

<b>Council Meeting</b>		<b>Agenda Item:</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	23 November 2016	
<b>Report Title</b>	Review of Members' Allowances Scheme – Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Swale and review of Mayor/Deputy Mayor Allowances.	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Mark Radford, Corporate Services Officer	
<b>Head of Service</b>	Katherine Bescoby, Democratic and Electoral Services Manager	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jo Millard, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	
<b>Classification</b>	Open	
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number:</b>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the Council considers the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and considers reviewing its scheme of Members' Allowances in the light of the recommendations made by the Panel.</li> <li>2. That the Council considers reviewing the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Allowances, to take effect from the Annual Council meeting in 2017.</li> </ol>	

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Panel to consider the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and make recommendations to full Council.
- 1.2 Allowances for the Mayor/Deputy Mayor are not subject to review by the Independent Panel, but as they have not been reviewed for some time the Council is asked whether it wishes to consider them at this time.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Regulations require Councils to undertake a review of their Members' Allowances Scheme every four years. The last review full review for Swale was undertaken in 2012, therefore the Panel met on 14 and 15 September 2016 to review the Scheme.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 The attached report of the Panel sets out their recommendations in full, and provides commentary on the reasoning behind their recommendations.
- 3.2 In respect of the Mayor/Deputy Mayor Allowances, they currently reflect 68.82% of the basic allowance (for the Mayor) and 27.54% of the basic allowance (for the Deputy Mayor). The Council may wish to round these figures to become 70%/30% of the basic allowance.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Council is required to set a Members' Allowances Scheme and in doing so, it must have regard to the Panel's recommendations. However, the Council does not have to approve the exact recommendations made by the Panel.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

- 5.1 A questionnaire was circulated to all Councillors in advance of the Panel meeting to seek feedback on the current Members' Allowances Scheme. Twenty of the 47 Members completed this. In addition, 14 Members and 1 Officer were interviewed as part of the Panel's review.
- 5.2 The Panel's report has been circulated to Group Leaders and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance for comments.
- 5.3 In accordance with Regulations, a notice has been published in one newspaper which circulated across the Borough. The Notice advised that recommendations had been made by the Panel, a summary of which was included, and that these would be considered by the full Council on 23 November 2016.

### **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	None for the purposes of this report.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The introduction of an allowance for Deputy Cabinet Members, at the rate suggested, amounts to £33,402. However, it should be noted that there is already provision in the budget for 9 Cabinet Members when there are now 6 (excluding the Leader). If all recommendations within the report are agreed, additional budget of £24,267 would be required.</p> <p>Members will be aware that the revised role for Deputy Cabinet Members was introduced in May 2017 and they have been fulfilling their duties since then. It would seem appropriate to backdate this</p>

	<p>element only of the allowances; if approved there would be an in-year cost of £15,000. It is suggested that all other changes to the allowances commence from Annual Council 2017.</p> <p>The Mayor/Deputy Mayors allowance is currently set as £3358.78 and £1344.54 respectively. If the amount is increased as suggested in the report, this is an increase of £128.52.</p>
Legal and Statutory	The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out the rules regarding allowances schemes for Members and the requirement to establish an Independent Panel and to consider their recommendations.
Crime and Disorder	None for the purposes of this report.
Sustainability	None for the purposes of this report.
Health and Wellbeing	None for the purposes of this report.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None for the purposes of this report.
Equality and Diversity	The introduction of a carer's allowance may provide more opportunities for those interested in becoming a councillor.

## 7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## 8 Background Papers

Reports and Minutes considered by previous Council meetings  
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