

## Independent Remuneration Panel

8 April 2004

2pm

### Present

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

### In Attendance:

Mr S Whatmough, Head of Democratic Services  
Mr P Wilson, Accounting Manager

### 1. Members' Allowances Scheme

Panel members received a copy of the current scheme of allowances which had been approved by the Council on 4 March 2003 and re-adopted under the new regulations on 24 June 2003, following the recommendations made by the Panel on 22 January 2003. The Panel also received details of allowances paid by other authorities in the South-East in a schedule compiled by South East Employers.

The Panel did not think there were any reasons to make fundamental changes to the basic scheme for members' allowances but considered that some provision should be made for inflation for allowances in 2004/05. Mr Wilson provided information compiled by the Office of National Statistics which covered indicators on prices and inflation and the labour market. The Panel was also advised that the Local Government Pay Award for the current year had not yet been agreed. The Council have made contingency provision in its budget for an award of the order of 3.5 per cent.

After some discussion the Panel proposed that members' allowances be increased to the following:-

Basic members and special responsibility allowances (other than Vice-Chairs), increase to	£2,720
Vice-Chair's allowance, increase to	£1,370
Leader's Allowance, increase to	£29,960

This was a 3.5 per cent increase at all levels.

The Panel did not propose any increase to the child care and dependent carer's allowance or to the travel and subsistence allowances agreed in October 2003.