

AGENDA CLASSIFICATION OPEN		AGENDA ITEM 4	
REPORT TO	INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL	DATE	29 NOVEMBER 2002
FROM	DIRECTORATE: CENTRAL SERVICES DIVISION: FINANCIAL SERVICES		
WARD	BOROUGH WIDE		

SUBJECT: PROCESS AND WORK PROGRAMME

1. Details of Exempt Information Category
Not applicable.
2. Purpose of the Report and Summary
For Members to consider the process and work programme for the Panel.
3. Key Decision
Not applicable.
4. RECOMMENDATIONS
 - 4.1 That Members of the panel decide what information they would like supplied to them.
 - 4.2 That Members of the panel decide which Members of the Council they would like to interview.
 - 4.3 That Members of the panel decide the process and work programme.
5. Background
 - 5.1 Under the Local Government Act 2000 (2000 Act) local authorities must establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP or the Panel). The purpose of the Panel is to make recommendations to the authority about the allowances to be paid to elected members. The recommendations are not binding upon the authority but the authority must publish the report and recommendations of the Panel.
 - 5.2 The legislation defined the remit of the Panel and this is set out within the Terms of Reference for the Panel as agreed by the GAC. These are reported elsewhere on this Agenda. The Government has

DCS1

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

29 NOVEMBER 2002

provided some guidance as to how an IRP may choose to consider issues and come to a recommendation. This guidance has been provided informally to Members of the Panel, but is now formally attached as part of this report at Appendix A.

- 5.3 The current Dartford Borough Council Members' Allowances Scheme (the Scheme) was approved before the 2000 Act came into force but, nonetheless, meets the fundamental requirement of that Act in that it comprises a Basic Allowance together with Responsibility Allowances. Attendance allowances are not paid. The Scheme has remained in force, without amendment, since May 2000 and is also appended to this report (Appendix B).

6. Discussion

- 6.1 The Panel is required to review all aspects of the Scheme and to make recommendations as to the basic allowance to be paid to elected Members; the roles and responsibilities for which a special responsibility allowance should be paid and the amount of any such allowance and should also consider and make recommendations as to whether the authority's scheme of allowances should include a carers allowance and if so the amount of any such allowance.

- 6.2 In order to make recommendations Members will need information and research undertaken on their behalf. Officers feel that the following information may be of help to the panel:

- Copies of reports from Independent Remuneration Panels set up by other Kent and neighbouring authorities;
- Copies of scheme of allowances actually adopted by those authorities;
- The LGA daily rate (referred to in paragraph 54 of the guidance);
- Local and regional wage rates.

Members are asked to confirm that they would like this information supplied and also say what further information they require.

- 6.3 In order to understand fully the roles that Councillors perform in their various roles and thus gauge the weight of each role, officers feel that it would be helpful for members of the Panel to interview various Members. The Panel are asked to consider which Members of the Council it would like to interview. It may be difficult to arrange meetings with Members of the Council. Because of this and in order to preserve the independence of the information gathering stage, the Panel may wish to conduct interviews outside of a formal meeting.

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

29 NOVEMBER 2002

6.4 Members of the Panel will also need to consider the process to be adopted in reviewing the research information and interviewing Members of the Council, and considering all relevant issues before coming to any conclusions. For example, would Members like to consider the research information before or after interviewing Members of the Council.

6.5 The Council would like to be in a position to introduce a new scheme of allowances from May 2003 following the election of the new Council. Accordingly, members of the Panel are asked to consider their work programme.

7. Financial Implications

None specifically.

8. Legal Implications

None specifically.

9. Staffing and Other Administrative Implications

None specifically.

10. Conclusion

Members of the Panel are asked to decide on the process and work programme.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<u>Short Title of Document</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>File Ref</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>	<u>Exempt Information Category</u>
Process and Work Program			Steve Brooks ext 3317	Not applicable