Planning Committee meetings held and which involve extra briefing meetings..

The above-mentioned recommendation was subject to review and the Panel are now of the view that the SRA of the Chair of Planning Committee should be reduced from £3,288 to £2,630 to bring it into line with other Chairs allowances.

Panel Recommendation II

1. Basic Allowance

The Panel were firmly of the view that a 1% increase in Basic Allowance, in line with the increase in salary for West Lindsey District Council Employees was totally justifiable. The Panel therefore recommends a 1% increase to Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance.

	£
Basic allowance	5,151
2. SRA – Special Responsibility Allowances	
i) Leader of the Council	11,573
ii) Deputy Leader/s	3,682
iii) Leader of the Opposition	3,682
iv) Deputy Leader of the Opposition	758
v) Minority Group Leaders Per Group Member	84
vi) Chair & Vice Chair of Council (this amount to be apportioned at year end to whoever takes the chair)	2,630
vii) The Chairs of Policy & Resources &	2,630

Prosperous Communities Committees		
viii)	The Chair of Planning Committee	2,630
ix)	The Chairs of Governance & Audit & Challenge & Improvement Committees	2,630
x)	The Chair of Licensing & Regulatory Committee	2,630
xi)	Chair of Chief Officer Employment	2,630
xii)	Vice Chairs of Committees	1,263
xiii)	Chair Taxi & General Sub Committee	1,263
xiv)	No change to the allowances for Co-optees, Dependent Carers or travel allowances. The Panel noted and commented that travel allowances are currently in line with the tax efficient rate authorised by the Inland Revenue.	
xv)	Subsistence – No change (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 £15.	
	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 £25.	
	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 £33.	
	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 £40.	
	e. Overnight – No Change – £83	
	f. Overnight (London or LGA) – No Change – £208	
xvi)	No change to the mileage rate, which is in accordance with the tax efficient rate authorised by the Inland Revenue, of £0.45 per mile with first passenger supplement of £0.031; and additional passenger £0.021. Motorcycle allowance of £0.25 per mile, and bicycle allowance of £0.21 per mile.	