

## **North Tyneside Council Independent Remuneration Panel**

### **Background Information for Prospective Panel Members (July 2024)**

#### **Introduction**

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 (who are also referred to as 'councillors').

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

#### **Why are we recruiting?**

To ensure that the Authority is always able to properly constitute a Panel of three members when needed, we are seeking to appoint a pool of six individuals who may each be called on to discharge the duties of the Panel as required. This will provide additional resilience and avoid potential problems with quorum.

#### **What do we need from our Panel members?**

Prospective Panel members cannot be an elected member of the Authority or an individual who would be disqualified from being or becoming an elected member of the Authority.

If you require any additional information about these requirements, please don't hesitate to ask – contact details given below.

## **Terms of Reference of Independent Remuneration Panel**

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 to elected members, and the level of such payment
- the level of allowance for Co-opted Members
- whether dependant carers' allowance should be payable to elected members of the Authority, and if so the rate of such allowance
- travel and subsistence allowance for elected members
- annual review of allowances, and whether, if the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated
- which members of the Council are entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme
- which aspect of members' allowance is to be pensionable
- Whether adjustments to an allowance may be determined according to an index and if so which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years, before its application is reviewed

A copy of the elected member allowances paid under the Council's current scheme of allowances will be provided to all Panel members in due course.

### **Meetings**

The Panel will commence its next annual review, in respect of allowances to be paid for the financial year ahead 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 six 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 or CVs should be submitted to Allison Mitchell, Head of Governance, North Tyneside Council, Quadrant, The Silverlink North, Cobalt Business Park, North Tyneside NE27 0BY.

**Appointment Process**

Following receipt of applications, a shortlisting exercise will be undertaken and shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend a brief interview.

**Further Information**

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

Allison Mitchell  
Head of Governance  
Telephone 0191 643 5724  
Email [Allison.mitchell@northtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:Allison.mitchell@northtyneside.gov.uk)

Jon Ritchie  
Director of Resources  
Telephone 0191 643 6476  
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