



**REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL  
TO THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2013**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, Local Authorities must establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. The purpose of the Panel is to make recommendations to the Local Authority about the allowances to be paid to Members.
- 1.2 The Regulations require that Independent Remuneration Panels should have at least three members. Members of Panels cannot be Members of any Local Authority in respect of which the Panel makes recommendations and must be independent of the Council.
- 1.3 Bury MBC has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel which currently consists of the following members:-

Colin Smith OBE (Chair) Retired Local Authority Chief Executive.

Ronald Schwarz : Resident of Bury and retired Head Teacher.

Arnold Wilcox-Wood : Rock Triangle Centre Director.

Geraldine Greene : Resident of Bury and Voluntary Sector Worker

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Members of the Panel were asked to undertake a review of the Bury MBC Members' Allowance Scheme and in particular to consider the following issues:

1. Whether or not there should be a Special Responsibility Allowance in respect of Deputy Cabinet Member positions.
  2. Whether or not there should be a Special Responsibility Allowance in respect of the Independent Person appointed by the Standards Committee.
- 2.2 In order to arrive at a determination on these issues the Panel considered the following information:

The current Members' Allowances Scheme for 2013/14.

The actual payments made with regard to Special Responsibility Allowances following the decision of Council taken on 14 September 2011 to impose a 10% reduction.

The Role Specification of the post of Deputy Cabinet Member and payments made by other local authorities in respect of this type of position.

The effects of the Localism Act 2011 on the Standards Regime and the role and duties of the position of Standards Independent Person.

The role of the Standards Independent Person which includes:

- The consideration of complaints against councillors in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer;
- The Independent Person, must be consulted prior to a decision being made on a complaint against a Member that has been investigated. The Council must also consult with that person when deciding whether to accept or reject a new complaint when it is received. The Independent Person will also be available for consultation by the Member who is the subject of the complaint.

### **3. POST OF DEPUTY CABINET MEMBER**

- 3.1 The Panel concluded that the position of Deputy Cabinet Member should qualify for payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance on the basis that the duties set out in the Role Specification should be the subject of challenging performance through the management review process.
- 3.2 The Panel further concluded that the Special Responsibility Allowance should be set at £1,200 per annum. This represents approximately 12% of the Cabinet Member SRA. Whilst the Panel accepted that this was lower than the examples before it, (for example Oldham's rate equated to 16%), it considered it to be reasonable when set against the Role Specification and when

considering that very few neighbouring authorities had a similar position, making comparison difficult. The Panel asked that the impact of the new arrangements be reviewed when the new system has had time to allow the benefits to be quantified.

#### **4. POST OF STANDARDS INDEPENDENT MEMBER**

- 4.1 The Panel concluded that the position of Standards Independent Person should attract a Special Responsibility Allowance in recognition of the duties placed upon this post by the Localism Act.
- 4.2 Given the nature of the Standards Process, and the fact that there can be significant periods of time where there are no complaints to deal with, the Panel concluded that the Allowance should consist of a base figure plus an hourly rate.
- 4.3 The Panel concluded that the position of Standards Independent Person should attract a Special Responsibility Allowance of £350 per annum plus £30 per hour for each Hearing Panel attended.

#### **5. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme be amended by the addition of Special Responsibility Allowances as follows:
  - £1200 per annum for Deputy Cabinet Members;
  - £350 per annum plus £30 per hour for each Hearing Panel attended for Standards Independent Persons.

**Colin Smith**  
**Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel.**