

## **REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT PANEL ON MEMBERS REMUNERATION**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF PAPER**

- 1.1 To bring to the attention of the County Council the report of the Independent Panel on Members Remuneration, and to seek approval to the scheme of allowances and approved duties for 2009/10.

### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The report of the Independent Panel on Members Remuneration is attached as **Appendix A** for consideration by the County Council.
- 2.2 The County Council needs to consider the report and its recommendations and decide whether it wishes to amend its allowance scheme.

### **3.0 ISSUES AND DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 In making its recommendations, the Panel considered the allowances paid at the current time, in the context of the performance improvement achieved by the County Council, and the overall financial climate. It also considered comparator information from other Councils.
- 3.2 The County Council must approve a Scheme of Allowances before the start of the financial year. The proposed scheme, which takes account of all the recommendations made by the Panel, is attached at **Appendix B**.
- 3.3 The County Council must also agree a list of approved duties. Last year, the Panel recommended the inclusion of Attendance at Parish Council Meetings on County Council Business as an approved duty. This is reflected in the list included at **Appendix C**. No new changes are proposed for 2009/10.
- 3.4 The Panel also considered a report of the Standards Committee on the Withholding of Allowances for Members under Suspension. The proposals were endorsed by the Panel who also recommend that the responsibility for dealing with these matters should be delegated by the County Council to the Standards Committee. This is referred to in paragraph 11 of the Report of the Panel (Appendix A) and the proposed wording at paragraph 11 of the Members Allowances Scheme in Appendix B reflects the recommendation on delegation.

#### 4.0 RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 **Appendix D** summarises the proposed expenditure on Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances, Co-optee Allowances and travelling and subsistence allowances, including the increases compared with budgets in the current financial year.
- 4.2 If agreed, the cost of these changes will be reflected in the budget proposals for 2009/10.

#### 5.0 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 In line with the regulations, a notice publicising the report of the Panel has been placed in the Yorkshire Post and on the County Council's website. A copy of the Report has been made available for public inspection at County Hall.
- 5.2 If the County Council adopts the amendments proposed to the scheme then it must ensure that copies of the scheme are available for inspection by the public. In addition the Council must publish in one or more newspapers circulating in their area a notice which states that the Council has made/amended the Allowances Scheme and specify the period of time for which the Scheme has effect. It must also describe, amongst other things, the main features of the Scheme, specify the amounts of each allowance, state that the Council has had regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and describe the main features of the Panel's recommendations.

#### 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That the County Council approve a scheme of allowances (as attached at **Appendix B**) and a list of approved duties (as attached at **Appendix C**) for 2009/10.
- 6.2 That the County Council delegate to the Standards Committee the authority to take decisions on withholding allowances or requesting repayment of allowances in relation to Members under suspension as set out in the scheme.

JOHN MARSDEN  
Chief Executive

County Hall  
Northallerton