

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 26th November 2015
Report of: Head of Governance and Democratic Services
Subject/Title: Re-Appointment of Members Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report invites the Committee to confirm the appointment of a pool of four individuals to the Cheshire East Council's Members Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel and to appoint the Panel Chairman.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That
- (a) the four individuals, to be named at the meeting, be appointed to a pool of Members to sit on the Cheshire East Council's Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of four years;
 - (b) one of the four individuals, to be named at the meeting, be appointed as the Panel Chairman; and
 - (c) the Chairman of the Panel be given authority to use his discretion to select members from the pool according to the nature of the work to be conducted by the Panel.

3.0 Reason for Recommendations

- 3.1 The term of office of the former Panel members expired in February 2015 and the Council is now required to re-appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 No policy implications have been identified.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 Individuals appointed to sit on the Independent Remuneration Panel are entitled to claim a meeting allowance of £30, plus reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. In addition, an allowance is payable to the Panel Chairman.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Failure to re-appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel would result in the Council being in breach of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 No risks have been identified.
- 9.2 The appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel will ensure that the Council receives independent advice on the level of allowances which should be paid to reflect the time, commitment and responsibilities of elected Members.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 requires the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel for the purpose of making recommendations to the Council on the amount of allowances which should be paid to elected Members.
- 10.2 The former Independent Remuneration Panel, comprising of 5 individuals was appointed in January 2012 for a period of three years. As the Panel's term of office came to an end in February 2015, arrangements were put in place to re-appoint the Panel.

11.0 Appointment Process

- 11.1 To ensure that the Panel is independent of the Council, restrictions are placed on who can apply to sit on the Panel. Individuals cannot be a member if they-
- are a member of any of the local authorities (borough or parish) in respect of which the Independent Remuneration Panel makes recommendations;
 - would be disqualified from being a Councillor of any local authority;
 - are a member of a political party;
 - are a close relative or friend of any elected member of the Council.
- 11.2 To advertise the vacancies on the Panel, a press release was issued seeking expressions of interest from applicants together with information on the Council's website with a front page link.

- 11.3 A number of application packs, explaining the role of the Independent Remuneration Panel and its Members, were issued in response to enquiries received. In total 8 application forms have been returned for consideration by the deadline (which was extended by a further week from that originally published).

12.0 Appointment of Candidates

- 12.1 Interviews for the Panel were held on 9 and 15 October 2015; the names of preferred candidates will be reported at the meeting. Owing to the high calibre of applicants, it is suggested that a pool of four Members be created, from which the Chairman of the Panel would choose attendees for meetings, depending upon on the nature of business to be considered. This is as opposed to appointing a Panel comprising three Members, as was originally proposed by the Constitution Committee.

13.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

Name: Lindsey Parton

Designation: Registration Service and Business Manager

Tel No: 01270 686477

Email: lindsey.parton@cheshireeast.gov.uk