

Report for:	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE SHADOW EXECUTIVE
Meeting Date:	10 September 2019

Title of Report:	Appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel to set a scheme of members' allowances for Buckinghamshire Council
Responsible Officer or Relevant Member:	Catherine Whitehead
Officer Contact:	Mathew Bloxham, 01494 732143; mathew.bloxham@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk
Recommendations:	<p>1. That the following individuals be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for Buckinghamshire Council and the Parish Remuneration Panel:</p> <p>a. Hazel Bentall b. Nigel Palmer c. Dr Bill Reid d. Mark Tosh</p> <p>2. That the proposed approach and timetable, as detailed in this report, be noted.</p>
Corporate Implications:	<p>Legal The statutory duties relating to member allowances which the council is obliged to follow are contained in The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. The Council has a duty under the Regulations to have regard to the recommendations made to it by the Panel before making or amending a scheme of allowances. The Council does not have to accept the Panel's recommendations but should give reasons for departing from them. The Council must publish the scheme it approves.</p> <p>Financial The Shadow Authority will agree the final scheme of allowances and associated budget.</p>
Options: (If any)	The Council is legally required to have regard to the recommendations of an IRP before making or amending a scheme of allowances. There is therefore a requirement to appoint an IRP for this purpose.
Reason: (Executive only)	The proposed IRP members are experienced, have knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of Members and have already participated in previous member allowance reviews at other local authorities. Three of the IRP members have already participated in the review of member allowances for the Shadow Authority.

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to propose the arrangements for appointing to the Independent Remuneration Panel for the new Buckinghamshire Council as well as to note the proposed timetable and approach for the process of setting a scheme of allowances for the new Council.

Executive Summary

2. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations) require a relevant authority to make a scheme providing for the payment of a basic allowance (BA) to each Member of that authority. The BA must be the same for each authority.
3. The mechanism with which Councils consider allowances is by way of appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel. This Panel considers the level of member allowances to be operated by a Council under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2003.
4. Regulation 20(2) requires that an independent remuneration panel shall consist of at least three members none of whom:
 - (a) Is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or
 - (b) Is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.

Content of Report

Existing Arrangements


5. Currently all sovereign predecessor Councils operate members' allowances schemes entitling all members to receive a basic allowance in recognition of the community representative role that they undertake. In addition, within the existing schemes, recognition is also given to those members who have special responsibilities attached to the roles they perform within the Council. For example, the role of the Leader and Committee Chairman.
6. The Shadow Authority set a scheme of allowances at its inaugural meeting on 3 June 2019, having had regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel.
7. Each Member of the Panel who met to recommend a scheme for the Shadow Authority, were drawn from existing panels across Buckinghamshire. These were:

Hazel Bentall
Dr Bill Reid
Mark Tosh

The Panel for the Buckinghamshire Council

8. The Panel members each have experience of reviewing allowances for local authorities. This experience would be useful when it comes to setting a scheme for the new Buckinghamshire Council.
9. As noted at point 4, the regulations require that the IRP consists of a minimum of 3 individuals. It is recommended that four individuals be appointed to the IRP for practical reasons for example to ensure that IRP meetings can take place even if one panel member is unable to attend a meeting.
10. Each of the proposed panel members have indicated that they would be willing to participate as a member of the independent remuneration panel for Buckinghamshire Council. Biographical information for the proposed appointments to the IRP is provided in a private appendix.
11. Due to the likely number of IRP meetings required for this review it is recommended that each IRP member receives £200 in recognition of their time involved in conducting this review.

Further considerations

12. The scheme set for the Shadow Authority runs to 31 March 2020. Elections for the 147 seats to the Buckinghamshire Council will be held on 7 May 2020.
 13. For an 'interim' period from 1 April 2020 to 11 May 2020 (the fourth day after the election), the 202 current members of the existing councils will continue as members of the Shadow Authority. As the existing councils will no longer exist, their respective members' allowances schemes will cease and allowances may no longer be available, pursuant to the Regulations.
 14. Therefore, in addition to making recommendations on a scheme of allowances from 11 May 2020 for councillors elected on 7 May 2020, the Panel will also need to consider what approach should be taken to the provision of allowances during the interim period.
 15. Regulation 5 requires any parish councils wishing to pay an allowance to its members to have regard to the recommendations of a parish remuneration panel. It is recommended that the IRP members also be appointed to the parish remuneration panel.
 16. It is suggested that questionnaires be sent to all Shadow Members in advance of the meetings, and that representations from Councillors can help to inform the Panel's recommendations. This is the proposed approach to ensure the Panel receive a range of representations to base their recommendations on.
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Proposed Timetable for setting a Scheme of Allowances

Date	Activity
10 September 2019	Shadow Executive considers and agrees the IRP appointments.
September/October 2019	Send questionnaire to all Shadow Authority Members and invite representations from the Constitution Member Working Group.
November/December 2019	Hold meetings of the Panel, including where representations from Councillors are received.
January 2020	Draft report and seek agreement from the Panel on recommendations.
27 February 2020	Shadow Authority considers and agrees the Members Allowances Scheme for Buckinghamshire Council.
1 April 2020	Members Allowances Scheme takes effect

Resourcing requirements

18. The work associated with supporting the IRP in making their recommendations for the scheme of allowances for Buckinghamshire Council and parishes is led by the Implementation Team. A range of background information will be supplied to the IRP including:

- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the Regulations).
- Benchmarking allowance data from other similar sized unitary authorities along with electorate figures (e.g. Dorset, BCP and Durham Members' Allowances).
- Information from members informed by the Constitution member working group.
- Current Members' Allowances schemes for Buckinghamshire Councils.
- Budget information.
- Emerging governance structure and anticipated roles of Members.
- Emerging Constitution of Buckinghamshire Council.

Consultation

See paragraph 18.

Next Steps

See timetable in paragraph 18.

Background Papers	None other than those referred to in the report.
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