

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

**Report By: County Secretary and Solicitor**

### **Wards Affected**

County wide

### **Purpose**

1. To consider the recommendations of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel arising from a review of the Scheme of Allowances for elected Members.

### **Financial Implications**

2. Any increase in expenditure for Members' Allowances in 2003/4 will be met by compensating savings elsewhere in the budget or funded from reserves. It is estimated that the full year costs of the new scheme will be an additional £20,000.

### **Considerations**

3. The Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to advise on a Scheme of Allowances for Members and any proposed amendments. The Council is required to publish details of the Panel's recommendations and the main features of any Scheme that it adopts.
4. The Regulations provide that the Council must "have regard to the recommendations" of the Panel when making or revising its Scheme.
5. In March 2002 Council approved a revised Members' Allowance Scheme as recommended to it by the Independent Remuneration Panel.
6. New Regulations dealing with Members' Allowances have recently been introduced. They initially required all local authorities to review their existing schemes before 30 September 2003. This has only recently been amended to 31 December 2003.
7. The New Regulations also enable the Council to consider paying co-opted and appointed non-elected members of the Council a co-optees allowance. They also allow the Council to determine its own travel (including cycling) and subsistence allowances, having regard to the recommendations of the IRP.
8. Separate regulations provide a discretion to pay a pension to any Councillor.
9. The Independent Remuneration Panel has reviewed the existing Scheme and considered the new powers provided to the Council. Its recommendations are set out in its Report, as appended.
10. Adjustments may need to be made once the Local Area Forum Chairmen are appointed.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Marie Rosenthal, County Secretary and Solicitor on (01432) 260200

## RECOMMENDATION

- THAT (a) the Panel be thanked for their work;
- (b) the Council consider and have regard to the recommendations of the Panel and approve a revised Allowances Scheme to take effect from 1 May 2003 in relation to the Basic Allowance, and Special Responsibility Allowances to take effect from 23 May 2003 and otherwise from 1 September 2003; and
- (c) the County Secretary and Solicitor give further publicity to the Scheme as required by regulation.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Report from Herefordshire Independent Remuneration Panel dated July 2003.