

## **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBERS**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Councillor Clive Eginton, Leader of the Council  
**Responsible Officer:** Kathryn Tebbey, Group Manager for Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

**Reason for Report:** to approve the recommended appointments to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Members' Allowances in Mid Devon

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (1) that Mr Paul Baker, Mrs Karen Stone and Mrs Marianne Hulland be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel until the Annual General Meeting in May 2023**
- (2) that the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel be paid travelling expenses for attendance at meetings of the Panel at the same rates as those paid to councillors and officers from time to time**

**Financial Implications:** it is recommended that the Council continues its current practice of paying travelling expenses when Panel members attend their meetings. The cost can be met within existing budgets.

**Legal Implications:** The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 set out the requirements relating to the appointment of Independent Remuneration Panels.

**Risk Assessment:** The Council must have an Independent Remuneration Panel of a least three members.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** None directly arising from this report.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** None.

### **1.0 Introduction/Background**

- 1.1** The Council must have an Independent Remuneration Panel to review members' allowances and the Panel must comprise at least three members. The Panel also acts as the relevant Parish Remuneration Panel within the district.
- 1.2** Historic guidance from the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister emphasises that the membership of the Panel must be truly independent – and be perceived to be such. Political appointments and those made through any personal association with the Council should always be avoided.
- 1.3** Further, it is desirable that there is continuity of experience in the Panel – with appointments being made for a period of several years and to ensure that

there is always at least one member of the Panel with sufficient experience of the role.

## 2.0 Current Membership

2.1 By law, the minimum number of panel members is three. Following the resignation of one panel member in 2018/19, there were three remaining Panel members. However, a further Panel member has now resigned, leaving just two remaining members who are willing to continue. It is recommended that their appointments continue from 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019 for the duration of the new Council i.e. until May 2023. The two current members are:

- **Paul Baker** – Deputy Director for Primary Care, NHS
- **Karen Stone** – Business Manager, South West Councils

## 3.0 New Appointment

3.1 With the Panel until recently at the minimum level of three and in the knowledge that one member intended to resign, the Monitoring Officer authorised an advert for new panel members in February. An advert was placed in a local newspaper, on the website, through social media and via the South West Councils' website.

3.2 Panel members receive expenses, but are not remunerated. Although there were a number of enquiries, only one application was received by the deadline of 31 March 2019. Given the importance of the role and the need for confidence in their ability to perform it, the applicant was nevertheless interviewed on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2019 by a panel comprising the Monitoring Officer, the Member Services Manager and the Director of Corporate Affairs and Business Transformation. Satisfactory references were also requested and received.

3.3 The applicant was found to combine both a good understanding of the role of local authority members with political sensitivity and an understanding of the work of independent remuneration panels. Whilst now retired, with a journalistic background and then as a Communications Manager for councils in the East of England, she also managed a transition to shared services. With the support of the current members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, it was felt that the applicant would be well suited to the role.

3.4 It is therefore recommended that **Marianne Hulland** be appointed as the third member of the Panel for the period May 2019 to May 2023.

## 4.0 Future appointments

4.1 Given the requirement for a minimum of three panel members, it would be desirable to make at least one further appointment. However, it would be better if this took place after the Panel has completed the fundamental review of members' allowances - which has recently begun. It is anticipated that this review will be completed by the end of this calendar year in time for

recommendations to be made to Council and any changes approved to be reflected in the budget for 2020/21.

**Contact for more Information:** **Kathryn Tebbey**, Group Manager for Legal Services and Monitoring Officer, (01884) 234210 [ktebbey@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:ktebbey@middevon.gov.uk)

**Circulation of the Report:** Cabinet Member seen and approved

**List of Background Papers:**

- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003
- Historic ODPM Guidance on members allowances and the appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel

**Background of applicant recommended for appointment –**

- Former journalist – freelance and in PR
- Local authority communications and internal comms
- Communications Manager for two councils in the east of England 2001-2017
- Experienced at working with leadership teams and members
- Now retired and resident in Mid Devon
- No connection with any officer or member of the Council