

Crawley Borough Council

Report to Governance Committee

22 June 2021

Further Deliberations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Mayoral Allowances 2021/22 and 2022/23)

Report of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel – **LDS/169**

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The Council is required to adopt a scheme of allowances that sets out the remuneration payable to its councillors. This is reviewed by an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
- 1.2. The IRP also reviews Crawley Borough Council's mayoral allowances (the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's allowances). This is not a statutory requirement, but is deemed good practice.
- 1.3. This report sets out the IRP's deliberations and recommendations regarding the mayoral allowances.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. That the Governance Committee:
 - a) Considers the deliberations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (set out in section 5 of this report).
 - b) Considers the proposed mayoral allowances for 2021/22 (commencing 1 August 2021) and 2022/23 as set out in section 6 of this report and decides the allowance rates it wishes to recommend to the Full Council.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1. The IRP was assigned the task of giving detailed consideration to a range of information and forming independent recommendations regarding the mayoral allowances.

4. Background

- 4.1. On 26 January 2021, the Governance Committee considered the recommendations within the final report of the IRP. These were approved to be recommended to Full Council, with the exceptions of recommendations (i) and (j):
 - i) If a clear rationale cannot be provided for maintaining the rate of allowance payable to the Mayor, the allowance should be reduced by an amount to be decided by the Governance*

Committee and in turn the Full Council. The IRP advises that careful consideration be given to what it deemed was a disproportionately high allowance compared to mayoral allowances of other local authorities.

j) The Deputy Mayor's allowance should be maintained at the current rate, unless a substantial change is made to the Mayor's allowance. In which case, the rate should be altered proportionately to remain at approximately 15% of the Mayor's allowance.

4.2 The Governance Committee resolved that the IRP be asked to reconsider recommendations (i) and (j), and to recommend to a future meeting of the Committee (and in turn the Full Council) an amount of allowance for the roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

4.3 The IRP has since undertaken a further meeting and produced further recommendations. Members present at the meeting were:

- Jeff Alexander, Chief Executive, Gatwick Diamond Business (Chair)
- Philip Brown, Interim Group Director of Policy and External Affairs, B&CE
- Steve Turner, Crawley Prevention Police Inspector, Sussex Police

Previous IRP Chair/member John Williams was not present.

5. Deliberations of the IRP

5.1. During the meeting, members of the IRP considered the following information:

- The South East Employers Councillors' Allowances Survey (2020)
- Other local authorities' IRP reports
- Proposed new arrangements for the Crawley Mayor's transportation.

5.2. Members of the IRP discussed the Crawley Mayor's allowance (£11,548) in the context of other local authorities' Mayor's allowances. The IRP had previously considered the 2019 data and noted that Crawley's allowance was unusually high. When presented with the 2020 data, the IRP established that the allowance remained notably high, and that the figure was perhaps even more of an anomaly than in the 2019 data.

5.3. Members of the IRP heard that since the last meeting, the Mayor's car and chauffeur were no longer used. New arrangements proposed that all transportation for mayoral purposes be undertaken by the Mayor themselves and funded by the Mayor's allowance (e.g. use of own car, petrol, parking, public transport, taxi). IRP members were in support of the resulting financial savings to the Council and regarded that provision of a car/chauffeur was not fundamental to the role. It was recognised that public transport may not always be the most viable option for attending events, but that the purpose of the allowance was to enable the Mayor to cover the cost of their choice of transport. It was highlighted that the small geographical area of the borough would not incur vast travel costs.

5.4. The IRP emphasised that there was no evidence to explain or justify the current rate, which was considered to be disproportionate and to have inflated over time. It was decided that the regional figures provided a sound basis for setting the allowance. The IRP noted the following figures:

- South east average (all councils) = £6,361
- District/borough average (Mayors/Chairpersons) = £4,438
- Borough average (Mayors only) = £5,122
- West Sussex average (not including CBC) = £4,992.

- 5.5 The IRP agreed that the Deputy Mayor's allowance (currently £1,800) should reflect their workload, which was approximately 10-15% of the Mayor's workload.
- 5.6 The mayoral allowances should be effective for the financial years 2021/22 (commencing 1 August 2021) and 2022/23, to correlate with the IRP's previous recommendation regarding the timescales of the Councillors' Allowances Scheme.
- 5.7 As per the prior recommendations made by the IRP, the next review of the scheme will be due in 2022 for implementation in 2023/24. It was requested that, between now and then, councillors and mayors are welcomed to collect evidence and information to demonstrate the usage and suitability of the Mayor's allowance. This should be passed to Democratic Services for inclusion in the next IRP review.

6. Proposed Mayoral Allowances

- a) The Mayor's allowance to be set at £6,361 per annum (the current regional average for the south east).
- b) The Deputy Mayor's allowance to be set at £954 per annum (15% of the proposed Mayor's allowance).

7. Implications

Financial

- 7.1. If the recommendations to set the allowances as above from 1 August 2021 are agreed, a saving of £4,022 would be made in 2021/22 and a saving of £6,033 would be made in 2022/23.
- 7.2. The combined saving regarding the mayoral car and chauffeur is £15,696 per year.

8. Background Papers

- Report [LDS/163](#) to the Governance Committee (26 January 2021) 'Final Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Councillors' Allowances Scheme 2021/22 and 2022/23)'
- [Minutes](#) of Governance Committee (26 January 2021)
- [Councillors' Allowances Scheme for 2021/22 and 2022/23: Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel](#)

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On behalf of the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel