

Report to COUNCIL

Appointment of Independent Members on the Independent Remuneration Panel

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Reason for Decision

Establishing a pool of five independent members to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel will ensure sustainability and continuity to cover any future vacancies or absences, so that the Panel is responsive to any requests to meet.

Recommendation

1. To reappoint Geoffrey Millard to the Independent Remuneration Panel until May 2029.
2. To approve the proposal to establish a pool of five independent members to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel.
3. That the Assistant Director of Governance be requested to proceed with the advertisement for two additional independent members to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), comprising a minimum of 3 members. The purpose of the IRP is to make recommendations to the levels of allowances and expenses for Councillors and co-opted independent members/person of the Council. Whilst the scheme and any changes are ultimately agreed by the Council, they can only be made having taken account of any recommendations from the IRP. The IRP therefore, provides a level of independence and objectiveness to this process. IRP members do not receive an allowance, they are however, reimbursed to cover any expenses incurred in carrying out their role.
- 1.2 There are currently three independent members on the IRP. On 10 July 2024, full council agreed to extend the term of office for Peter Claber and John Barlow to July 2028. Geoffrey Millard's term of office ended in September 2025, and it is proposed to extend this for a period of 4 years until May 2029.
- 1.3 To ensure sustainability and continuity, a recruitment exercise will need to be undertaken with a view to appointing up to two individuals and establish a pool of five members to cover any future vacancies or absences and ensure the Panel is responsive to any requests to meet. A report will be presented to Council when the recruitment process is complete.
- 1.4 The key responsibilities of the Panel as set out in the Regulations are to make recommendations as to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following allowances should be made available and the amount of allowance:
 - Basic Allowance.
 - Special Responsibility Allowances.
 - Member Travel and Subsistence allowances.
 - Dependent Carers Allowances.
 - Index linking arrangements for allowances.

2 Options/Alternatives

- 2.1 The Council is required to appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Any expenses incurred will be met from the Constitutional Services budget.

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council is required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel comprising a minimum of 3 individuals. The purpose of the Panel is to review the existing scheme of allowances, including the special responsibility allowances, paid to members and to make recommendations to the Council on the appropriate level of payments to be made in the future.
- 4.2 It is a matter for each local authority to agree its own process for recruiting and appointing Members to the IRP. New Council Constitutions: Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority

Allowances recommends that any appointment process should have a level of independence with successful candidates avoiding close associations with Members or being seen as political appointments.

- 4.3 The Regulations require that an IRP shall consist of at least three members none of whom—
(a) is also a member of an authority in respect of which it makes recommendations or is a member of a committee or sub-committee of such an authority; or (b) is disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority. 18. The proposals detailed in this report meet the requirements of the Regulations.

5 **Oldham Equality Impact Assessment, including implications for Children and Young People**

- 5.1 None

6 **Key Decision**

- 6.1 No

7 **Key Decision Reference**

- 7.1 N/A

8 **Background Papers**

- 8.1 None