



Signed off by	Deputy Monitoring Officer
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To	Council
Date	Thursday, 21 September 2023
Executive Member	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Organisation

Key Decision Required	No
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Subject	Appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel
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Recommendations
<p>That the following applicants be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) for a four-year term ending in August 2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr John Thompson MBE (incumbent Chair of the IRP); • Mrs Margaret A Waller; and, • Mrs Carmel Briody.
Reasons for Recommendations
<p>In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to report and make recommendations on Members Allowances.</p>
Executive Summary
<p>In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to report and make recommendations on Members Allowances.</p> <p>A recruitment process was undertaken in August and September 2023, during which shortlisting and interviews for the three vacancies on the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel were conducted by the Democratic and Electoral Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer.</p>

The Council is therefore recommended to approve the appointment of Mr John Thompson MBE, Mrs Margaret A Waller, and Mrs Carmel Briody for a four-year term, aligning with a four-year work programme agreed in consultation with Group Leaders and the Management Team.

The above recommendations are subject to approval by Full Council.

Statutory Powers

1. In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to report and make recommendations on Members Allowances.

Background

2. All members of the Council ("Councillors") receive a basic allowance. Some members are also paid a special responsibility allowance (SRA) to recognise significant additional responsibilities. SRAs are paid, for example, to members of the Council's Executive and to Chairs of Committees. Expenses for travelling, subsistence and dependants' carers' can also be paid to those members who incur expenditure in undertaking particular duties.
3. In accordance with legal requirements, the Council has an Independent Remuneration Panel which is made up of people independent from the Council. The Council may only pay allowances and expenses after first considering a report from its Independent Remuneration Panel. It is for the Council to decide on the Members' Allowances Scheme that is put in place, having regard to the Panel's recommendations.
4. One Member of the IRP resigned in Spring 2023 and the term of office of the remaining two incumbents ends in February 2024.
5. Further to consultation with Group Leaders and the Management Team, a new four-year work programme has been agreed and the Council is therefore reappointing members to all three seats of the IRP in alignment with the new work programme.
6. The Council anticipates holding one full review once every four years, with an interim ('light-touch') review on the third year in a four-year cycle. Additional reviews may be commissioned at the discretion of the Council, for which at least 1 months' notice will be given, however in fallow years the Council may choose to increase allowances within its scheme according to an index (for example, the Consumer Price Index).

Key Information

Role description

7. IRP Members are expected to:
 - i. Analyse and compare appropriate remuneration data from other councils and public bodies.

- ii. Hear evidence and consider representations from Councillors and senior officers.
- iii. Assess the roles and responsibilities of Members generally and of those with Special Responsibilities.
- iv. Consider Government guidance.
- v. Analyse issues and evidence, to establish what needs to be done next and/or commission work as appropriate;
- vi. Make recommendations based on the above, with the intention of achieving an appropriate scheme of allowances for the Council.

Person specification

8. The essential qualities for candidates are that they:
 - i. Have experience of public life;
 - ii. Have an interest in the work of the council;
 - iii. Have the ability to interpret comparative data and economic trends;
 - iv. Take a balanced, open-minded and objective approach, for example, in evaluating evidence;
 - v. Can communicate effectively;
 - vi. Demonstrate respect for others, value diversity and respond sensitively to different circumstances;
 - vii. Must not be disqualified from being a councillor;
 - viii. Must not have been a member or officer of the council within the last 5 years; and
 - ix. Should not be the spouse, partner or close relation or friend of a councillor or officer.

Recruitment process

9. Panel members are recruited by public advertisement and should be of good standing in the community. Ideally members should have sound knowledge of employment and financial matters with an understanding of the operations of a local authority.
10. To maintain independence political appointments, and appointments which are made through friendship or any other personal association of any members of the council must be avoided.
11. Following a public advertisement throughout August 2023, interviews were held during the week commencing 4th September and the following were considered suitable for appointment by the Full Council –

Candidates recommended for appointment

- Mr John Thompson MBE – is the current Chair of the IRP who has applied for reappointment. He has worked in the public, private and charity sectors. Has been on IRPs and an Independent Person for various Authorities since 2001. He is the Lay Member of the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership. He is a School Governor. He was appointed to the Board of Governors of Chichester

University in July 2022 and is a Director of Arun Arts which runs the Alexandra Theatre complex in Bognor Regis. In view of his good performance as the Chair of the IRP, his reappointment is therefore recommended for approval by the Full Council.

- Mrs Margaret A Waller – is an HR professional who has worked in various local authorities and Police services in the UK with considerable experience of pay arrangements, conditions of service and job evaluation. Margaret also has experience acting as a Chair of the IRP for two other local authorities since 2022. Her appointment to the IRP is therefore recommended for approval by the Full Council.
- Mrs Carmel Briody – is a solicitor with over 17 years' experience in a local government context, as well as private sector and regulatory experience. Carmel also has experience acting as a parent governor, trustee, Presiding Officer, and voluntary work for local charities in the area. Her appointment to the IRP is therefore recommended for approval by the Full Council.

Options

- 12. Option 1 (recommended)** – to appoint Mr John Thompson MBE, Mrs Margaret A Waller; and, Mrs Carmel Briody. All three recommended candidates are considered by the Deputy Monitoring Officer to have the necessary experience and independence (in view of the essential qualities listed under paragraph 8) to perform the role effectively.
- 13. Option 2 (not recommended)** – to not appoint Members to the IRP. This is not recommended, as the Council is required to appoint an IRP to make recommendations on Member allowances under the Local Government Act 2003.

Legal Implications

- 14.** In accordance with the Local Government Act 2003 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) to report and make recommendations on Members Allowances.

Financial Implications

- 15.** A fee (approx. £690) will be paid to each Member of the IRP upon completion of the Panel's annual report. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred for attendance at meetings in-person will also be reimbursed.
- 16.** IRP Members' fees are funded from the Member Allowances budget. There is already sufficient funding within the Member Allowances budget for the three postholders appointed to the IRP. Therefore, no growth in funding is required to appoint Members to the IRP as recommended.

Consultation

- 17.** Group Leaders and the Management Team were consulted during the review of the job description, person specification and the work programme.

Background Papers

There are no background papers to consider.