

Subject:	Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Brighton & Hove City Council		
Date of Meeting:	1 July 2021		
Report of:	Executive Director Strategy Governance and Law		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Elizabeth Culbert	Tel: 01273 2915
	Email:	elizabeth.culbert@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

Note: The special circumstances for non-compliance with Council Procedure Rule 3, Access to Information Procedure Rule 5 and Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), (items not considered unless the agenda is open to inspection at least five days in advance of the meeting) were that final confirmation of the Panel's recommendations could not be obtained prior to publication of the agenda.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This report covers the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) with regard to their review of the Member Allowances Scheme (the Scheme).
- 1.2 The review covered three areas: the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances for roles that are undertaken on a job-share basis; support for car parking, and allowances for co-optees.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy & Resources Committee recommends to full Council that:-

- 2.1 Recommendation 3.1 as set out in the attached IRP report relating to job sharing roles be agreed.
- 2.2 Recommendation 3.2 as set out in the attached IRP report relating to car parking for members be agreed.
- 2.3 Recommendation 3.3 as set out in the attached IRP report relating to an allowance for co-optees who attend committee in a personal capacity be agreed.
- 2.4 The Executive Director Strategy, Governance and Law be delegated authority to update Council Procedure Rules to reflect the agreement in relation to the job sharing of roles as referred to in paragraph 3.2 of this report and to publish the revised Members Allowances Scheme.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The role of the IRP, under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, is to make recommendations to the Council as to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which allowances should be available and the amount of those allowances. The IRP may also make recommendations as to whether, in the event that the Allowances Scheme is amended at any stage, payment of allowances may be backdated. All councils are required to convene their Allowances Panel and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their Allowances Scheme and they must 'pay regard' to the Panel's recommendations before setting a new or amended Members' Allowances Scheme.
- 3.2 In November 2019 the Policy & Resources Committee considered a report on Women in Local Government and agreed a recommendation that Member positions of special responsibility are open to job share. At full Council on 23 July 2020 appointments were made to Committees and Sub-Committees, including the appointments to positions of special responsibility. This included a number of roles which were identified as job share roles. A subsequent report was submitted to the 13 August full Council meeting confirming some of the details. A Chair's job share protocol was included for information with the papers for full Council.
- 3.3 In view of the above, the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) were invited to consider whether changes or clarification of the agreed Member's Allowances Scheme 2018-2023 was necessary.
- 3.4 At the Budget Council meeting in February 2021 it was agreed that car parking provision at the Norton Road car park for councillors should be withdrawn. The IRP were asked to review the recommendations and consider the implications for the Scheme.
- 3.5 Finally, the IRP were also asked by a resolution of P&R on 13th May 2021 to consider whether co-optees and standing invitees who are appointed and attend council committee meetings in a personal and voluntary capacity should receive an allowance to acknowledge the value they bring to the Council's decision-making.
- 3.6 The IRP met on 19th January, 2nd March and 25th May 2021, with councillors in attendance on 2nd March and 25th May. The Panel's report and recommendations are attached to this report as Appendix 1.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 In relation to all the proposals set out in the report, the IRP stated that they would review the situation as part of the next full review ahead of making recommendations for the Members Allowances Scheme to be in place for 2023-2027.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Panel sought the views of councillors directly and through Group Leaders and met with a number of councillors prior to making its recommendations on potential changes to the current Members Allowances Scheme.
- 5.2 The different Groups had different preferences in terms of the options for car parking they wished to see pursued. The Green Group were in favour of withdrawing support for Councillor parking (Option 2); the Labour Group indicated a preference for Option 3 (passes issued but no spaces reserved) and the Conservative Group indicated a preference to maintain the existing level of support (Option 1).

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The report presents the report and recommendations of the IRP for consideration by the Committee.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The recommendations regarding job sharing roles have been made on the basis that they remain cost neutral and there are not expected to be any financial implications arising from these recommendations.
- 7.2 The recommendations regarding parking for members will mean that the potential budget saving of £0.025m agreed by Budget Council in February 2021 cannot be achieved in 2021/22. This can be addressed by utilising the small General Fund contingency budget but this may become an additional commitment in the 2022/23 budget if there are other calls on contingency during the year.
- 7.3 The recommendations regarding allowances for co-opted members will result in a small additional cost of £1,500, however, this is expected to be manageable within the overall budget held by Democratic Services.

Finance Officer Consulted: Nigel Manvell

Date: 18/06/21

Legal Implications:

- 7.4 These are included in the body of the report.

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 18/06/21

Equalities Implications:

- 7.5 The proposed revision to the Scheme in respect of job share roles will support younger members, working members and those with other responsibilities to undertake a position of responsibility. The proposal in relation to car parking will ensure ongoing accessibility for members who need to attend meetings and who may have mobility or other issues which are supported by access to car parking

arrangements nearby. The proposal for co-optees who attend Council committee meetings in a personal and voluntary capacity to receive an allowance will assist in ensuring that invitees are not excluded from engaging in the role on financial grounds.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.6 The use of a car has recognised environmental implications, which need to be taken into consideration when a councillor fulfils their duties and responsibilities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. IRP report and recommendations dated 18th June 2021