



WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT COMMITTEE

14 MAY 2019

Report Title	REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL TASK AND FINISH GROUPS
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AGENDA STATUS: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee (WNJC) for approval, the findings and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel Task and Finish Group (the 'IRP Task and Finish Group').

2. Recommendations

The West Northamptonshire Joint Committee (WNJC) is asked to consider and approve the following recommendations of the IRP Task and Finish Group:

- 2.1 That the following individuals be appointed as members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (the 'IRP') for the proposed West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority:
- Person D (Northampton Borough Council IRP Member) – Chair of the IRP
 - Person B (Daventry District Council Panel IRP Member)
 - Person F (Northamptonshire County Council IRP Member)
 - Person G (South Northamptonshire Council IRP Member)
- 2.2 That Officers be tasked with contacting the individuals above should the Joint Committee agree to recommendation 2.1 above to make preliminary arrangements for meetings of the IRP.
- 2.3 That the Lead Monitoring Officer for the West Northamptonshire Authorities be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Chair of the Task and Finish Group, to determine the remuneration of the IRP members, taking account of the remuneration received by IRP members in each of the four West Northamptonshire authorities.

- 2.4 That the report of the IRP regarding its recommendations in relation to a Scheme of Members' Allowances for the West Northamptonshire shadow Authority is presented to the shadow Authority at its inaugural meeting for consideration.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1 Report Background

- 3.1.1 The purpose of the IRP Task and Finish Group was:

In respect of the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for the purpose of the IRP recommending a Scheme of Members' Allowances for the potential shadow Authority for West Northamptonshire:

- To consider the different ways of establishing an IRP for this purpose, and to make a recommendation to the WNJC as how the IRP should be established and composed and specifically who the Members of the IRP should be;
- To recommend a process to the WNJC for the independent review by an IRP of a scheme of allowances for the shadow Authority; and
- Upon the establishment of an IRP, to liaise with, co-ordinate and support the IRP as required by the IRP (only in so far as this is compatible with the independence of the IRP).

3.2 What is an Independent Remuneration Panel?

- 3.2.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (the 'Regulations') require a local authority to establish and implement a scheme which provides for the payment of allowances for its Members in accordance with Regulations.

- 3.2.2 In summary, the functions of an IRP are to make recommendations to the local authority of the kind set out in the Regulations, namely:-

- (a) as to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following should be available-
- (i) special responsibility allowance;
 - (ii) travelling and subsistence allowance; and
 - (iii) co-optees' allowance;
- (b) as to the amount of such allowances and as to the amount of basic allowance;
- (c) as to whether dependants' carers' allowance should be payable to members of the authority, and as to the amount of such an allowance;

- (d) as to whether, in the event that the Scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated to apply with effect from the beginning of the year in which the amendment is made; and
- (e) as to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and if so, which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed.

3.2.3 An IRP must 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.

3.2.4 The 2003 Regulations do not specify how a local authority may go about finding members of its IRP. Therefore, it is necessary for a local authority to carefully consider and plan the appointments process to ensure that the process results in a Scheme of Members' Allowances that commands public confidence throughout all the communities within the local authority's area. In particular, the Local Authority must consider how to appoint an IRP that is truly independent, well qualified to discharge the functions of the panel and representative of the diversity of the communities within the local authority's area.

3.3 Members Allowances and the potential West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority

3.3.1 If a Structural Changes Order ('SCO') for Northamptonshire is made establishing a Shadow Authority for West Northamptonshire, the Shadow Authority's Members would comprise of all the Councillors of Daventry District Council, Northampton Borough Council, and South Northamptonshire Council together with those Northamptonshire County Councillors covering these three district areas (if the currently anticipated model is adopted, although this could change).

3.3.2 It is currently understood that the SCO (if made) is likely to state that one of the duties of the Shadow Authority will be to prepare and adopt a scheme for the payment of allowances to its Members. The SCO will also likely state that the majority of the provisions of the Regulations will apply to the Shadow Authority and its Members.

3.3.3 Therefore, the Terms of Reference of the WNJC include the following:

"To agree the process for an independent review of a Scheme of Members' Allowances for the Shadow Authority, including the setting up of an Independent Remuneration Panel and to recommend to the Shadow Authority a Scheme of Members' Allowances for adoption at its inaugural meeting".

3.3.4 The WNJC must establish an IRP for the Shadow Authority. The IRP, once established, must produce a report to the Shadow Authority making recommendations regarding the payment and amount of all allowances paid, the duties in respect of which special responsibility allowances should be paid and whether allowances should be index linked. (The IRP would also be required to make recommendations to the Shadow Council if in the future, the Shadow Council decided to either revoke or amend its first Members' Allowances scheme).

3.4 Work of the IRP Task and Finish Group

3.4.1 As many Members as possible from the existing IRPs of each of the four Sovereign Councils were contacted. Individual IRP Members were asked for their permission to share certain biographical information with the Task and Finish Group. Where permission was secured, the information was provided to the Task and Finish Group in an anonymised format for their consideration.

3.5 Conclusions of the IRP Task and Finish Group

3.5.1 After careful consideration of the information that they were provided with, the IRP Task and Finish Group concluded that the following individuals would be recommended to the WNJC to make up the IRP for the Shadow Authority:

- Person D (Northampton Borough Council) – Chair of the IRP
- Person B (Daventry District Council)
- Person F (Northamptonshire County Council)
- Person G (South Northamptonshire Council)

Some brief biographical information in relation to each of the recommended individuals is set out at Appendix A. The information is anonymised to protect the individuals' sensitive data and to ensure equal opportunities in relation to the appointment process.

3.5.2 The IRP Task and Finish Group agreed that it would recommend to the WNJC that Officers should make arrangements for the IRP members' remuneration, taking account of the remuneration received by IRP members in each of the four West Northamptonshire authorities. The IRP also concluded that Officers should be tasked with contacting the individuals as recommended above to make preliminary arrangements for meetings of the IRP.

3.5.3 In terms of the process of the IRP once established, the Task and Finish Group noted that an IRP is independent and would therefore to a certain extent determine its own process, but that Members of the IRP Task and Finish Group and Officers from each of the four Councils would support it as required.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1 Policy

4.1.1 None arising directly.

4.2 Resources and Risk

4.2.1 Once established the IRP will require some Officer support. This will be resourced through Officers of the four West Northamptonshire authorities. There will be a cost associated with establishing the IRP in that Panel Members will be remunerated. This cost will be shared equally between each of the four West Northamptonshire authorities.

4.3 Legal

4.3.1 The legal implications are outlined in the body of the report.

4.4 Equality and Health

4.4.1 Due regard has been had to Equalities Legislation and the process for identifying potential members of the Panel has included the selection of the individuals from existing Panels across the west Northamptonshire area Councils using anonymised information about individuals.

4.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1 Members of the Task and Finish Group

5. Background Papers

5.1 Agendas and papers presented to the West Northamptonshire Joint Committee – IRP Task and Finish Group

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