

Crawley Borough Council

Report to Governance Committee

26 January 2021

Final Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2021/22 and 2022/23)

Report of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel – LDS/163

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Council is required to adopt a scheme of allowances that sets out the remuneration payable to its councillors.
- 1.2. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations (as amended) require the Council to:
 - a) Appoint an independent remuneration panel (IRP) to review the Councillors' Allowances Scheme
 - b) Have regard to the recommendations of the IRP.
- 1.3. An IRP was formed in 2020 and has concluded its review. Details of the considerations and subsequent recommendations are set out in the final report, attached as appendix A. The draft Councillors' Allowance Scheme for 2021/22 and 2022/23 is attached as appendix B.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Governance Committee:
 - a) Considers the final report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and the recommendations therein.
 - b) Considers the draft Councillors' Allowances Scheme for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and decides the allowance rates it wishes to recommend to the Full Council.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. The IRP is an independent body that has given detailed and thoughtful deliberation to a range of information throughout the process. It is required by law that due consideration be given to the IRP's recommendations.

4. Background

- 4.1. On 29 January 2020, the Governance Committee delegated the appointment of individuals to the IRP to the Head of Legal, Democracy and HR, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governance Committee (report [LDS/156](#)).

- 4.2 LDS/156 also requested an extension to the Councillors' Allowances Scheme to encompass the 2020/21 year, in order to allow the IRP's timescales to better align with the budget process. This was agreed by the Full Council on 26 February 2020.
- 4.3 Shortly afterward the Coronavirus pandemic saw workplaces close and Government restrictions on meeting others. The effects of this upheaval on the IRP were twofold:
- The appointment process was delayed as invitees had greater demands than before so could not volunteer their time. Seeking a fourth member of the IRP in particular was time-consuming.
 - The difficulties involved in setting up virtual meetings also caused delays.

The timescales set out in report LDS/156 were therefore not possible. The report of the IRP is thus brought to the Governance Committee and Full Council in early 2021.

5. Overview of the Final Report of the IRP

- 5.1. The IRP met three times between October and December 2020. A structured approach was taken, with consideration given to different elements of the scheme at each meeting. The recommendations were finalised upon deciding that no further information was required to inform considerations.
- 5.2. The final report of the IRP is attached as appendix A. The report sets out:
- a) The membership of the IRP
 - b) Key elements of the relevant legislation
 - c) The information and data used to inform the IRP's recommendations
 - d) A summary of the discussions had and the key points raised at each meeting
 - e) The IRP's final recommendations to the Governance Committee.
- 5.3. The recommendations were based on the desire of the IRP to seek a balance between wanting to sufficiently remunerate councillors for their work in ever-changing circumstances, while ensuring no further pressure on the Council's budget.

6. Implications

- 6.1. Financial: if the recommendation to forego indexation increases in 2021/22 and 2022/23 is agreed, the Council would make savings of roughly £7,535 in each of the two financial years (based on the average of the past three pay award increases).
- 6.2. Legal: the Council must have regard to the recommendations set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel as per The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

7. Background Papers

- Report [LDS/156](#) to the Governance Committee (29 January 2020) 'Councillors' Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel 2020'
- [The Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#)

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On behalf of the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel