

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

14 August 2003

2:30pm

PRESENT

Mr Graham Sawell, Managing Director of Gravesham Chamber of Commerce
Mr Malcolm Bell, Principal of North West Kent College
Mr Malcolm Cooper, Industrial Chaplain

In Attendance:

Mrs Shirley Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services
Mr Phillip Wilson, Accounting Manager

1. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME

The Panel noted that the scheme proposed by them in January 2003 had been adopted by the council under the new Regulations which came into force on 1 May 2003. From that time, the council had also implemented the recommendation of the Panel that the Leader's special responsibility allowance be superannuable.

2. TRAVEL AND SUBSISTENCE

Under the new Regulations the national scheme for travel and subsistence for elected members had been revoked and local authorities were empowered to adopt their own local scheme. The Panel considered the previous scheme alongside that for council officers and agreed that a similar scheme should be proposed for members of the council. The Panel emphasised that the scheme should cover the reimbursement of expenses incurred by members carrying out their duties and they would therefore normally expect receipts to be provided to cover any claim. The Panel also suggested that the travel and subsistence expenses be applied to any co-optees the council may appoint.

The Panel did not feel it appropriate to automatically increase the level of payments in line with an index and were happy to re-consider the levels annually or on the request of the council.

A copy of the agreed scheme is attached to these minutes.

NEXT MEETING

The Panel agreed to meet again early in the year 2004 on a date to be arranged by the Head of Democratic Services.