

# **Forest Heath District Council**

## **JOINT INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL PROCEDURE RULES**

Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council ("the Councils") have established a Joint District / Borough Independent Remuneration Panel to make recommendations on remuneration levels for District and Borough Councillors.

### **1.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1.1 The Panel shall be in place for a term of office for 4 years, commencing 1 June 2016, expiring on 31 May 2020. The Panel shall produce a report by the 30 November each year, making recommendations to each of the District and Borough Councils as to:
- a) the amount of the basic allowance which should be payable to its Elected and Co-opted Members;
  - b) the responsibilities, roles or duties where special responsibility allowance should be payable and the amount of such allowances;
  - c) the amount of any travelling and subsistence allowance which should be payable to its Elected and Co-opted Members;
  - d) whether child care and dependants' carers' allowance should be payable and the amount of such allowance;
  - e) Annual adjustment / increase of allowances;
  - f) such other functions as may be allocated to the Panels by Statute, from time to time.
- 1.2 The Panel's Reports shall be submitted to the Councils by way of the Chairman of the Panel.

### **2.0 PANEL MEMBERSHIP AND APPOINTMENT**

- 2.1 The Membership of the Joint Independent Remuneration Panel shall consist of up to 6 Members appointed by the Joint Independent Remuneration Selection Panel.
- 2.3 The following persons cannot be appointed to the Panel, namely a person:
- a) who is a Member or Co-opted Member of either of the Councils; or
  - b) a person who is disqualified from being or becoming an elected Member of either of the Councils.

- 2.4 Appointment to the Panel shall be for a period of not more than 4 years.
- 2.5 A Member of the Panel may be reappointed following the end of their term of appointed provided that the Councils carry out a recruitment process involving public advertisement.
- 2.6 The Members of the Panel shall receive the following allowances to be reviewed every 4 years:

Panel Members: £100.00 per Meeting attended.

- 2.7 Wherever possible the Panel Members shall be treated as separate and individual consultants who are responsible for their own tax, National Insurance etc.
- 2.8 A person specification shall be drawn up and agreed by the Joint Independent Remuneration Selection Panel, to ensure that the candidates who are appointed:
- a) are able to demonstrate a high degree of personal integrity;
  - b) are not Members of any Local Authority and are not disqualified from being or becoming a Member of a Local Authority;
  - c) have, if possible, the appropriate level of skill, knowledge and understanding of setting remunerations;
  - d) have the necessary time and commitment for the role;
  - e) will disclose the extent of their connections to any political party or other group and whether these are such as to risk the effective discharge of the Panel's functions were the candidate to be appointed.
- 2.9 Terms of appointment shall include a provision that the Council will have the right to remove particular Members from the Panel before the 4 year term expires in special circumstances such as:
- a) Becoming disqualified for any of the following reasons:
    - An elected Councillor of any Local Authority;
    - Employed by Forest Heath District Council or St Edmundsbury Borough Council;
    - A senior employee (in a politically restricted post) of another local authority;
    - The subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order;
    - Subject to a conviction in the last 5 years of an offence with a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of not less than 3 months without the option of a fine; and

- In debt to or in dispute with Forest Heath District Council or St Edmundsbury Borough Council.
- b) Breach of confidentiality.
- c) Persistent non-attendance; and
- d) Any other act or behaviour which may bring the Panel or the Councils into disrepute.

### **3.0 PANEL OPERATING RULES**

3.1 The Panel's terms of office shall commence on 1 June 2016;

3.2 The Panel shall:

- a) appoint its own Chairman at the first Meeting and, thereafter, at the first Meeting in each Municipal year;
- b) require a quorum of 3 at all Meetings;
- c) meet a minimum of once in each Municipal year, with such additional Meetings as necessary to fully discharge the functions of the Panel; and
- d) otherwise devise its own rules for the conduct of Meetings providing that such rules are consistent with legislative requirements and good governance practice.

### **4.0 DELEGATED FUNCTIONS**

4.1 The Panel shall have the following delegated functions:

- a) To research Members' Allowances schemes in other relevant Authorities;
- b) To gather evidence from interested persons and relevant organisations
- c) To conduct interviews with relevant persons; and
- d) To produce the Annual Report to the Councils, in line with the Terms of Reference of the Panel, and the Chairman of the Panel to present recommendations at both Council meetings.

4.2 Note:

- a) A copy of the relevant Report shall be provided to the relevant Council;

- b) Once having received the Report, the Council shall, as soon as reasonably practicable, ensure that copies of that Report are available for inspection by members of the public at the principal office of the Authority, at all reasonable hours; and
- c) Once having received the Report, the Council shall publish in one or more newspapers circulating in its area, a notice which:
  - i) states that it has received recommendations from an Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of its scheme;
  - ii) describes the main features of the Panel's recommendations;
  - iii) specifies the recommended amounts of each allowance mentioned in the Report in respect of that Authority;
  - iv) states that copies of the Panel's Report are available at both Councils offices for inspection by members of the public at such times as may be specified by the Councils in the notice; and
  - v) specifies the addresses of both Councils offices at which such copies are made available.
- d) The relevant Councils shall supply a copy of any Report made by the Panel, where possible electronically, to any person who requests a copy. Where a hard copy is provided, both Councils may charge such reasonable copying and postage fees, as may be determined from time to time.