

FULL COUNCIL

25 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

**WELLAND INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL –
PAYMENT FOR PARISH REPRESENTATIVES
WHEN DEALING WITH PARISH COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 To consider the Welland Independent Remuneration Panel's report regarding an allowance for the Parish Representatives when they are involved in a Governance Sub Committee meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **To consider whether to accept the Panel's recommendations that Parish Representatives required to be involved in considering allegations of inappropriate behaviour by a Parish Councillor receive an annual allowance of £300 and this allowance be payable with immediate effect and be index linked to the NJC Pay Award;**
- 2.2 **A one-off payment of £300 be made to the Parish Councillor who has been involved in 3 Governance Sub Committees to date;**
- 2.3 **The Panel be thanked for its work.**

3.0 KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Full Council resolved the following at its meeting on 16 July 2014 :-

'The Welland Independent Remuneration Panel be requested to consider an allowance for the Parish Representatives when they are involved in a Governance Sub Committee meeting.'

- 3.2 The Panel met on 12 November 2014 to consider this request and its 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.
- 3.3 The Panel's report focuses on the interpretation of the legislation and the role of the Parish Representatives in context with the role of the Independent Persons.

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 Councillors and Parish Councillors is essential and an appropriately set remuneration package assists in achieving this.

5.0 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The annual allowance of £900 (£300 to each Parish Representative) will be met from existing resources.
- 5.2 The linking of the allowance to the NJC Pay Award provides some financial uncertainty but due to the national financial climate any such increases are likely to be modest as evidenced in the 1% increase for 2013/14.

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 to be made in the future.
- 6.2 Section 28(7)(iii) of Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 deals with Standards. This legislation requires that, when an allegation of inappropriate behaviour by a Parish Councillor is made, the arrangements for considering that allegation must include a Parish Council representative.

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 undertaken on the policy.

9.0 RISKS

- 9.1 If Members' remuneration is not at an appropriate level the Council will not be able to recruit and retain good quality Members. In the same way Parish Representatives will be reluctant to assist the Member Complaints Process in accordance with the legislation.
- 9.2 The use of an independent remuneration panel with a professional Chair assists in reducing reputational risk in the setting of allowances and ensures fairness.
- 9.3 In the current economic climate there is the risk that the Council cannot afford to fund extravagant increases without making cuts to services elsewhere.

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 The Panel provided the opportunity for the Chair of the Governance Committee and the Parish Representatives to make representations to the Panel. The Head of Communications has been consulted on the draft report. The Chair of the

Panel will answer Members' questions during the consideration of its recommendations.

12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 All wards are indirectly affected.

Contact Officer:	Angela Tebbutt, Head of Communications/Sarah Evans, Senior Democracy Officer
Date:	January 2015
Appendices:	Appendix A – Welland Partnership Remuneration Panel Report
Background Papers:	Supporting papers held by Remuneration Panel
Reference:	X: Committees/Council/2014/15/250215