

**PAYMENT OF ALLOWANCES TO MEMBERS OF THE BEDFORDSHIRE  
POLICE AND CRIME PANEL**

**REPORT OF BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S INDEPENDENT  
REMUNERATION PANEL**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Earlier this year the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) considered a request from the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel (PCP) that it consider whether the position of the Chair of the PCP should attract a special Responsibility Allowance and whether an Allowance should be available to any other PCP members.
- 1.2 At the time, the IRP concluded that no allowance should be paid from the Home Office funding available to meet Panel costs.
- 1.3 The IRP has now given further consideration to this matter and this report sets out the Panel's recommendations.

**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That an allowance of £5050 pa be paid to the Chair of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel.**
- 2.2 That an allowance of £500 pa be paid to the Vice Chair of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel.**
- 2.3 That each of the Panel's Lay Members be paid an allowance of £750 pa.**
- 2.4 That in the event that a Lay Member is elected as Chair or Vice Chair of the Bedfordshire Police and Crime Panel, they be paid both the Chair or Vice Chair's allowance (as appropriate) and the Lay Members' Allowance.**
- 2.5 That the allowances set out in recommendations 2.1 to 2.3 above be payable with effect from 1 April 2014.**

**3. Details**

- 3.1 Following its earlier report, the IRP has recently given further consideration to the question of the payment of allowances to members of the Bedfordshire PCP.
- 3.2 In considering this request, the IRP has had regard to the following:

- the role and responsibilities of the Police and Crime Panel
- the number of occasions on which the Police and Crime Panel have:-
  - met both formally and informally
  - met collectively for training/workshop purposes
  - attended external training events/conferences
  - met as part of a Task Group undertaking a discrete item policy review work
- that the Chair of the Panel and the Chief Executive of the Host Authority (Bedford Borough Council) also now hold scheduled monthly meetings with the Police and Crime Commissioner and his Chief Executive).
- the results of a survey undertaken to establish whether and what allowances are currently being paid to Chairs/Members of Police and Crime Panels elsewhere in the country – this identified wide ranging practices across England and Wales including that there are a number of panels in respect of which allowances are payable.
- the current level of Basic Allowances paid by the Panel's three Constituent Authorities, together with the levels of Special Responsibility Allowances they currently pay to their Scrutiny Committee Chairs and to their Co-opted Members.

3.3 IRP Members also had the opportunity to interview the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel (Councillor Fiona Chapman, Central Bedfordshire Council and Councillor Colleen Atkins, Bedford Borough Council respectively) and one of the Panel's Lay Members, Mr Paul Cain. This enabled the Panel to find out in greater detail about

- What their respective roles on the PCP entail and the level of time commitment required
- How the actual workload involved compares to their initial expectations and to other similar roles they may undertake.
- What are the most challenging aspects of their roles.

This has enabled the IRP to gain a much clearer appreciation and understanding of the Panel's role, and the work and time commitment it requires on an ongoing basis. In particular, the IRP now appreciates that whilst there is a collaboration agenda between the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire forces, this does not extend to the operation of the PCPs for those force areas, which are wholly distinct.

- 3.4 It is clear to the Panel that the role of Chair of the PCP extends significantly beyond the responsibility for chairing Panel meetings and that there is significant ongoing contact with Host Authority officers in relation to Panel business and with the Police and Crime Commissioner's office on behalf of the Panel. This constitutes a significant time commitment on the part of the Chair. All three constituent authorities (ie Bedford Borough Council, Central Bedfordshire Council and Luton Borough Council) provide a Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairs of their Overview & Scrutiny Committees and the Panel has concluded that the role of Chair of the PCP should merit the payment of an allowance at a level which is commensurate with the allowance paid by the Host Authority to the Chairs of their OS committees (currently £5050 pa)
- 3.5 The operation of the Panel is underpinned by a variety of protocols. These include a number of requirements for consultation with both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel on specific issues. The IRP was advised that it is standard practice to consult both the Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel between meetings on any issues which arise, thus extending the role of the Vice Chair beyond the customary role of chairing meetings in the Chair's absence into involvement with the wider management of Panel business. This also increases the time commitment for the Vice Chair. The IRP considers that this wider role should be acknowledged with the payment of a modest allowance of £500 p.a.
- 3.6 The Panel's membership includes two lay members appointed following an open recruitment process and whose legal status is that of co-opted member of the host authority (Bedford Borough Council). At the time of their recruitment, and based on guidance that was then available, it was not anticipated that the PCP would be as active as has turned out to be the case. Consequently, the amount of time which the Panel's lay members are now finding that they need to devote to Panel business is significantly greater than was considered to be required at the time of their appointment. The Councillor members of the Panel, are all entitled to receive from their own Authorities a Basic Allowance which is intended to recognise calls on their time such as preparation time for meetings, attendance at briefings and participation in training and development sessions. Other co-opted members of all three of the Panel's constituent authorities receive a modest allowance which recognises the calls on their time which carrying out those roles entails. Given the activity level of the PCP since its establishment, the IRP considers that the principle of paying an allowance should be extended to the Panel's lay members and that they should receive an allowance of £750pa. The Panel further considers that in the event that a lay member of the Panel is elected Chair or Vice Chair, this allowance should continue to be payable in addition to the Chair's/Vice Chair's Allowance.

- 3.7 The Home Office provides grant funding to support the operation of the Panel. This is paid to Bedford Borough Council as the host authority. The IRP has been advised that the payment of these allowances (the total of which in a full year is £7050) can be met from that grant and they will not, therefore, fall as an additional cost to the PCP's constituent authorities. The IRP recommends that these allowances should be paid with effect from 1 April 2014.