

## Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Report of: City Solicitor

Report to: Council

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The Independent Remuneration Panel provides advice to Leeds City Council about its overall remuneration scheme and the amounts payable to elected members.

The Panel met on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to consider the uplift in Members' Allowances in light of the agreed local government pay award.

The conclusions and recommendations of the Panel are summarised in the appended report.

### Recommendations

Members of Council are asked to note the comments, conclusions and recommendations set out in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel presented at Annex 1.

Members are specifically asked to agree that:

#### **Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances**

Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances be uplifted by 3.88% and backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

#### **Dependent Carers Allowance**

The actual care costs incurred be the basis for payments of Dependent Carers Allowance - with the maximum hourly amount that can be claimed set at the hourly rate for the Real Living Wage.

That criteria for accessing the allowance, as detailed in Appendix 1 of the IRP report, be incorporated into the Members' Allowances Scheme.

## Other Allowances

All other Allowances, contained in Schedule two of the Members' Allowances Scheme (Travel Allowance and Subsistence Allowance) be uplifted as per the NJC pay award and where applicable backdated to 1st April 2023.

## Indexation

- Basic, Special Responsibility and Other Allowances be uplifted on the 1st of April each year by a percentage equivalent to the pay award of SCP 43 on the NJC pay structure.
- The maximum hourly rate payable under the Dependent Carers Allowance be determined by the prevailing hourly rate for the Real Living Wage.
- That these indexations apply from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2028.

## What is this report about?

- 1 As Council will recall, the Allowance Scheme sets out that the amounts referred to in paragraphs 3, 4 and 6 of the scheme will be increased yearly on 1 April in line with the headline pay increase negotiated through the National Joint Committee for Local Government Employees (or equivalent).
- 2 The National Employers and Trade Unions have now agreed a one-year (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024) pay offer of an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points.
- 3 Council agreed that the case for any uplift in Allowances for 2023/24 be considered by the IRP once the NJC pay award had been settled.
- 4 The IRP met on the 11<sup>th</sup> December to consider and make recommendations to the Council on:
  - The uplift to be applied to Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2023/24
  - The rate and circumstances whereby Members may make claims for Dependent Carers Allowance
  - The uplift in other Allowances (Travel and Subsistence)
  - Indexation of future uplifts in Allowances.

The report of the IRP to the Council is presented at Annex 1.

## What impact will this proposal have?

- 5 The recommendations of the IRP will result in an increase in the Basic, Special Responsibility Allowance and Dependent Carer Allowances paid to elected Members and will Index future uplifts for a period of four years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 6 There are no such specific implications arising from this report.

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 7 All Group Leaders have been advised of, and no objections have been raised in response to, the Panel's recommendations.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 8 If agreed by Council, the financial impact of the uplift will be neutral with the uplift having been fully accounted for in the 2023/24 budget.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 9 There are no new risks created through the application of these recommendations.
- 10 Due to the way in which pay increases are negotiated for local Government Employees it is not possible to determine the specific impact on future budgets.

### **What are the legal implications?**

- 11 The recommendations made by the IRP are made in accordance with The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

### **Options, timescales and measuring success**

#### **What other options were considered?**

- 12 The IRP explored a range of options to identify the most appropriate and balanced method for applying an uplift in Members' Allowances.

#### **How will success be measured?**

- 13 Any decision regarding the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel is a matter for full Council.

#### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

- 14 If approved, the recommendations of the IRP will be implemented with immediate effect with payments backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

### **Appendices**

- Annex 1: Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (December 2023)

### **Background papers**

- None