

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL and MIDSUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

From Independent Remuneration Panel	Report Number M92
To Mid Suffolk Council Babergh Council	Date of meeting 27 September 2012 28 September 2012

REPORT TO BABERGH AND MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCILS FROM THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP) – SEPTEMBER 2012

ALLOWANCES FOR CO-OPTED MEMBERS ON JOINT STANDARDS COMMITTEE

1. Panel Members

Dr John Hill: Dr Alan Lower: Professor David Muller

All three of us have considerable experience and expertise of Allowances Schemes in Suffolk.

2. Role of the Panel

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) England Regulations 2003 (as amended) we were asked to make a recommendation to both Councils on the level of allowance to be paid to co-opted members appointed to the new Joint Standards Committee.

3. The Independent Remuneration Panel **RECOMMENDS**

That an allowance of £730 per annum per member be payable to co-opted members appointed by the relevant Council to the Joint Standards Committee.

4. Considerations

We were aware that the closer working arrangements between Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils together with the integration of services may require a more fundamental review of the current Members' Allowances Schemes in the future, but in the meantime, the appointment of the new Joint Standards Committee has led to the current very limited exercise.

We had before us the report of the Monitoring Officer which was considered by both Full Councils at their June meetings, together with further information supplied by the officers on the current allowance levels for co-opted members, and on the anticipated operation of the new Committee, particularly in relation to its reduced workload. We particularly noted that under the new Standards regime, complaints will be considered by the Monitoring Officer in consultation with the independent person and hearings will be unnecessary, the main role of the Committee being to promote and maintain high ethical standards of conduct across both Councils, and to monitor those standards on an on-going basis.

5. Findings of the IRP

The reduction in frequency of meetings and in the level of workload anticipated leads us to conclude that the appropriate allowance should coincide with the current rate of £730 paid under the Babergh Scheme, which represents 20% of Basic Allowance, and reflects quarterly meetings, which will be the normal pattern for the new Joint Committee.

We have given some initial thought to the matter of a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chairman, but note that at the present time, this issue is awaiting a formal request from both Councils to consider the wider issue of SRAs for a number of Joint roles.

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