



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Agenda Item No: 9

Report To: Selection & Constitutional Review Committee

Date: 9th October 2014

Report Title: Extension of Term of Appointment of Member of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Report Author: Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Danny Sheppard - Senior Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer

Portfolio Holder Cllr Clarkson - Leader of the Council

Summary:	To seek agreement to extend the term of appointment of a Member of the Independent Remuneration Panel to 31 st October 2017
-----------------	--

Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: N/A

Recommendations: To recommend to the Full Council that the term of appointment for one of the Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel, namely Mr Christopher Page, be extended to the 31st October 2017.

Policy Overview: The Local Authorities (Member's Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001 require Councils to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel which will broadly have the functions of providing the Local Authority with advice on its Members Allowances Scheme and the amounts to be paid.

Financial Implications: N/A

Contact: danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk – 01233 330349

Extension of Term of Appointment of Member of the Independent Remuneration Panel

Issue to be Decided

1. The term of appointment of one of the members of the Independent Remuneration Panel expires on the 31st October 2014 and authority is therefore being sought to extend the period of appointment for a further three year period.

Background

2. Pursuant to Minute No. 694/5/02 Mr Christopher Page was appointed as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a five year period to October 2007. This was subsequently extended by three years to 2010. In 2010, when the appointments last came up for consideration, it was agreed to stagger the appointments of the three positions for three, four and five years respectively. This was to try and ensure that in the future there were always at least two members of the Panel who had some previous experience. Mr Page was appointed for four years so his appointment is about to expire.
3. Mr Page has indicated that he would be willing to serve a further term, and it is therefore suggested that the existing period of appointment be extended for a further three years to 31st October 2017.

Consideration

4. The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2001 require Councils to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel which will broadly have the functions of providing the Local Authority with advice on its Members Allowances Scheme and the amounts to be paid. The Ashford Panel has also in the past served as the Interview Panel for Independent Members of the Standards Committee. Ashford's Panel is comprised of three local people and made up from representatives from: - The Business Sector (by way of a retired Ashford Chamber of Commerce and Industry representative); The Trade Union Sector (retired Transport and General Workers Union representative); and the Community/Voluntary Sector (previously a retired Head Teacher/Churches Together in Ashford representative). Mr Page serves as the Business Sector representative. He has also chaired the Panel meetings since its inception.
5. It is also worth noting that the appointment of one of the original three members of the Panel (Community/Voluntary Sector) expired last year and the individual indicated they did not wish to be re-appointed, therefore there is currently a vacancy on the Panel which will need to be filled before the Panel meets again after the 2015 Elections.
6. It is Officers' view that they would like to, where possible, re-appoint members to retain knowledge, expertise and experience. This is also in recognition of the positive contribution of the existing Panel members who have undertaken

their tasks with a high degree of professionalism and understanding of the issues they have considered. To go through another additional recruitment and selection process at this time when the Council has the opportunity to retain a member and ensure continuity seems unnecessary. The Panel has met very infrequently (seven times since 2002), so it is considered that extended service would not affect the impartiality of the members.

7. The Council previously agreed that to safeguard the Council and ensure the integrity of the Independent Remuneration Panel's work, that if circumstances arise whereby any Panel member becomes discredited and the Council wishes to removed that person from membership of the Panel, i.e. if for example a Panel member was found guilty of a criminal offence, then the Council may terminate such appointment. This provision may not be invoked to change a Panel member for any political or vexatious ends.

Handling

8. Subject to Council agreeing to extend the term of appointment, the member will be advised accordingly.

Conclusion

9. That it be recommended to the Full Council on the 16th October 2014 that the term of appointment for Mr Christopher Page as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel, be extended to the 31st October 2017.

Portfolio Holder's Views

10. Not applicable as the appointment of members to the Independent Remuneration Panel is a whole Council function.

Contact: Danny Sheppard

Email: danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk