

**REPORT TO:** Council  
**DATE:** 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive  
**PORTFOLIO:** Corporate Services  
**SUBJECT:** Members Allowance Review  
**WARD(S)** All

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The report is to bring to the attention of Council the need to review the Members Allowances Scheme and to suggest the process to be followed.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**  
**1) the report be noted; and**  
**2) Council approves the process for the review of the Members Allowances Scheme set out.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Under the Local Authority (Members<sup>1</sup> Allowances) Regulations 2003 the Scheme of Members<sup>1</sup> Allowances, which was approved in March 2022, is due for review. It must be reviewed tri-annually by an independent panel. This is a legal requirement.

The Council proposes to invite three independent and respected private sector representatives to sit as an Independent Panel (the Panel) to review the Council's Scheme of Members Allowances and to make recommendations to the Council with regard to the matters to be included in the scheme.

It is suggested that the Independent Panel for the 2025 Tri-Annual Review will consist of :-

- John Lewis (MD - SOG Ltd)
- John Downes (MD – Langtree)
- Mary Murphy (Principal Riverside College)

The Panel will be supported by :-

- Stephen Young (Chief Executive - Halton Council)
- Mark Reaney (Monitoring Officer - Halton Council)

- Ed Dawson (Director - Finance - Halton Council)
  - Such other persons as the Panel may request to assist them.
- The Independent Panel will review the Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances and make recommendations to the Council with regard to the matters to be included in the Scheme.

#### **4.0 PROCESS**

4.1 It is envisaged that most of the work will be done off line.

The Council will provide advice and support as required, and as requested by the Panel.

The Council will also provide background information to help the Panel consider all they need to complete the task and make their recommendation to Council.

The following arrangements would be suggested to the Panel :-

- A Panel meeting with information circulated in advance.
- Panel will consider, and prepare draft recommendations which will be shared with all members
- An opportunity will be provided for all Councillors to comment.
- A Panel meeting if necessary (in person or online) to discuss the Panel's final recommendations.
- Panel sign off Final Report offline and public notice of recommendations is placed.
- Panel Report to Council for consideration and approval.
- Complete the advertising and legal processes.

The Council will do all the administration and drafting. However, the content and final recommendations will be for the Panel to determine and approve.

The process will be completed in March 2025 when the Panel report is submitted to Full Council.

#### **5.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

5.1 To assist the Panel and as background before the first meeting of the Panel they will be provided with the following:

- Report to Council from the Independent Panel in 2022.

- Minute of Council considering the report/recommendations of the Independent Panel in 2022.
- Current Members Allowance Scheme.
- The amounts paid to members under the Current Members Allowance Scheme for 2024/25.
- Comparative data on Members Allowance Schemes for neighbouring local authorities.

The process set out above seeks to provide an opportunity for all Councillors to share any views they may have in respect of the review of Members Allowances, with the Panel members.

## **6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The Council is required by law to have a Members Allowances Scheme, which must be reviewed at least every three years, and the Process must involve consideration and recommendation by an Independent Review Panel.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, although there may be later in the process

## **8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 8.1 No background papers within the meaning of the Act have been used in the preparation of this report. The documents to be provided to the Panel are set out above.