

## **REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

**28 SEPTEMBER 2004**

### **Allowances for Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee**

#### **Recommendations**

1. That the Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee be paid the following allowances in 2004/5:
  - Annual allowance of £500;
  - An hourly rate of £11.28 for any investigation hearings and pre-meetings.
2. That the allowances referred to above be increased annually in line with any index applied to Members' Allowances generally.
3. That issues relating to allowances for other co-optees be referred to the Panel for consideration as and when any appointments are being considered.

#### **Introduction**

The Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) was constituted in 2002 and produced two reports for the Council in 2003. The Panel have made recommendations on:

Basic Allowance  
Special Responsibility Allowances  
Carer's Allowances  
Travel and Subsistence Allowances  
Allowances to be treated as Pensionable  
Co-optees' Allowance

#### **Background**

When considering the co-optees allowance the Panel were advised that the Council had no current co-opted Members and thus could only make a general recommendation about the amount of such an allowance. The Panel's recommendation which was subsequently agreed by the Council was:

"That if the Council appoints any co-opted members to any of its committees, Boards or Panels then the allowance paid to the co-opted member should be based on the same methodology as used by the Panel to calculate the basic allowance."

The methodology used by the Panel for the calculation of the basic allowance was:

Annual estimated hourly time commitment

*Multiplied by*

Rate for the job

*Multiplied by*

52 weeks

*Less*

33% voluntary element

### **Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee**

Officers had previously advised the Panel that the Council had no co-opted Members. However, this was an error as it became clear that the definition of co-optees included the Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee. Thus any allowance paid to the Independent Members/Persons would be on the basis of the Panel's recommendation.

There is a legal requirement to appoint Independent Members/Persons onto the Standards Committee. The Council may also from time to time appoint other co-optees to its committees, boards and panels. These appointments would however be at the discretion of the Council and would probably be for a limited period only e.g. to deal with a specific project etc.

The Council has requested the Panel to look at allowances for co-optees afresh and make specific recommendations for Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee.

### **Considerations of the Panel**

The Panel met with Marie Kelly-Stone Head of Legal Services who explained the role of Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee and answered questions from the Panel. The Panel also considered the allowances paid by neighbouring/other authorities in Kent. The amounts paid by these authorities to their Independent Members/Persons vary considerably:

1. Some only pay expenses;
2. Some pay travel and subsistence;
3. One pays £50 per meeting.

4. Two authorities have two Independent Members who also are chairman and vice chairman and thus receive the same special responsibility allowance as do other chairmen and vice chairmen for that class of committee - £860 and £450.

When considering the allowance for Independent Members/Persons on the Council's Standards Committee, the Panel discussed both the estimated time commitment and the complexity of the work and considered separately any investigation hearings into alleged Member misconduct that may be held.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Panel concluded that Independent Members/Persons on the Standards Committee should be paid an annual allowance based on the estimated time commitment for meetings and training: paid at the same rate as allowed in the calculation of the basic allowance (i.e. £11 per hour in 2003/4, increased to £11.28 in 2004/5).

The estimated average annual time commitment was considered to be in the region of 44hrs, giving an annual allowance of £500.

The Panel recommend that an allowance of £11.28 per hour be paid for attendance at investigation hearings.

The Panel recommend that the allowances be increased annually in line with any index applied to Members Allowances generally.

The Panel recommend that allowances for other co-optees be referred to the Panel for consideration as and when any appointments are being considered.