

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Maxine Mahony – Executive Director Strategy & Governance

To: Council 25 February 2021

Author: Rory Ringer, Democratic Services Manager

Subject: Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding Members Scheme of Allowances 2020-2023

Purpose: The Independent Remuneration Panel recommends to Council the Members Scheme of Allowances for the period of 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the Carer's allowance is increased in line with the increase to the 'Real Living Wage' on an annual basis and is back dated for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023.
- 2) That District Councillors Basic/Special Responsibility Allowance is aligned to the locally agreed Breckland staff pay settlement on an annual basis for the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2023.
- 3) That the Council continues to review any changes to roles and responsibilities undertaken by Councillors and should there be any significant changes and/or requests from Parish Councils to review a request then it will invite the Independent Remuneration Panel to convene to consider the impact of any such changes/request.
- 4) That Council note that a Member may, by notice in writing given to the proper officer of the authority, elect to forgo their entitlement or any part of his or her entitlement to allowances.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Breckland Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to consider and recommend a scheme of allowances that complies with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and associated regulations.
- 1.2 The Panel met on two occasions and also interviewed Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen, Leader of the Council, and Councillor Nigel Wilkin as Chairman of the Planning Committee.
- 1.3 It should be noted that the panel does not propose any change to: travel and subsistence allowances; the approach to be taken in respect of allowances for town and parish councillors; nor the Council's ability to withdraw allowances from a member under a full or partial suspension.

2.0 OPTIONS

- 2.1 Option 1 – To accept and approve in full the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel until 2023.

- 2.2 Option 2 – To accept and approve in part the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 2.3 Option 3 – To agree alternative recommendations and give appropriate reasons for these.
- 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**
- 3.1 During their meetings and deliberations, the Independent Remuneration Panel had been mindful of the financial constraints affecting the Council and the public sector as a whole. Despite these, the authority continues to perform very well, and the Remuneration Panel wished to congratulate the Council for maintaining the lowest District Council Tax in the country whilst providing good levels of public satisfaction and local service provision in times of austerity.
- 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**
- 4.1 This report complies with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and associated regulations.
- 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**
- 5.1 **Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues**
- 5.1.1 The scheme of Members Allowances makes provision for travel allowances for Members. There are no recommendations being made in this report in respect of these allowances.
- 5.2 **Constitution & Legal**
- 5.2.1 The duty to comply with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and associated regulations. Approval of the Members Scheme of Allowances is a duty reserved to full Council. The Council must have due regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel when setting members' allowances.
- 5.3 **Equality and Diversity/Human Rights**
- 5.3.1 There are not considered to be any significant equality and diversity implications arising from this report. Allowances are fixed without the consideration of the individual post holder. A Carer's allowance is included in the scheme.
- 5.4 **Financial**
- 5.4.1 Should the Council accept some or all of the recommendations of this report there will be an increase to the budget for Members Allowances.
- 5.4.2 There are also public advertisement costs that are unavoidable
- 5.5 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**
- 5.5.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel have undertaken some consultation in considering their recommendations. If approved, the changes to remuneration will be effective for the period 1 April 2020 – 31st March 2023.
- 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 No wards are directly affected by the content of this report.

7.0 **ACRONYMS**

7.1 N/A

Background papers:- None

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Appendix B Breckland Council Allowances.