

## Report of the Chief Executive

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) considered at Council on 5 March 2015 made recommendations about the increase of Members' special responsibility allowances and basic allowance. The panel, in addition, recommended a separate review of the allowances paid to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor because this fell outside its remit.
- 1.2. In accordance with the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations, the substantive allowances for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have continued to rise in line with the officers' pay increases only, over the last three years. The allowance for 2017/18 is £6,573.52 for the Mayor and £2,089.00 for the Deputy Mayor.
- 1.3. This report asks Council to consider increasing the allowance paid to the Mayor (and Deputy Mayor) for the 2018/19 civic year and beyond.

### 2. Recommendation

It is **RECOMMENDED** that

- a) The allowance paid to the Mayor to be raised to £8,778.98 for the civic year 2018/19
- b) The allowance paid to the Deputy Mayor to be raised to £2,790.00 for the civic year 2018/19

### 3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. The Mayor has precedence in the Borough, but not so as to affect Her Majesty's Royal Prerogative – effectively and historically, this means the Mayor is the "first citizen" of the Borough.
- 3.2. This civic role of office is perhaps the more important element of the Mayor's duties during the term of office in representing the Borough in its widest sense, both within Rushcliffe and outside when attending functions in other areas.

- 3.3. The Mayor also presides over meetings of the Council. If the Mayor is not present, then the Deputy Mayor will preside at the meeting. The 1972 Act states that the person presiding at a meeting of the Council, i.e. the Mayor, will have a second or casting vote in the event of an equality of votes on any question coming before the meeting.
- 3.4. The Mayor is a respected office and it is a long held belief that this office should be seen to be "above politics", as far as possible. It is the Mayor's duty to ensure that Council meetings are conducted in a proper manner and in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Council's Standing Orders.
- 3.5. The Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's allowances have not been reviewed since the 2015 recommendation. Due to the considerable personal expense and time dedicated to undertaking the civic duties of the role, it is recommended that an increase in the allowance should be made to ensure that it remains attainable and accessible for those who aspire to be the Civic Leader of the Council. An increase in the allowance is recommended at this stage to address this oversight.

#### **4. Supporting Evidence**

- 4.1. In March 2015, the Council considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel chaired by Professor Steve Leach of De Montfort University. The terms of reference for the Panel included a review of the "Borough Council's Members' Allowance scheme taking into account the roles and responsibilities of Members and having particular regard to the review of ward boundaries and potential changes to decision-making and scrutiny structure, and external representative roles". The recommendations made by the Panel can be summarised as follows:
  - An increase in the basic allowance to £5,188
  - Modifications to the special responsibility allowances (SRA)
  - Discontinuation of the SRA for the Chairman of the Council, but the allowances paid to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor reviewed to ensure that all legitimate expenses of these roles are met
  - The notional allocation of £600 in the basic allowance for use for IT and communication purposes should be discontinued, but not subtracted from the basic allowance
  - Allowances to be increased each year in line with the percentage pay award made to officers.
- 4.2. As a result of these recommendations being endorsed at Council in March 2015, the SRAs were amended and all Councillors have received annual increases reflective of the percentage pay award made to officers. This brought the basic allowance to £5,292.24 in 2017/18.
- 4.3. The allowances paid to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have only increased in line with the percentage pay award made to officers bringing the allowances

paid to the Mayor to £6,573.52 and £2,089.00 for the Deputy Mayor for the civic year 2017/18.

- 4.4. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor receive allowances under Sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act 1972 which enables them to meet the expenses of their office. These are detailed as follows in the guide provided to the incoming Mayor each year:
- Clothing for civic events
  - Church service collections
  - Raffle tickets at events
  - Refreshments for players at Charity Events
  - Personal bouquets of flowers
  - Private catering / working lunches
  - Tickets for other local authority Chairman's Charity Events
  - Raffle Prizes for Charitable Fundraising.
- 4.5. It has been commented upon by a number of past Mayors that the level of allowances does not match the actual expenditure incurred and therefore should be increased. In recent years mayors and deputies have attended 190 events in a year.
- 4.6. The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Mayor of Rushcliffe is paid an allowance commensurate with undertaking the civic duties of the role in Rushcliffe to ensure that any members undertaking that role are properly recompensed.
- 4.7. To bring the allowance paid to the Mayor in line with Rushcliffe's other SRAs, to address the recommendation of the 2015 Panel recommendation (ie reviewing the allowance), and to accurately reflect the expenses incurred during their year of office, it is recommended that the allowance paid to the Mayor is increased to £8,778.98. It is also recommended that the allowance of the Deputy Mayor is increased to £2,790.00.

## **5. Risk and Uncertainties**

- 5.1. Failure to properly consider the Panel's report and thereby review the allowances of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor could restrict the Council's ability to ensure the Mayor and Deputy Mayor both receive an allowance which enables them to meet the expenses of their office, is reflective of their community leadership role and represents the level of responsibilities required of the role.

## **6. Implications**

### **6.1. Finance**

- 6.1.1. The proposed allowances amount to £11,568.98 which is £2,906.46 more than the current allowances which will be met from 2018/19

budget. The allowances will also be subject to a further pay inflation increase, dependent upon the employee pay award for 2018/19.

## 6.2. Legal

6.2.1. The allowances payable to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are matters for local determination under Local Government Act 1972. A council may pay such allowance as they think reasonable to meet the expenses of such offices.

6.2.2. Whilst a council has a duty under The Local Authority (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to have regard to the recommendations made to it by the IRP before it makes or amends the scheme of allowances, it is not bound to follow those recommendations.

## 6.3. Corporate Priorities

6.3.1. Consideration of an increase in the allowance paid to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor supports delivery of the Council's priority of 'Maintaining and enhancing our residents' quality of life' by ensuring allowance payments are reflective of the role and responsibility of the Mayor, as first citizen of the Borough, and both Mayor and Deputy Mayor as community leaders within Rushcliffe.

## 6.4. Other Implications

6.4.1. None

<b>For more information contact:</b>	Allen Graham Chief Executive  0115 914 8349 <a href="mailto:agraham@rushcliffe.gov.uk">agraham@rushcliffe.gov.uk</a>
<b>Background papers available for Inspection:</b>	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel – March 2015
<b>List of appendices (if any):</b>	