

FULL COUNCIL**14 OCTOBER 2015****REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS****WELLAND PARTNERSHIP INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL -
REVIEW OF NON-ADMINISTRATION GROUP LEADER(S) ALLOWANCE****1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 2.1 To consider the Welland Partnership Independent Remuneration Panel's report regarding a review of the non-administration Group Leader(s) Allowance.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To consider whether to accept the Welland Partnership Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations set out at paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of Appendix A.**
- 2.2 **Should 2.1 be approved, the Members' Allowances Scheme set out at Part 6 of the Council's Constitution be amended accordingly.**
- 2.3 **The Panel be thanked for its work.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Members' Allowance Scheme includes provision for Non-administration Group Leader to receive an allowance and the relevant wording reads as follows :-

'When the Members of the Council are divided into at least two Groups constituted in accordance with Regulation 8 of the Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulation 1990 a special responsibility allowance shall be paid to the Leader(s) of the Political Group(s) other than the Group containing the Leader of the Council.

The amount of such allowance for each Leader other than the Leader of the Council shall be calculated by sharing the sum of £3,589 pro-rata to the number of Members in each Group. The main Opposition Group Leader's allowance be augmented by £670.94 per annum.'

- 3.2 Following the Borough Council Elections on 7 May 2015, the resulting political balance of the Council was 26 Conservative Members and 2 Independent Members.
- 3.3 Under the current Remuneration Scheme, this would mean that the Leader of the Independent Group (consisting of 2 Members) would receive the whole of the £3,589 sum plus the £670.94 as the Leader of the Independent Group is also the Leader of the Opposition. These two sums together equate to more than the amount paid to the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Committee Chairs. Due to this being the first time such a small group was the only opposition group and its

Group Leader was due to be awarded more than that paid to the Deputy Leader of the Council and each of the Committee Chairs, it was considered that an independent review was needed of the Non-administration Group Leader(s) Allowance.

3.4 The Panel met on 26 August 2015 to carry out the review and the Panel's report is attached at Appendix A for Members' consideration. The report will be presented by the Chair of the Panel, Mr. John Cade of the University of Birmingham, who will also be available to answer Members' questions.

3.5 The Panel's report considers the interpretation of the legislation, the history of the Non-administration Group Leader(s) Allowance, the role of the Non-administration Group Leader in context with the role of the Chair of a Committee as well as the views received.

4.0 POLICY & CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Members are part of the Council's Corporate and Democratic Core. The ability to attract and retain interested and hard working Members is essential and to do this a fair, structured and transparent process to review remuneration arrangements is in place.

5.0 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial changes proposed to the Non-administration Group Leader(s) Allowance show a small saving which will be used to offset any financial pressures elsewhere in line with the Council's approach to flexible budget management.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 Under the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of the Panel is to review the existing Scheme of Allowances, including the Special Responsibility Allowances, paid to Members and to make recommendations to the Council on the appropriate level of payments.

6.2 Particularly of relevance in this report, where one or more groups on a Council form an Administration, a special responsibility allowance must be paid to a Member of the Opposition – usually paid either to the Leader of the Opposition (when such a post exists) or to a Chair of a Scrutiny Committee. Any such payment can only be made to a constituted group which comprises at least two Members. If a Group does not exist it is not possible to share an allowance with an individual.

7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 There are no direct links to community safety as a result of this report other than the role that Members take in relation to this area of the Council's work.

8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 An equalities impact assessment has been completed which refers to legislative requirements.

9.0 RISKS

9.1 The risks associated with this report relate to following legislative requirements, appropriate consideration to the Panel's recommendations and transparency in decisions around allowances.

L I K E L I H O O D	A	Very High				
	B	High				
	C	Significant				
	D	Low		1, 2		
	E	Very Low				
	F	Almost Impossible				
			Negligible 1	Marginal 2	Critical 3	Catastrophic 4

IMPACT

Risk No	Risk Description
1	Decisions challenged due to legal and democratic processes not followed.
2	Council reputation affected if transparency in decision-making not followed

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 There are no direct links to climate change as a result of this report

11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 All Councillors have had the opportunity to provide a view on this allowance. The Panel met with the Group Leaders and the Chief Executive to receive their comments on this allowance.

12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 All wards are indirectly affected.

Contact Officer: Sarah Evans, Senior Democracy Officer
 Date: September 2015
 Appendices: A – Welland Independent Remuneration Panel Report
 Background Papers: Supporting papers held by Remuneration Panel
 Reference: X: Committees/Council/2015/16/141015