

# **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **REPORT BY INDEPENDENT PANEL FOR COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES**

### **REVIEW OF COUNCILLORS' ALLOWANCES 2005-2006**

#### **Introduction**

The Panel submitted a previous report to the Council in March of this year recommending a number of amendments to the Councillors' Allowance Scheme. Those changes were intended as a short-term step to address the changes that had been made in the Council's governance arrangements. The present report is intended as a medium-term step to take a wider look at the allowances regime.

#### **Consideration by Panel**

The Panel met at the Guildhall on 10 May 2006 and heard information from Councillor Hadland (Leader), Councillor Flavell (Cabinet Member), Councillor Crake (Whip for Liberal Democrat Group) and Ella Yeshin (Corporate Manager - Legal and Democratic Services).

The Panel also took into account information they had gathered from a number of Councillors and other sources as part of their previous report.

The Panel had before them information on the level of allowances in comparable authorities.

#### **Panel Advice**

1. The special responsibility allowance for the Leader should be increased from £10,000 to £11,000 pa, and for the Deputy Leader from £6,000 to £6,600 pa.

Note that although the Panel took into account the particularly heavy workload that fell on the Leader and Deputy at the present time, they considered that much of this additional responsibility must be regarded as compensated for by their Improvement Board allowances, which were additional.

2. The special responsibility allowance for other Cabinet Members should increase from £4,000 to £5,000 pa.

Note that the Panel took into account the proposal, shortly to be implemented, under which individual Cabinet members will have delegated authority to take decisions within their portfolios. However, the Panel considered that the effect of this upon workload and

responsibility levels was not really known at present and the above recommendation was based more upon a consideration of the comparative data from other authorities. The question could be reviewed again once the delegations' scheme had been operating for a time.

3. The position of whip does not appear to have any clearly defined role in the Council's management, as opposed to the party's, and it was not therefore recommended that any special responsibility allowance be paid in respect of it.  
Note that the Panel were conscious that they had heard from only one of the whips.
4. It is recommended that the basic allowance and all special responsibility allowances should be revised annually in line with the Local Government pay award (the first revision to be from April 2007, but subject always to the Council's approval each year).
5. It is recommended that the increases described at 1 and 2 above should be backdated to 1 April 2006.
6. No other changes are recommended at present.

#### **Budgetary Implications**

Increase in Leader's allowance	£1,000
Increase in Deputy Leader's allowance	£600
Increase in Cabinet Members' allowance	£1,000 x 4 = £4,000

#### **Panel Members**

Ros Catlin

Gary Smith

Ray Starkey (not present at meeting on 10.05.06)