

Local Government North Yorkshire and York**18 October 2019****Police, Fire and Crime Panel: Member allowances and contribution to administration****1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To invite Leaders to:

(a) consider payment of an allowance for their constituent Member to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel; and

(b) agree a funding contribution to ensure the Panel can receive adequate staffing support.

- 2 At the last meeting of Local Government North Yorkshire and York on 28th June 2019, Leaders took a paper from the Police, Fire and Crime Panel (“the Panel”) regarding future resourcing (staffing support) and the provision of Member allowances.
- 3 It was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Home Office on behalf of LGNYY seeking, in the first instance, for the Panel to be provided with a permanent uplift to its grant. A letter was sent from the Leader of North Yorkshire County Council to the Minister of State for Policing and Fire to this effect on 28th August 2019. A response to this letter is still awaited.
- 4 It was also agreed that Leaders would give further consideration to the issues discussed, in October 2019. To assist Leaders in considering these matters further, the two distinct issues on which the Panel are seeking agreement are as follows:
- (a) consideration of payment of a Member allowance by the constituent local authority;
- (b) agree a funding contribution to ensure that adequate support can continue to be provided for the Panel through NYCC.

Member allowance

- 5 The NYCC Independent Remuneration Panel recommended in February 2019 that the work of each Member of the Panel should be remunerated and this was agreed at full council at NYCC. In respect of the NYCC Member allowance scheme, this would equate to one unit of allowance, which is £1,697 per annum. The current grant paid by the Home Office would not cover these additional payments and as such the host authority, NYCC, cannot fund this.

- 6 Clearly, it is legitimate for each council to determine how much would be paid to its Member on the Panel, if at all, and whether or not this aligns with the NYCC suggested amount. Leaders are invited to consider this further at their own authorities.

Support for the administration of the Panel

- 7 The paper provided to Leaders at the last meeting detailed how the workload of the Panel has had to expand over the last few years and how, as a consequence, NYCC has had to soak up additional costs which are not fully covered by the Home Office grant. The Panel previously requested that Leaders consider a contribution of up to £20,000 to ensure that staffing support and advice to the Panel can continue on a more financially sustainable footing. Without a contribution from the constituent authorities to the Panel, decisions will need to be made regarding the level of support provided to the Panel by NYCC. This could result in a reduction in the number of Panel meetings and a reduction in specialist briefing support around key areas such as the precept, or even legal guidance.
- 8 A funding formula was formally agreed by all constituent authorities in 2012 as part of the Panel’s Arrangements and ensuring that the costs of the Panel could be met. This agreement was as follows:

“The annual costs of the Panel, reduced by the figure of any grant from the Home Office or any other source, shall be borne between the Authorities on the basis of population, and further also on the basis of the County Council and the respective District Council for a North Yorkshire District Area sharing equally the cost in respect of the population of that Area.”

- 9 In line with the funding formula agreed by all local authorities, the contribution being sought from councils to ensure a more sustainable source of staffing support for the Panel would be as follows:

Local authority	Recommended contribution (£)
North Yorkshire County Council	7,500
City of York Council	5,000
Craven District Council	693
Hambleton District Council	1115
Harrogate Borough Council	1966
Richmondshire District Council	663
Ryedale District Council	663
Scarborough Borough Council	1330
Selby District Council	1070
TOTAL	20,000

- 10 The amounts which local authorities are invited to contribute will not be used to cover the costs for the Special Responsibility Allowances for the Chair and Vice Chairs to the Panel. Under the 2019/20 Member allowance scheme agreed through the NYCC IRP, these costs will increase to just over £15k per

annum, an increase from [current figure]. The SRAs have traditionally been paid through the grant, although the attendant impact on overspend of the grant has meant that NYCC has historically paid around £10k per annum in order to meet the other staffing costs for the Panel. NYCC has agreed to continue to make this payment of around £10,000. However, even with the SRA costs met in this way, a further £20,000 is considered to be required to ensure that the Panel can benefit from adequate and sustainable staffing support going forward. On this basis, Leaders are asked to agree contributing in line with the funding formula agreed.

11 Recommendations

11.1 That Leaders are invited to:

- (a) consider at their own authority provision of a Member allowance to their representative on the Panel;
- (b) agree a contribution to staffing support for the Panel as indicated in section 9 of the report.

Report presented by:

Councillor Carl Les
Chair
North Yorkshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel

Report prepared by:

Diane Parsons
Principal Scrutiny Officer
North Yorkshire County Council

9th October 2019

Background papers: None

Comments of the PFCC

Hello Ruth, further to my earlier email, apologies again for not being able to attend the LGNYM meeting, but I was wondering if you could please pass the below on to members.

Firstly and importantly, I very much recognise and understand that it is vital to note and appreciate that the recommendations are made by an independent panel. I was therefore interested to read their recommendations and rationale for the Chair, Vice-Chairs and members of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel - extract below:

“The role had increased due to additional work and also that the work was due to increase because of the change of the Police and Crime Panel to the Police, Fire and Crime Panel as the Panel has additional responsibility in carrying out its functions regarding the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. At this stage it is hard to envisage exactly how much additional work is required of the new Panel and this will be kept under review. The Panel considered the evidence and made the following recommendation. We recommend that the allowance for this role increases from 3 units to 5 units to reflect additional work that is already undertaken.”

To assist LGNYM, I thought it might be useful to provide some further context. Prior to taking on statutory duties in relation to governance of North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service, the Police and Crime Commissioner role in North Yorkshire attracted a salary of £70,000. On transfer of fire governance, the role was given an uplift of £3,000 to specifically to reflect the additional responsibilities entailed. This is an increase of 4.3%. The increases being proposed by the independent panel are as follows:

Chair - £4,962 - £8,485 (an increase of £3,523 or 41.5%)
Vice-chairs - £1,654 - £3,308 (an increase of £1,654 or 50%)
Members - £1,697 - (a new allowance so a 100% increase)
Co-opted members - £827 - £1,654 (an increase of £827 or 50%)

The findings of the independent panel do seem to be a little out of kilter, in that for taking on statutory responsibilities for governance of the fire and rescue service, the PFCC received £3,000, when allowances for Panel members are either more (in the case of the Chair) or proportionally more for scrutinising the work of the PFCC. Apologies if this was done, but it might perhaps have been useful for the Independent Panel to have this information (which was published on 13th September 2018) prior to its deliberations in November/December 2018.

With kind regards
Julia

Julia Mulligan
North Yorkshire Police Fire & Crime Commissioner