

**Committee:** Full Council **ITEM 2**

**Date:** 13<sup>th</sup> December 2005

**Title:** Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2006/07

**Authors:** Ruth Whitlam, Steven Bennett, Martyn Fiddler

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel is:

Ruth Whitlam (Chairman) – local resident and Director of Corporate Affairs, NHS Appointments Commission

Steven Bennett – Secretary and Clerk to Anglia Ruskin University

Martyn Fiddler – local resident and consultant on aviation customs duties and VAT.

1.2 The Chief Executive of the District Council wrote to us during the year confirming that we had each been re-appointed for a further two years. The terms of appointment therefore end as follows:

Martyn Fiddler	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2007
Ruth Whitlam	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2008
Steven Bennett	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2009

1.3 For the year 2005/06 the panel undertook a comprehensive review of its work, so for the year 2006/07 we have concentrated on assessing the impact of the change in the Council's constitution on the scheme for members' allowances. We were also asked to look at the unusual workload of the licensing committee during 2005/06 and whether this should be recognised within the scheme; and to consider flexibility in the calculation of the group leader allowance.

1.4 As usual officers of the Council have provided us with excellent and efficient support and we would particularly like to thank Mick Purkiss for his patience and assistance.

1.5 In this report for 2006/07 we consider and make recommendations on:

- the implications of the revised constitution on the scheme for members' allowances;
- the unusual workload of members of the licensing committee;
- the effective date for the calculation of the group leader allowance; and
- the annual increase in the basic, special responsibility and carer's allowances.

## **2. Impact of the revised constitution**

We have been briefed on the deliberations of the constitution task group and the acceptance by the Council of the revised constitution. In relation to the revised committee structure, on the information supplied to us, we are able to equate the anticipated workload and responsibilities of the three new policy committees and two new select committees with the policy and scrutiny committees which existed in the former structure. We are able to recommend, therefore, that the chairmen of the community, environment and operations policy committees and of the performance select committee and review and petitions committee should receive the special responsibility allowance for committee chairmen.

We have not yet received sufficient evidence that the chairmen of the three area panels would have equivalent workloads and responsibilities of the committee chairmen. It is clear to us that their pattern of meetings and working arrangements will be different and a mixture of the formal and informal. We recommend, therefore, that the area panel chairmen receive 60% of the special responsibility allowance payable to committee chairmen in the first instance.

The impact of the revised constitution, in particular the work of the area panels and the role of vice chairmen in the new structure, will be fully reviewed in the summer of 2006 and we will make further recommendations in our report for 2007/08.

We note that the two regulatory committees, development control and licensing, will remain unchanged and that the standards committee will continue to exist as previously.

## **3. Licensing Committee**

We have been presented with evidence of the unusual workload borne by members of the licensing committee during the period June to September 2005. We are persuaded that this is an exceptional and short-term circumstance and recommend that members of the committee receive an allowance of £24 per meeting during this period of unusual workload. This figure being one-third of the daily rate (£71.14) used for calculating allowances in 2005/06.

The panel would wish to emphasise that this recommendation in no way sets a precedent it merely acknowledges and recognises an unusual situation. The chairman of the committee, already in receipt of a special responsibility allowance would not be entitled to also receive a meeting allowance.

We understand that the recommendation for the payment of a per meeting allowance has already been considered and was adopted by the Council at its meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005.

#### **4. Group Leader Allowance**

The group leader allowance is calculated on the group membership at 1<sup>st</sup> April each year. We are advised that there have been a number of changes to the membership of the various groups during the year 2005-06 and we have been asked to consider whether the effective date for the calculation of the allowance should be more flexible.

We believe that this has been an unusual year in the movement in group numbers and that normally there is not such a great variation in group membership to justify a review in year. We recommend, therefore, that the effective date for the calculation of the group leader allowance remains 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

#### **5. Review of allowances for 2006/07**

We recommend that the 2.95% increase in the earnings of full-time local government employees agreed for 2006/07 is applied to members' basic and special responsibility allowances for 2006/07.

No adjustment to the carer's allowance is proposed but this will be kept under review.

#### **6. Summary of recommendations**

- 5.1 We recommend that the special responsibility allowance payable to committee chairman is paid to the chairmen of the community, environment and operations policy committees and of the performance select committee and of the review and petitions committee.
- 5.2 We recommend that, in the first instance, the chairmen of the area panels receive a special responsibility allowance of 60% of the allowance payable to committee chairman. This to be reviewed in the summer of 2006.
- 5.3 We recommend that members of the licensing committee receive a payment of £24 per meeting in recognition of the current unusual workload during the period June to September 2005.
- 5.4 We recommend that the effective date for the calculation of the group leader allowance remains 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

5.5 We recommend the following allowances for payment in 2006/07:

Basic allowance	£4,760 (notionally 65 days p.a. @ £73.24 per day)
Chairman of the Council	£4,760 + £3,570 + civic expenses (Basic allowance + $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Vice Chairman of the Council	£4,760 + £2,380 (Basic allowance + $\frac{1}{2}$ basic allowance)
Leader of the Council	£4,760 + £7,140 (Basic allowance + $1\frac{1}{2}$ basic allowance)
Deputy Leader of the Council	£4,760 + £2,380 (Basic allowance + $\frac{1}{2}$ basic allowance)
Committee chairmen	£4,760 + £3,570 (Basic allowance + $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Chairmen of area panels	£4,760 + £2,142 (Basic allowance + 60% of SRA for committee chairmen)
Chairman of Standards Committee	£3,570 ( $\frac{3}{4}$ basic allowance)
Group Leaders	One basic allowance + either £1,000 p.a or £108 x group membership as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April (subject to a minimum group size of 2) whichever is the greater.
Members of the Development Control Committee	£4,760 + £476 (Basic allowance + $6\frac{1}{2}$ days @ £73.24 per day)
Carer's allowance	£10 per hour

**Ruth Whitlam**  
Chairman

December 2005