

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

<u>Report of the:</u>	Head of Legal and Democratic Services
<u>Contact:</u>	Simon Young
<u>Annexes/Appendices</u> (attached):	None
<u>Other available papers</u> (not attached):	Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

REPORT SUMMARY

Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 ("the Regulations"), the Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations to it about the allowances to be paid to Members.

RECOMMENDATION (S)

That the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with Group Leaders, be authorised to confirm appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Notes

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 There are no direct implications: the establishment of the Panel is a statutory requirement if the Council wishes to pay its Members any allowances.

2 Background

- 2.1 The previous Panel was appointed by the Council in February 2011 following an open recruitment process. The Panel originally reported to the Council on 14 April 2011 and undertook a limited interim review of the Special Responsibility Allowances payable to members in the summer of 2014, reporting to Council in the December of that year.
- 2.2 Regrettably, the term of office of the previous Panel members has expired and therefore a new Panel needs to be appointed. Whilst some members have indicated that they are still willing to help, we do need to appoint some new members.

- 2.3 We advertised the role on our website and by word of mouth. Whilst we did receive some applications, we did not have sufficient interest from individuals without any local political connections to make up a panel.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 We have recently contacted colleagues at Elmbridge Borough Council, and have established that, in principle, several current members of their Independent Remuneration Panel are prepared to assist us. We would therefore propose that they be appointed. Before doing so, we would intend to consult group leaders on each individual, in an effort to ensure that members are content with the appointments.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 The members of the Independent Remuneration Panel are not themselves paid an allowance, but will be paid a contribution to any out of pocket expenses they occur in discharging their duties. These will be met from existing budgets. There are no other direct financial implications arising from this report. The setting of allowances will be a matter for the Council, which will do so having regard to the views of the Panel, as well as to the budgetary implications of any changes.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 It is important that the Council appoints an Independent Remuneration Panel, and has regard to the views of the Panel before any decisions are made in respect of changes to the scheme of allowances for members.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 There are no implications arising from this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 The opportunity to appoint persons who are also appointed in the same capacity by another authority could help better inform the decisions of both authorities, as the panel members will be able to bring the perspective they have gained advising another authority.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 It is not considered that there are significant risks in proceeding as planned. The risks of not doing so would appear to be greater, as the Council will need to undertake a further exercise in order to find suitable persons. In the meantime, we will not be able to make changes to the scheme of members allowances, which are required in order to reflect changes roles and responsibilities and changes to the support provided to members (such as in relation to ICT equipment and services).

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 In conclusion it is considered that the balance lies in favour of seeking to appoint some or all of the independent remuneration panel members who currently advise Elmbridge Borough Council, together with such other persons as we think fit. Before confirming any appointment, it is considered appropriate that Group Leaders be consulted, as this is a matter which affects all members.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: N/A