

## **Report of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel**

The joint independent remuneration panel for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Sevenoaks District Council was established under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) England Regulations 2001 and the panel was established in November 2001. The function of the panel is to make recommendations in accordance with SI 2003 Number 1021 and Number 1692.

The five members of the panel are drawn from within the three borough/districts it serves and are:

Professor Malcolm Forsythe (Chair) Retired Physician who lives in Tunbridge Wells.

Mr Michael Eede Retired TGWU Regional Industrial Organiser who lives in Larkfield.

Mr Tony Shepherd an ex Civil Servant, who is now a self-employed Personnel Consultant who lives in Tunbridge Wells.

Mrs Amanda Stewart a Solicitor who lives in Plaxtol.

Mr Geoff Tomlinson retired Clearing Bank Project Manager who lives in Sevenoaks Weald.

### **This Review for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council**

In its last review the Panel indicated that it wished to delay consideration of any responsibility allowances in relation to the new licensing arrangements until they had become operational for some time.

Finally, when the Panel met Cllrs. Mark Worrall (Conservative Leader of the Council), Paul Hickmott (Labour Group Leader), Mrs Ann Kemp (Chair of Licensing Panel) and Mr David Thornewell (Liberal Group Leader) they commented on the following aspects of the Licensing Committees work in respect of Alcohol and Entertainment.

- Considerable preparation for meetings.
- The need for Training.
- The requirement for Daytime Hearings.
- The fact that the Panel could be confronted by Legal Representatives.
- The Panel were open to Legal channels as individuals.
- Comparisons were made with Planning.
- The Chair brings consistency to the Hearings.
- Vice Chairs have to read all the papers.
- Officers make decisions in respect of straightforward applications where there are no objections.

## **Recommendations**

### **Basic Allowance**

The basic allowance should be increased from 1 April 2006 to reflect inflation according to RPI. Previously, the recommended increases were to be effective from 5<sup>th</sup> May, but the Panel feel that April is more appropriate. Furthermore the Panel recommend that the increased allowances be rounded to be divisible by 3 to assist payroll processing.

### **Licensing Committee**

1. All members of the Licensing Committee, except for the chairman, should receive a one off payment of £100 in respect of initial training undertaken in Licensing responsibilities and duties.
2. The chair of the Licensing Committee should receive a SRA equivalent to 50% of the basic allowance with effect from 24 November 2005 (the date The Licensing Act 2003 came into force).
3. The Vice chair should receive no SRA.
4. The above decisions and rates to be reviewed after one year of operation of the new Licensing arrangements.

Additionally, it was suggested that the Councils should advise Government of the difficulties encountered by Employed Councillors in obtaining the necessary release due to the insistence on daytime hearings as this was creating very real problems in manning both the committee and hearings.

The Panel would like to thank the Group Leaders for their assistance and Charlie Steel for his support.