

MINUTE EXTRACT

Cabinet Meeting – 21 June 2018

1. Title of Item/Report

Independent Remuneration Panel

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented the findings from the review of Stockton Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and the recommended changes to the scheme to be implemented from 1 April 2019.

The relevant legislation was The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The regulations provided that an authority must make a members' allowances scheme which must include a basic allowance payable to all members and may provide for the following:

- Special Responsibility Allowance
- Dependant's carers' allowance
- Travelling and subsistence allowance
- Co-optees' allowance

The same Regulations also provided for local authorities to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to make recommendations to the Authority about the allowances to be paid. Details of the Panel members was attached to the report.

The Panel were required to review the operation of the Members Allowance Scheme as requested and on this occasion, following a request by Members, the Panel had reviewed the Co-optees allowance only.

The Members' Allowances Scheme was based on the recommendations that were agreed by Council on 30 April 2014.

The principles of the review were as follows:-

- Comparable figures, using comparable authorities and Nationally available information
- Consideration of previous allowances paid to co-optees through the Stockton Members Allowance Scheme and the number of co-optees appointed from 2005 – 2018
- Consideration of the time input expected of co-optees
- Draw Conclusions
- Agree recommendations to be made to the Full Council

In order to draw their conclusion and formulate recommendations for consideration by Cabinet and agreement by Council, the Panel re-assessed the expected time commitment of co-opted representatives, compared and analysed the amount paid to co-optees across the North East and with those authorities that were deemed to be near neighbours as defined by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountants. In addition the Panel considered the number of parent governor co-optees appointed compared to previous years and the amount of allowance previously paid.

The IRP agreed that the allowance paid should reflect the level of responsibility and time commitment required by the role. They acknowledged and applauded the work of co-optees and the role they play in the consideration of Education matters on the Councils committees however, the IRP felt strongly that this role should be performed willingly for the benefit of the public and not attract any remuneration.

The Panel would also like to encourage the recruiting bodies to actively promote the role of the co-optee to avoid vacancies and agreed that it would be appropriate for expenses to be paid in line with the existing members allowances for travel and subsistence scheme. The IRP recommended this approach on a pilot basis until such time as the full review of the Members Allowance scheme.

RECOMMENDED to Council that the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted and the following changes to the Council's Members Allowance Scheme be approved:-

1. In accordance with the practice adopted by the majority of other local authorities in the region and the Council's CIPFA family nationally, remuneration of co-optee post for Diocesan and Parent Governor representatives be removed.
2. Travel and subsistence allowance be paid to each of these co-opted representatives in accordance with the rates specified within the Members Allowances Scheme.
3. Council write to those recruiting parent governors and diocesan reps to encourage them to actively promote the role.
4. Changes to the scheme be implemented with effect from April 2019.