

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

25 FEBRUARY 2015

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE & RESOURCES

Report prepared by Caroline Matthews

1. **MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES**

- 1.1 In accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent Regulations, the Council is obliged to give consideration to the recommendations of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel ("JIRP").
- 1.2 Attached at Appendix A is the report of the Head of Policy and Communications considered by the JIRP in January 2015. Appendix B sets out the response from the Chairman of the Panel, having taken into account the views of the other Panel Members.

1.3 Issues Discussed

Group Leaders Allowance

- 1.3.1 It is proposed that the Group Leaders' Allowance be changed to reflect a more robust way of proportioning the allowance and that it would be divided up based on the number of Members in each party. Therefore taking into account the political make up at the time of the review, this would be:-

Liberal Democrat Group Leader = 20 Members x £376.23 = £7,525

Independent Group Leader = 5 Members x £376.23 = £1,881

UKIP Group Leader = 4 Members x £376.23 = £1,505

Labour Group Leader = 2 Members x £376.23 = £753

These figures could, of course, change throughout the year, dependent on any bi-elections or defections.

The Leader's Allowance would remain unchanged as long as they had the majority in their party. The number of Members within their party would be immaterial.

Members' Allowance – Pay Rise

- 1.3.2 It is proposed that Members be eligible to receive the same percentage increase in their allowances as the Council's members of staff receive each year.

Special Allowance for Vice-Chairmen of Committees

1.3.3 It is proposed that the consideration of a Special Responsibility Allowance for Vice-Chairmen across the Council's Committees be considered more fully when the JIRP undertake their full review in March 2015.

2. **RECOMMENDED:**

- 2.1 That the Group Leaders' Allowance be determined based upon how many Members there are in their respective parties as set out in paragraph 1.3.1 of this report.
- 2.2 That Members be eligible to receive the same percentage increase in their allowances as the Council's members of staff receive each year and that this should include Dependant Carer's Allowance and Non-Councillors Allowances.
- 2.3 That the issue relating to a Special Responsibility Allowance for Vice-Chairmen be deferred for further consideration by the JIRP at the full review in March 2015.