

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - REMUNERATION PANEL

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To refer the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel to council to enable it to approve a revised scheme of members' allowances.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council is required to make an annual scheme for members' allowances. It cannot make or amend a scheme without first considering advice from the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- 2.2 This is the thirteenth year that the Panel have considered members' allowances. The Panel consists of members representing the multi-faith communities, the voluntary sector and business communities. The Panel currently consists of five members namely Mrs Shelia Girling, Mr Rashpal Nijjar, Mr Brian Pettifer, Mr Howard Robinson and Mr Gordon Rowlands.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 The Remuneration Panel's report is attached. The regulations provide that the council must "have regard to the recommendations" of the Panel when making a scheme. This allows the council if it wishes to adopt the recommendations in full or to vary the recommendations so long as it has regard to them.
- 3.2 The council must now consider the recommendations of the Remuneration Panel and determine a revised scheme.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

- 4.1 Financial - The recommendations of the Remuneration Panel will be contained within existing budgets.

5. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

5.1 There are no statutory implications.

5.2 There are no other implications within this category.

6. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

6.1 No specific consultation is required.

7. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That the Remuneration Panel be thanked for its work.

7.2 That the council consider and have regard to the recommendations of the Panel and approve a revised allowance scheme to take effect from 15 May 2012.

7.3 That appropriate officers publicise the scheme in accordance with the 2003 regulations.

DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report - Report of the Elected Members Remuneration Panel

ELECTED MEMBERS' REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT

FOR NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL 2012/2013

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This is the thirteenth report of the Elected Members' Independent Remuneration Panel. Since its report to council in May 2011, the panel has met on five occasions. However, the panel's work has to some extent been disrupted by the need to appoint a new chairman. In addition, two of the panel members are relatively inexperienced. These factors have had an impact on the panel's work. However the panel have taken the opportunity at two meetings to interview seven members of the council who had indicated a wish to speak to the panel. The panel would like to place on record its appreciation to those members for their invaluable contributions.

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE IN 2011/2012

- 1.2 The panel noted that the council, when considering its report in May 2011 had reduced by 10% both the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances, reduced the number of cabinet and lead members, deleted from the members' allowance scheme the majority of subsistence and dependent carers' allowances, reduced the mileage claimable to a maximum of 5,000 miles and reduced mileage rates for cars with travel to be paid at one rate i.e. the approved HMRC rate. These decisions went further than the panel's own recommendations which were to freeze all allowances except special responsibility allowances, proposed a 10% reduction in all special responsibility allowances, required receipts for subsistence expenditure above £3.50, and harmonised mileage rates with the top rate of 53.1p per mile being abolished.

BASIC ALLOWANCE

- 1.3 With regard to the basic allowance paid to all members the panel referred to the previous representations made in relation to the increasing workload of all members of the council with regard to their ward representative role, membership of neighbourhood action teams, outside bodies etc and that this was not reflected in the level of the basic allowance. The reduction of the basic allowance by 10% in 2011/2012 had to be given detailed consideration in the light of that reduction and the increasing workloads of members.

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES (SRAs)

- 1.4 In relation to special responsibility allowances the panel referred to the work it had carried out in previous years and the options it had put forward to rationalise some of the SRAs particularly around the scrutiny panels and the planning and licensing committees. It was still the view

of the panel that these, together with the roles of vice chairs', should be looked at more closely and this it intended to do during the coming year.

COST OF LIVING INCREASE

- 1.5 The panel noted the need to consider the annual cost of living increase which was normally linked to the most recent local government pay settlement. However, local government staff had been the subject of a three year pay freeze because of the current economic climate. The panel concluded therefore that if local government staff did not receive an increase in pay then this should also continue to apply to members of the council.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- 1.6 The panel continued to note with pleasure that training in planning and licensing was compulsory for members sitting on those committees and that members would continue to receive an individual assessment of their training needs. Member development and training was an ongoing and developing issue and the panel felt that this should continue to be given significant priority.

NEW TECHNOLOGY

- 1.7 The panel also continues to believe that providing members with the necessary equipment to carry out their roles is vital. It once again noted that members have access to council mobile phones and laptop computers and to other IT devices such as Blackberries and I pads which were providing members with the tools to carry out their work. However the panel is of the opinion that the introduction and utilisation of IT is an integral part of the council's IT strategy.

SUBSISTENCE AND DEPENDANT CARERS

- 1.8 The panel noted that the council had deleted from the members allowance scheme all subsistence and dependent carers allowances with certain exceptions.

TRAVEL ALLOWANCES

- 1.9 In relation to travel allowances, the panel noted that the council had now harmonised mileage rates for both members and officers. This was something that the panel had been recommending for some time and it commended the council for doing so. It also noted that the rate paid was Her Majesty's Revenue and Custom (HMRC) rates i.e. 45p per mile for motorcars and 24p per mile for motorcycles. The panel also noted that the council had reduced the maximum amount of mileage claimable from 10,000 to 5,000 miles.

CO-OPTEEES ALLOWANCE

- 1.10. A number of co-optees or added members sit on various council panels or committees. The panel noted that the current rate payable was £42 for meetings attended and, given the previous comments about the national pay freeze, the panel could not recommend that this should be increased in 2012/13.

2012/13 MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME

- 1.11 In view of the comments made in paragraph 1.1, the panel did not feel that at this stage it could make any significant recommendations in relation to the members' allowance scheme for 2012/13. The panel now had a new chairman and some relatively inexperienced members and was therefore keen to establish a work programme and to develop a members' allowance model scheme for the future based on detailed work in comparing the allowances paid in North Lincolnshire to all other unitary authorities within England. In particular, the panel would want to look specifically at the basic allowance and special responsibility allowances, especially around the chairmanship and vice chairmanship of scrutiny panels and other committees such as the planning and licensing committees. It would also review the roles of Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, cabinet members and lead members.
- 1.12 The work involved in putting together a model for the future would take some time to compile, analyse and discuss and it would therefore wish to carry out this work, discuss the outcomes with the council before submitting a further report during the council year 2012/2013. On that basis, the panel would not be making any recommendations other than that the council should be recommended to adopt its current members' allowance scheme for 2012/13, pending the outcome of the report of the panel later in the year.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.13 That, in view of the comments and observations set out above, the council be recommended to adopt the current members' allowance scheme for 2012/2013 as detailed in Appendix 1.

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2012/2013

APPENDIX A

	2012/2013	
Group	<i>Special Responsibility Allowance</i>	Proposed New Allowance £
1	Leader of the Council	19,764
2	Deputy Leader of the Council	13,090
	Mayor	13,090
3	Cabinet Members (x 4)	11,291
	Chair of Planning Committee	11,291
	Chair of Licensing Committee	11,291
	Chair of Scrutiny Panels (x 3)	11,291
4	Secretary to Majority Group	11,291
	Leader of Minority Group	9,882
5	Chair of Audit Committee	6,558
	Deputy Mayor	6,558
	Deputy Leader of Minority Group	6,545
6	Vice Chair of Planning Committee	5,508
	Vice Chair of Licensing Committee	5,508
	Vice Chair of Scrutiny Panels (x 3)	5,508
	Secretary to Minority Group	5,646
	Lead Members (x 8)	5,508
	Appeals Committee	
	Co-optees Allowance	£562 per annum £42.00 per meeting attended
	Basic Allowance	£6,874
		The dependants' carers allowance (including child care) will no longer be included in the scheme

(1) Mileage Rates

Travel to be paid at the following approved Her Majesty's Revenue and Custom (HMRC) rates -

Cars - 45p per mile

Motorcycles - 24p per mile

An additional 5p per mile can be claimed in respect of each passenger carried to whom a travelling allowance would otherwise be paid.

A maximum of 5,000 miles has been set as eligible for claim.

In addition, the actual cost of tolls, ferries and parking fees may be claimed. Receipts, must be provided. Discounted Humber Bridge tickets are available from the Political Group Offices and should be used.

(2) Public Transport

If you are using public transport for journeys out of the council's area you may use standard class travel only. Wherever possible travel arrangements should be pre-booked in advance in order to allow better access to discounts. Only as a last resort should warrants for rail travel be used. These can be obtained through the group office. Receipts or used tickets (train tickets tube fare tickets etc) should be retained and produced as receipts. The reimbursement of public transport costs is not taxable or subject to NI contributions.

(3) Hired transport

If you wish to hire a vehicle, please contact your group PA who will ensure that the best possible rates are obtained.

(4) Bicycle - Travel to be paid at the approved HMRC rate of 20p per mile.

(5) Subsistence

Subsistence allowances will no longer be included in the member allowance scheme and members will not therefore be able to claim for lunch or dinner.

(6) Overnight rates

Actuals, claimed to a maximum of

London	£100.50
Elsewhere	£88.10
Out of pocket expenses	£4.39 per night
Overseas allowance	£20.50 per night

Accommodation should be pre booked by group office staff in order for the council to reclaim VAT and take advantage of discounts.