

North Tyneside Council Independent Remuneration Panel

Background Information for Prospective Panel Members

Introduction

The 1989 Local Government and Housing Act requires North Tyneside Council, along with all other local authorities, to establish and maintain a scheme for members' allowances. The basic provisions of the Act have been fleshed out in subsequent regulations. The 1991 Regulations provide that it is for each local authority to decide its scheme and the amounts to be paid under that scheme.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require the Council to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of this Panel is to make recommendations to the authority about the allowances to be paid to elected members. Whilst the Council must have regard to this advice, it does not have a duty to follow the Panel's recommendations. However, it must have good, justifiable reasons for departing from them.

A Panel must consist of at least three members who are appointed to ensure that the setting of members' allowances is open to robust, independent and local scrutiny and is accountable and transparent to local people.

The Regulations provide that a members' allowances scheme can provide for the following allowances to be payable to elected members of local authorities:

- basic allowance
- special responsibility allowance
- childcare and dependent carers' allowance
- travel and subsistence allowances
- co-optees' allowances

Terms of Reference

Each year the Panel produces a report, with recommendations, on:

- the level of Basic Allowance for all members.
- the categories of responsibility for which a Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid.
- the rate of childcare/ dependent carers' allowance.
- travel and subsistence allowance.
- annual review of allowances.

- which members of the Council are entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- which aspect of members' allowance is to be pensionable.
- the level of allowance for Co-opted Members.

A copy of the allowances paid under the Council's current scheme of allowances is enclosed in this information pack.

Meetings

The Panel will commence its next annual review, in respect of allowances to be paid for the financial year and may need to meet a number of times during the review period.

In undertaking its review, the Panel may wish to:

- research Members Allowances schemes in other Relevant Authorities.
- gather evidence from interested persons and relevant organisations.
- conduct interviews with relevant persons consistent with the Terms of Reference of the Panel.

Officer support will be provided to assist the Panel.

Composition of the Panel

To date, the membership of the Panel has comprised three persons, which is the minimum number required by the Regulations. A vacancy has now arisen and the opportunity is being taken to appoint up to five members on the Panel.

Term of Office

To assist with the continuity of the Panel's work, appointments will be made for an initial term of 3 years, with a possible extension of 2 years.

Payment for Panel Membership

Panel members will receive a small yearly allowance and will be able to claim for reasonable expenses incurred in attending panel meetings e.g. mileage.

Applications

Completed application forms should be submitted to Vivienne Geary, Head of Law & Governance, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside NE27 0BY.

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

The closing date for the return of application forms is Friday ####

Appointment Process

Following receipt of applications, a short listing exercise will be undertaken and short listed candidates will be invited to attend an interview.

Further Information

If you have any further queries regarding the work of the Panel and the application process please contact:

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Quadrant,
The Silverlink North,
Cobalt Business Park,
North Tyneside
NE27 0BY.

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