

The Welland Partnership Remuneration Panel

Report to Melton Council Meeting

Review of Member Allowances

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government (Members' Allowances) 2003 Regulations put in place a consolidated and simplified framework for allowances that covers Principal Councils and Parish and Town Councils.
- 1.2 Part 4 of the Regulations makes provision for the establishment of an Independent Panel to make recommendations concerning Allowances. The Welland Remuneration Panel – now comprising John Cade (Chairman), John Greenwood, Gordon Wells and Ian Davis – is compliant with the necessary arrangements.
- 1.3 We met, as a Panel, at Parkside, Melton Mowbray on Wednesday 9th January 2019. As is our normal practice, we asked to see the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, with an opportunity extended to every other Member of the Council to give oral evidence to us or to provide their comments by email.
- 1.4 We received comments from Councillors Glancy, Graham and Greenow.
- 1.5 We are grateful for these comments and we are also very appreciative of the support we received from Adele Wylie and Sarah Evans.

2. Context

- 2.1 We were asked to undertake this review in the context of your Council's decision to move to an Executive Scrutiny model of governance from your Annual General Meeting on 16th May 2019.

- 2.2 This posed a challenge for us. Whilst there were certain matters already determined, (i.e. the establishment of a Scrutiny Committee) other matters were still in the course of being decided. This is to be expected with such a significant change in your governance arrangements.
- 2.3 The move to an Executive model of governance, with delegation of decisions to individual Cabinet Members, can be expected to place increased responsibilities on these positions. This needs to be recognised in the Special Responsibility Allowances they receive. However, until we have evidence of how these accountabilities are being allocated and discharged it would be inappropriate to speculate.
- 2.4 We have, therefore, taken the view that, with one exception the Cabinet post SRA's should, for the time being, remain the same as the Chairs under the Committee model of governance. Allowing then for a seven-month bedding in period, we are proposing that we make a follow-up review in January 2020. We will then have the evidence upon which to base our recommendations to you and any changes could, if you wished, be back dated to May 2019.

3. Findings

3.1 Basic Allowance

We received no evidence that the Basic Allowance should be changed and we share this view.

3.2 Cabinet

3.2.1 For the reason given in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4, we propose that the SRA for the Leader and the other Cabinet Members(excluding the Deputy Leader) should, at this stage, remain unaltered (Cabinet Member SRA being the same as the current Chair)

3.2.2 We believe there is already sufficient information to determine that the role of the Deputy Leader will be enhanced. The role will not only have a portfolio in its own right but will also have an important

deputising role for the Leader. We therefore recommend that this SRA should be at a factor of 1.85 of the Basic Allowance

3.3 Scrutiny

3.3.1 The Local Government Act 2000 requires that any Council operating an Executive model of governance must have a Scrutiny Committee.

3.3.2 In the evidence we received from the Leader and the Chief Executive we were advised that they saw a proactive and robust overview and scrutiny function as an essential ingredient for the good governance of the Council. Scrutiny will not just have an important role in holding the Executive to account but will also be making an important contribution in helping shape policy.

3.3.3 We therefore recommend that the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee should receive an SRA equal to that of a Cabinet Member (“parity of esteem”) and the Chairs and the Vice Chair of the Committee should receive an SRA the same as existing Vice Chairs.

4. Regulatory Committees

4.1 We were asked to look at the SRA for the Planning Committee Chair.

4.2 Whilst we appreciate that the Planning Committee meets much more frequently than, say, the Licensing & Regulatory Committee, it is the responsibility level (not time commitment) that is the key determinant for the SRA.

4.3 We take the view that, as complex and important as many planning applications are, a similar case can be made for the importance of having safe licensed private hire vehicles and proper licensing arrangements for the sale of alcohol.

4.4 We are, therefore, of the opinion that no changes should be made to the SRA’s for the Planning and Licensing & Regulatory Committee Chairs at this moment in time. When we undertake our follow-up review in January 2020 we will also be able to assess

whether the creation of related Cabinet posts have had any implications.

4.5 We received no evidence for any change in the SRA to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governance Committee.

4.6 We were asked to look at the remuneration for the Chair of the Melton Safety Community Partnership. In the course of our discussion it was ascertained that it was expected that this role would in future be undertaken by the Cabinet Member for People and Community. It would therefore be inappropriate to introduce an SRA at this stage.

5. Budget Implications

5.1 The budgetary implications are shown in the table below:

Role	Status	£ Existing cost	£ Extra cost
Leader	Stay the same	12,781	0
Deputy Leader	Increase to a factor of 1.85 of the Basic Allowance	4,084	4,803
4 x Cabinet Members	Saving of 2 policy chairs + 2 vice chairs	10,576	5,760
Chair of Scrutiny	Same as current chair	0	4,084
Vice Chair of Scrutiny	Same as current vice chair	0	1,204
3 x Regulatory Chairs	Stay the same	12,252	0
3 x Regulatory Vice Chairs	Stay the same	3,612	0
Totals		43,305	15,851

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the basic allowance remains unaltered.
- 6.2 That, apart from the Deputy Leader, no changes be made at this stage to the SRA's for Cabinet Members and Leader (Cabinet Members to receive the same as existing Chairs)
- 6.3 That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Deputy Leader be set at 1.85 of the Basic Allowance
- 6.4 That the Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chair of Scrutiny be the same as that for a Cabinet Member. (i.e. a factor of 0.85 of the Basic Allowance)
- 6.5 That the Vice Chair of Scrutiny receive an SRA similar to other Vice Chairs.
- 6.6 That a follow-up review be undertaken in January 2020 once the new governance arrangements have had a period of operational running. Any changes identified in this review could, if the Council wishes, be backdated to May 2019.

John Cade

Chairman

Welland Independent Remuneration Panel

January 2019