

**DERBYSHIRE DALES
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

*ALLOWANCES
FOR COUNCILLORS*

REPORT OF THE PANEL

July 2008

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I. Introduction

The Derbyshire Dales District Council elected an 'Independent Remuneration Panel' in 2002 to review allowances for members of the authority and to carry out periodic reviews.

The current panel members are Rev Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb.

2. Meetings to discuss Members Allowances.

A meeting was held on 27th June 2008 attended by Brian Evans representing D.D.D.C together with panel members Rev. Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb. The meeting was convened to consider the proposed allowances for the revised 'Overview Committee' also the annual rate adjustment for all members.

Brian Evans explained that the Overview Committee's for Partnership & Regeneration and Community & Environment had been amalgamated into one Overview Committee. He also commented on recent concerns over the annual rate adjustment, the panel had originally recommended an annual adjustment of allowances based on average inflation as decided by D.D.D.C. This may not be appropriate in current circumstances and could differ from adjustments for D.D.D.C employees. The panel was requested to re-consider annual rate changes.

Following a discussion on the two issues, Brian Evans was asked to provide information on national inflation rates and progress on annual rate changes for D.D.D.C employees.

A second meeting was held on 29th July 2008 attended by Brian Evans and Sandra Lamb (part-time) representing D.D.D.C together with panel members Rev Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb.

Brian Evans provided inflation indices for 2007-2008 together with the proposed members allowances for 2008-2009.

Sandra explained that the 'Overview Committee' had been changed to a single committee with a Chairman, Vice-chairman and other council members.

The role of the committee was to investigate various policies and arrangements with a wide remit to consult the public, council members and D.D.D.C employees. An example was given of a major investigation to evaluate licensing policy of taxi's and other people carriers in terms of suitability and numbers for particular areas.

The work of the committee usually involves one major investigation of a policy area each year with several short-term investigations. The Overview Committee reports back to the relevant Policy Committee who would be responsible for implementation as appropriate.

3. Review of Councillors Allowances.

The panel members considered the above with regard to the annual rate change for member's allowances as originally set out in the report of 2002. It was considered that it would be more appropriate for any change to be in-line with the annual adjustment paid to D.D.D.C employees or lower where appropriate, rather than linked to an average national inflation rate.

With regard to the revised 'Overview Committee', the panel members felt that the Chairman and Vice-chairman had significant responsibilities in an advisory capacity. The key responsibility for implementation of any changes would remain with Policy Committees. The proposed rates as outlined in the 'Report of the Head of Corporate Services - June 2008 Appendix 1' were reviewed. The rates proposed for the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Overview Committee were considered in relation to the other committees and considered to be appropriate for the level of responsibility outlined.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Special Responsibility Allowances for the Overview Committee.

The panel recommends the following special responsibility allowances for councillors involved with the Overview Committee to be implemented for the 2008/2009 financial year.

Chairman- Overview Committee **£3095.00 p.a.**

Vice-chairman –Overview Committee **£1022.00 p.a.**

The panel also recommends that the above allowances be backdated to the start of the current year.

4.2 Annual Rate Change

The original wording recommended by the panel should be changed from '*Allowances to be adjusted annually based on average inflation as decided by D.D.D.C*', to the following wording.

'Allowances to be adjusted annually in-line with the annual adjustment paid to D.D.D.C employees or lower where appropriate'

5. Review and acknowledgement

The panel should be requested to review all the members' allowances again at the request of DDDC or within three years.

The panel would like to acknowledge the help and assistance provided by the management of the Derbyshire Dales District Council in formulating this report.

**DERBYSHIRE DALES
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

*CONSIDERATION OF ALLOWANCES
FOR PARISH COUNCILLORS*

REPORT OF THE PANEL

July 2008

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I. Introduction

The Derbyshire Dales District Council requested the 'Independent Remuneration Panel' to consider allowances/expenses for local council members.

The current panel members are Rev Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb.

2. Meetings to discuss Allowances for local councillors.

A meeting was held on 27th June 2008 attended by Brian Evans representing D.D.D.C together with panel members Rev. Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb. The meeting was convened to consider whether there is a case for payment of allowances and or expenses to Town and Parish Councillors.

Brian Evans explained that a request had been received from Bradwell Parish Council for the panel to consider allowances and expenses for local councillors under the national scheme for allowances paid to councillors. Derbyshire Dales has seventy two local councils, made up of Town and Parish Councils. Currently no councillors receive allowances although some local councils pay expenses to varying degrees.

Brian Evans suggested that a meeting with Brian Wood – Secretary of the Derbyshire Association of Local Council would be beneficial. The panel agreed and also requested a survey of local councils to determine what allowances/expenses were currently being paid and views on allowances for local council members. A letter was drafted for circulation by D.D.D.C to all local councils.

A second meeting was held on 29th July 2008 attended by Brian Evans representing D.D.D.C together with panel members Rev Philip Webb, Marcus Pegg and Roger Tebb and Brian Wood representing the Derbyshire Association of Local Councils.

Brian Wood gave a brief overview of local councils, members are supported by a paid Clerk and may have other administration staff on a part-time basis. He indicated that their role and workload was changing in line with organisational changes in some counties, nine unity authorities had been approved to date.

Amber Valley Council operate an allowance scheme for council members. After a discussion the panel thanked Mr Wood for his contribution.

Brian Evans tabled replies received following a survey letter sent to all local councils. Eight replies were received and indicated that the local councils were not in favour of allowances being paid to local council members but out-of-pocket expenses might be appropriate.

3. Review of local councillors allowances and expenses.

The panel considered the information received and the input from Mr Wood. It was agreed that the panel could not make recommendations based on future unknown changes to the council structure.

The panel concurred with the view that local council members were elected volunteers not usually seeking payment for their activities.

The panel considered that payment of out-of-pocket expenses to cover materials, telephone /internet, travel and subsistence would be appropriate.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Allowances for Local Council Members.

The panel does not recommend payment of allowances to any local council members.

4.3 Expenses for Local Council Members.

The panel recommends that local council members should receive out-of-pocket expenses to cover the following general categories:-

Materials used for council business (*such as stationary, inks, postage, etc*).

Telephone and Internet costs for council business purposes.

Travel and subsistence costs for council business purposes (*where significant*).

The above categories should be agreed by the council and supported by valid claims, materials may be supplied by the council.

(Where required D.D.D.C could supply guidance on expenses for council members)

Payment of the above expenses would be at the discretion of each local council.

5. Review and acknowledgement

The panel should be requested to review local council members' allowances again at the request of DDDC if circumstances change.

The panel would like to acknowledge the help and assistance provided by the management of the Derbyshire Dales District Council in formulating this report.