

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

**SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION  
PANEL REPORT**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in order to approve a scheme of Members' Allowances for the financial year 2024/25 (or for a further reasonable period, see paragraph 4.2) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations).

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The Council is required to make an annual scheme of Members' Allowances for each financial year. The Council may set a scheme for a minimum of one year or for a further reasonable period; previously the Council approved a scheme for the year to 2023/24 – but have previously also agreed a scheme for the remaining period of a four-year term of elected administration. The Council cannot make or amend a scheme without first having regard to recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP).
- 2.2 The Independent Remuneration Panel currently comprises four Independent Members, two who also sit on North East Lincolnshire Councils IRP.
- 2.3 The Members' Allowances Scheme includes a set Basic Allowance for all Members of the Council, defined Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs), a Substitution Allowance, Co-optees Allowance and Mileage Allowances including a level of mileage rates claimable to a maximum of 5,000 miles at a recommended rate approved by Her Majesty's Revenue and Custom (HMRC) and associated Public Transport, Hired Transport and Overnight Rates. The Scheme does not provide for members to claim for subsistence. All elected members continue to use an audited digital e-claims iTrent software system for making claims for travel allowances (also used by officers).

2.4 The Independent Remuneration Panel has met almost monthly in person since October 2023. Its work has reviewed and considered North Lincolnshire Council's Scheme whilst comparing and benchmarking with several similar sized unitary and other local principal councils. It also provided the opportunity for members to comment on the Scheme and has welcomed the agreed suggestions of a cross-party elected member working group which has shaped its report and recommendations. The council's Chief Finance Officer (S151) has received a copy of the IRP report.

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 To consider the Independent Remuneration Panel's report appended to the report, and approve a Members' Allowance Scheme for 2024/25, or for a further reasonable period (see paragraph 4.2 below).

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The proposed Members' Allowance Scheme recommended by the IRP for 2024/25 (or for a further reasonable period) is attached at Appendix 1 and includes five recommendations and two further observations with suggested action on Information Technology and Member Training and Development.

4.2 The Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and approve a scheme for the financial year 2024/25 (or a further reasonable period but no longer than the forthcoming years within the period of elected administration 2023-2027). By not having regard to the Panel's recommendations and not approving a scheme, the Council will not comply with statutory requirements of the associated Regulations.

### **5 FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 The proposed scheme based on the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel should ideally be self-contained within existing budgets. Associated financial implications of the IRP's recommendations are set out in its report.

5.2 There are no other specific relevant implications other than that the Regulations require the Council to consider the Independent Remuneration Panel's report/recommendations before approving its Members' Allowances Scheme.

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 The current reduction in mileage claimed by members supported by the successful ongoing use of IT software platforms like MS Teams contributes towards themes of the council's greener environmental strategy 'A Green Future: Our Plan for Positive Change'.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 Not applicable

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 Members were given the opportunity to comment through their Group Offices as part of the review of the scheme and the cross-party elected member working group submitted agreed suggestions to the IRP. Members will be aware of the contents of the Independent Remuneration Panel's report prior to the meeting of the Council on 22 February 2024. There are no conflicts of interest.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That the Independent Remuneration Panel be thanked for its work and report.

9.2 That the Council consider and have regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and approve a Members' Allowance Scheme for the financial year 2023/24 (or for a further reasonable period).

9.3 That the approved scheme be published on the Council's website in accordance with the Regulations.

**DIRECTOR: OUTCOMES**

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report** - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.