

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE
FULL COUNCIL**

3 APRIL 2019

1. **REPORT TITLE** **MEMBER ALLOWANCES 2019-20**
- Submitted by:** **Leader of the Council – Cllr Simon Tagg**
- Portfolio:** **Corporate & Service Improvement, People & Partnerships**
- Ward(s) affected:** **All**

Purpose of the Report

To enable Council to determine Member Allowances for the year 2019-20.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Council

- a) **Note that Members have received no increase in Allowances since 2006 – 13 years;**
- b) **Agree that Member Allowances for the year 2019-20 remain as currently set, with no increase this year.**
- c) **Agree that the Member Allowances are reviewed by the Member Remuneration Panel in time for Annual Council in May 2022.**

Reasons

These recommendations will ensure that an appropriate Member Allowances are in place for the term of this Council.

1. **Background**

1.1 At its 16th May 2018 meeting, Council considered a report of the then Acting Chief Executive, presenting the conclusions and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel convened to advise on the amounts to be paid to members under the Members' Allowance Scheme. The panel had considered:

- The amount of basic allowance to be paid to members
- Those positions which should receive special responsibility allowances, and the level of those allowances
- Travel, subsistence and certain other allowances.

1.2 In preparing its report, the Panel had reflected on the changes occurring at the May 2018 elections, with the number of elected members reducing from 60 to 44. The Panel reflected that this change might be expected to impact on the role of elected members, but accepted that this could not be fully anticipated. The Panel recommended allowances for the 2018-19 municipal year, and anticipated re-assessing the allowances once the new arrangements had bedded in.

- 1.3 The Independent Remuneration Panel recommended that the basic allowance increase from £3,365.04 to £4,250, together with a range of other adjustments to special responsibility allowances. Their full proposal is set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 1.4 In considering the report, Members did not accept the recommendations of the Panel, but rather they agreed:-
 - i. That the current Scheme of Members' Allowances be retained for the municipal year 2018/19.
 - ii. That an Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to review Members' Allowances prior to the 2019/20 Municipal year.

2. **Issues**

- 2.1 It is entirely appropriate that Council keeps its scheme of Members' Allowances under review. The Local Government Act 1972 stipulates that the scheme should be reviewed at least every four years. The scheme in Newcastle –under-Lyme Borough Council has been regularly reviewed, but has remain unchanged since 2006.
- 2.2 Whilst the May 2018 Council meeting agreed that the remuneration panel should review the allowances in time for the 2019/20 municipal year, the range of staffing changes in the senior officer cadre has meant that this work has not been prioritised. Rather than review the allowances mid-year, as Leader of the Council, I am proposing that we roll forward the existing scheme of allowances, and review them in the last year of this Council, ahead of the next all-out elections.

3. **Options Considered**

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to convening the Remuneration Panel to review the scheme as agreed by Council.

4. **Proposal**

- 4.1 It is proposed to leave the member allowance scheme unaltered for the remainder of this Council, and review in good time for consideration following the all-out elections in 2022.

5. **Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 5.1 This proposal will ensure a transparent scheme of member allowances for the life on this council.

6. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

N/A

7. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

7.1 The Local Government Act 1972 sets out the statutory basis for paying and reviewing Member Allowances

8. **Equality Impact Assessment**

None arising directly from this report

9. **Financial and Resource Implications**

The recommended approach will ensure that Members' Allowances remain within the existing budget.

10. **Major Risks**

None identified

11. **Sustainability and Climate Change Implications**

N/A

12. **List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Report to Full Council, 16th May 2018

13. **Background Papers**

N/A