



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

Date: 27 March 2006

Item No:

Directorate: Finance, Governance and
Citizens

Mario Abela

Author/Contact Officer:

Francis Fernandes

Solicitor to the Council

Ext. 7334

Title of the Report:

Remuneration Panel

Purpose of the Report

To seek Council's approval to amend the Council's current scheme on Members Allowances, to take into account the advice received by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.

Recommendations

Council notes the advice of the Independent Remuneration Panel and, in accordance with its advice, agrees to amend the Council's Remuneration Scheme to enable the following:-

1. That the Basic Allowance for all Councillors be increased to £6,000 per annum and backdated to 1 September 2005.
2. That the current Travel Allowance of £600 per year regardless of the amount of travel undertaken be removed and that that travel within the Borough should be claimed for in the same way as travel outside the Borough.
3. That the Special Responsibility Allowance for members of the Improvement Board should be set at £6,000 per annum and backdated to 1 September 2005 and that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny should be set at £3,000 per annum and backdated to 1 September 2005 and that the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of Audit Committee should be set at £2,000 per annum backdated to 1 September 2005.
4. That Council notes that a full Review will be brought to the May Council meeting and that that review will consider all allowances including the allowances agreed in this report.

Background

Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by the Local Government Act 2000, makes provision in relation to various allowances for members of local authorities.

The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 provide that each local authority has to decide its own scheme and the amounts to be paid under that scheme.

Members are required by law to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to advise the local authority on its scheme. Whilst it is ultimately for the Council to determine its own scheme, the Council has to, as a matter of law, take into account the Independent Remuneration Panel's advice before determining agreeing or amending its remuneration scheme.

On 28 November 2005, Council agreed to establish jointly with Northamptonshire County Council an Independent Review Panel with specific terms of reference.

The Remuneration Panel has approached its review of the Council's scheme on two basis; a short term interim position and a medium term full review.

Given the very tight timescales to which the Panel have been working, they have decided to prioritise their review and, in the short term, focus on priority allowances. The Remuneration Panel's report, attached to this report at Appendix 1, contains its advice on this interim position.

The Remuneration Panel will continue its work in reviewing the Council's whole scheme, with a projected timescale for its advice in time for the May 2006 Council meeting.

It should be noted by Councillors that the complete review, to be brought to the May 2006 Council meeting, will look at the whole scheme, and this will mean a review of allowances already agreed in this report.

Financial Implications

There is no budgetary provision for the increases in remuneration outlined in the report, but existing budgets will be re-prioritised to meet the identified expenditure.

Background Papers

Remuneration Panel Report March 2006

Various Papers File Ref FJF/ Remuneration

New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local
Authority Allowances – July 2003