

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

20 January 2009

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters For Decision

1 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES - REPORT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 A report has been received from the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) following its fundamental review of Members' Allowances. The IRP's Report is attached as an annex to this report. A Special Meeting of the Council is being called to discuss the Report as it will be necessary to incorporate the Council's decisions into the Estimates for 2009/10 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy and this cannot realistically be accommodated at the next ordinary Council meeting when the whole budget is under consideration. It is anticipated that the Chair and other members of the IRP will be in attendance to give a presentation on their findings and recommendations and to answer any questions Members might have.

1.1.2 The report makes the recommendations for increases to the level of annual allowances and those appointments that should attract special responsibility allowances.

1.1.3 The law requires that no changes to the Scheme of Members' Allowances can be made until the report of the IRP has been considered. The Council is not obliged to adopt the recommendations of the IRP but it is obliged to publish in local newspapers what the IRP recommended and what the Council determined.

1.2 Legal Implications

1.2.1 The Joint Independent Remuneration Panel ('the Panel') was established in November 2001 under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001.

- 1.2.2 The Council must have regard to the recommendations made by the Panel, but is not obliged to accept the recommendations. Where the recommendations are not agreed and alternative allowances are agreed, it is a requirement that this is made explicit within the statutory notice which must be published after the allowances have been determined.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 An additional sum of £62,000 has been built into the Estimates for 2009/10, currently being considered by Members during the Budget Cycle, which is sufficient to cover the full financial implications of the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 The Council must consider the recommendations of the Panel and publish its decision.
- 1.4.2 If Members decide to recommend allowances which total a higher amount than is presently factored into the Budget, additional budget provision will need to be made. Alternatively, if Members choose to agree a lower level of allowances, this would represent a saving within the current Estimates.

1.5 Recommendations

- 1.5.1 The Council is **REQUESTED** to consider the report of the IRP and approve a revised Scheme of Member Allowances to operate from 1 April 2009.

Background papers:

contact: David Hughes

Nil

David Hughes
Chief Executive