

REPORT OF THE JOINT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

31 DECEMBER 2006

The joint independent remuneration panel (JIRP) 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.

The Panel have observed that the allowances that we made to the leaders of our three councils are out of line with other councils in Kent.

The panel requested information from cabinet members in relation to their time and duties.

The group leaders did not wish to make representation in person but information was received reflecting their general observations for the panel to consider. Comparisons were made with other Districts' Leader's and cabinet members' responsibility allowances and other responsibility allowances paid to chairs and vice chair persons.

Standards Committee

The panel has decided to wait before making a recommendation on allowance for the chair until firmer details of the re-organised function could be made available, such as how many panels are to be established so that their individual responsibilities can be assessed.

Licensing

Following the initial rush of business there was now a falling off of applications, there was concern within JIRP that the initial allowance of 50% might need adjusting in the light of this. The panel were aware that new gaming legislation would be coming into being in 2007.

Audit Committee

The panel had received a report on the formation of the Audit Committee and accepted that it would be diverse with a great degree of responsibility. The JIRP was in discussion with the two other councils and will wait before making a recommendation.

Recommendations

In the light of the above the JIRP agreed to carry out a fundamental review of all allowances and responsibilities after the 2007 election.

In the meantime the basic allowance should be increased in line with inflation from the 1st April 2007.