

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>		
MEETING:	<b>Council</b>	
MEETING DATE:	<b>16 December 2019</b>	
TITLE:	<b>Establishment of Independent Remuneration Panel for Members' Allowances</b>	
WARD:	All	
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>		
List of attachments to this report:  Appendix 1: Membership of the Bristol City Council Independent Members' Allowances Review Panel		

## **1 THE ISSUE**

- 1.1 Council is asked to approve the appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Members' Allowances.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

The Council is asked to;

- 2.1 Approve the appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel and submit any suggestions for Panel consideration to the Monitoring Officer, before its first meeting in February 2020.

## **3 THE REPORT**

- 3.1 Group Leaders have requested that the Members' Allowances scheme is reviewed. The last review took place in 2017 and the current scheme was approved on 23rd March 2017. Since then, the Council has joined the West of England Combined Authority, there has been a change in the number of councillors and of the Administration.

- 3.2 The Council currently does not have an appointed Independent Remuneration Panel to review its Members Allowances scheme, as these have been set up on an ad-hoc basis as required. The Bristol City Council Independent Members' Allowances Review Panel have been informally asked if they would be willing to conduct a review on behalf of B&NES. They are an experienced Panel and have

recently reviewed Bristol's scheme and assisted with a review of the WECA scheme. This approach will save officers' and councillors' time and the cost of advertising and recruiting to a separate panel. The Bristol Panel will be available from early 2020.

- 3.3 Group Leaders have informally agreed that the above Panel be engaged, and this is now presented for Council's formal approval.
- 3.4 It is recommended that the Panel is advised by Bryony Holden, Chief Executive of South West Councils, who has considerable experience in advising such Panels and has access to considerable comparator data. Bryony would also draft the report on behalf of the Panel.
- 3.5 Following the establishment of the Panel, it is envisaged that they will meet during the first few months of 2020 before reporting to Council at a date to be set during 2020.
- 3.6 During the review process, there will be various opportunities for Members to input into the process through surveys and interviews, but any informal suggestions for items to be included in the scope can be submitted before then to the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.7 Ultimately, it is for Council to decide whether to amend its scheme in accordance with any recommendations from the Panel, and when any such amendments should be introduced.

#### **4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires local authorities to establish an independent panel which will broadly have the function of providing the Local Authority with recommendations on its remuneration scheme and the amounts to be paid.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)**

- 5.1 Recommendations from the Panel may have budgetary implications and any such considerations will need to be assessed in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, Monitoring Officer (as budget holder for Members' allowances) and Cabinet Member.

#### **6 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

#### **7 CLIMATE CHANGE**

- 7.1 The Council may consider inviting the Panel to consider any particular provisions relating to Member travel.

#### **8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 None.

## 9 CONSULTATION

9.1 This report has been cleared by the Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer.

<b>Contact person</b>	Maria Lucas, Monitoring Officer
<b>Background papers</b>	
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	