

# ITEM NO: 11

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	COUNCIL		
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL		
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008		
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	SOLICITOR TO THE COUNCIL		
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## STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

None

## SUMMARY

Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, local authorities are required to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel. The term of office for the Southampton panel expired in September 2007 and a new panel has been established.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) To note the appointment of the new Independent Remuneration Panel;
- (ii) To request the Independent Remuneration Panel consider whether the Chairs of Audit Committee and Standards and Governance Committee should be entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowances; and
- (iii) To request the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider a review of the carer and telephone allowances.

## REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, local authorities are required to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel.
2. At its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008, Standards and Governance Committee recommended to Full Council that the Independent Remuneration Panel undertake a review of Special Responsibility Allowances for the Chairs of Audit Committee and Standards and Governance Committee, and review the carer and telephone allowances.

## CONSULTATION

3. The Member User Group was consulted on the carer and telephone allowances and recommended that this be referred to Standards and Governance Committee to consider a review. Standards and Governance Committee considered a report at its meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and

recommended that Council request a review of the above allowances.

#### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

4. i) To decide that a review of the above allowances is not necessary
- ii) To recommend a review of one or more of the above allowances

#### **DETAIL**

5. The Member Allowance Scheme was approved at Full Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007 although it did not include any Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chair of Audit Committee. Audit Committee was initially a sub-committee of Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. It is now a sub-committee of Standards and Governance Committee and the Chairs' Allowances in the Member Allowance scheme refer only to Scrutiny and Regulatory Panel, and Audit Committee does not come under either of these categories.
6. Until May 2008, Standards and Governance Committee was chaired by the Mayor and therefore there has never been an SRA for the Chair of this committee. In accordance with changes in legislation, Council determined that the Chair of Standards and Governance would be one of the Independent members of the committee and therefore it would be appropriate for the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider whether or not the Chair should be entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance.
7. When Council approved the Members' Allowance Scheme in September 2007, it was decided that childcare, dependent carer and telephone allowances would be set at the same rate as that of staff. The criteria for staff allowances are significantly different from that of Members, especially in relation to childcare and dependent carer's allowances. As an example, prior to October 2007, Members were entitled to claim dependent carer allowance at the rate of the national minimum wage, which is in line with similar allowances paid by other local authorities. However as there is no dependent carer allowance for employees, Members are no longer able to claim a dependent carer's allowance under the scheme.

#### **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Capital**

8. Nil

##### **Revenue**

9. The appointment of the Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Special Responsibility Allowances, and the carer and telephone allowances, will result in allowances of £1,400 being paid to the Panel Members in 2008/09 only. This cost will be met from within existing Democratic and Members budgets. If the Panel's recommendations are to award Special Responsibility Allowances to the Chairs of Audit Committee and Standards and Governance Committee and to incur other costs through Members' carers and telephone allowances then financial costs would be detailed in the accompanying report to Council.

**Property**

10. Nil

**Other**

11. Nil

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

12. Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

**Other Legal Implications:**

13. None

**POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

14. Nil

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices**

1.	N/A
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	N/A
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**Background Documents**

Title of Background Paper(s) N/A

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

**Background documents available for inspection at:** N/A

**FORWARD PLAN No:** N/A      **KEY DECISION?** No

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	None
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