

Proposal form for items for consideration by Overview Committee



Submitted by: Cllr Paul Millar

Date submitted: 30/09/2021

Item for Consideration: Review of Members Allowances

Expected outcome (i.e. new policy, new action, new partnership, improve the performance of other public bodies or of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas):

Recommendation to Cabinet onto whether an Independent Remuneration Panel ought to be called.

Priority for matter to be considered (please tick):

High (up to 3 months)	X
Medium (3 to 6 months)	
Low (over 9 months)	

Basis on which priority has been set:

The suggested item should be included in future programme(s) because: (please tick as appropriate)

a) It is a district level function over which the district has some control	X
b) It is a new policy area or service area of activity to be developed and introduced	
c) It is a policy area which has been required for some time and is due for development	X
d) It is a major proposal for change	X
e) It is an issue raised via complaints received	
f) It is an area of public concern	
g) It would be of benefit to residents of the district	X

Which of the Council's objectives does the issue address?:

Outstanding Council and Council Services

Is there a deadline for the Council to make a decision? (If so, when and why?): Any review would need to be started soon to happen before the next round of elections.

Members are requested to provide information on the following:-

What do you wish to achieve from the review?:

A review of Members' Allowances

Are the desired outcomes likely to be achievable?:

Yes

Will it change/increase efficiency and cost effectiveness?:

While it would lead to an annual cost increase, arguably it would actually be cost-effective in leading to wiser decision-making by, and a better calibre and age diversity of, Councillors, able to better balance work with their public role.

Additional information – an explanatory sentence or paragraph to be provided below to support each box which has been ticked:

It is a district level function over which the district has some control

East Devon District Councillors are paid from East Devon District Council's budget.

It is a policy area which has been required for some time and is due for development

East Devon District Council's allowances are among the lowest in Devon. The vast majority of Councils regularly review their allowance scheme. There are regular increases in the allowances of County Councillors and Exeter City Councillors for example. Ours has been frozen for ten years. In addition, the new administration has created a number of new roles, and important Committees, since the new pandemic - work which is unfairly unremunerated, such as Assistant Portfolio Holders (who are remunerated at every Council they exist at other than EDDC), and the LED Monitoring Forum which meets regularly and is performing an extremely important role. The pandemic has transformed the work in some areas.

It is a major proposal for change

Depending on the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel, it could if accepted lead to an ongoing increased financial cost to the Council. It could also increase the number, diversity and calibre of candidates who run in elections, which would lead to a reduction in costs over time. Three Councillors were elected unopposed last time.

It would benefit the residents of the District

Councillors who are more reflective in age and occupation within their community - who are better able to balance work and Council life - will be able to be more active in, and more healthily able to make, wiser decisions for the residents of the District. Currently many of the younger Councillors on low pay struggle to balance things. Members of the public who know how hard the younger Councillors work would, from conversations I've had, support a modest rise. Ultimately, whatever an Independent Remuneration Panel decides, Council has the choice to set the level beneath what has been recommended.

Please can you return the completed form to Democratic Services via email to democraticservices@eastdevon.gov.uk.

MONITORING OFFICER COMMENTS

No comment required.

Date: 4th October 2021.