



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL (IRP)

Promoting Local Democracy

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

Thank you for your interest in joining the Independent Remuneration Panel looking at the allowances that Councillors should be able to claim. This pack contains some information about the Panel and the important role that local people can play in trying to make sure that local democracy attracts talented and committed people to stand for election as Councillors. There is also an application form for you to complete if you would like to be considered for appointment. The Council hopes to make the appointments by early September 2016.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY: **Monday 22 August 2016**

The Role

The Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) is responsible for advising the Council on the allowances that Councillors (also known as Members, as they are Members of the Council) should be entitled to claim for the various roles that they perform.

As a member of the IRP you will be expected to quickly understand the Regulations that have to be followed by Panels and the work that Councillors do. The Council will provide you with an information pack to assist you in undertaking your role, including copies of the relevant Regulations and guidance, and other useful background information such as our current Members' Allowances Scheme; information on the roles of Councillors; and the Members' Allowances Schemes of comparable Councils. You then will decide how you want to gather other relevant information and whom you need to talk to and what questions you want to ask to get all the information you need to make your recommendations. In the past, this has taken the form of sending a questionnaire to all 39 Councillors to complete, to assist in your assessment of the time commitment/responsibilities of backbench Members and those holding particular posts that receive Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs). The IRP also is likely to want to interview a cross-section of Councillors with differing roles. Meeting rooms will be made available and staff from the Council will provide administrative support and assistance to the Panel. However, the Panel itself will decide on its own working practices. The Panel can meet when it is convenient to the members, and set its own timetable. You will help the Chairman to write the report that the IRP will make to the Council. The report will contain recommendations on the different types of allowances/expenses and is likely to be submitted to the December or January meeting of Corporate Governance and Finance Committee which will make recommendations to full Council in February 2017, in order to enable the proposed levels of allowances to be incorporated into the Budget-setting process for the Council. It is intended that the allowances will be set for a 4 year period with effect from 1 April 2017, with appropriate indexation each year.

The Council will publish the Panel's report before it considers it, so that local people have the chance to see the recommendations and submit any views they may have on your proposals to the Council. The Council then will consider the recommendations that the IRP makes and take a final decision on the levels of allowances to be paid.

Each ordinary member of the Panel will receive a taxable allowance of £550 on the delivery of its report to the Council. The IRP Chairman will receive a slightly higher taxable allowance of £650 to reflect the additional responsibilities and duties.

The People

The Council is looking for between three and five people to serve on the IRP (a minimum of 3 members are required on the Panel by law) who are truly independent of the Council.

The people selected will have a strong belief in local democracy and will want to ensure that people are: -

- not discouraged from standing for election to the Council by financial considerations; and
- not seeking office for the financial rewards rather than to serve the local community.

The aim is to give local people a choice of talented and committed people to serve as Councillors at elections to the Council.

To qualify as a member of the Panel, you must not be a Councillor or Co-Opted Member of the Council. You also should not be a close friend or relation of any District Councillor. You must not be disqualified from being a Councillor. This means that you must not be employed by the Council, must not be officially bankrupt or have been sentenced within the last 5 years to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of three months or more without the option of a fine. You must not have been disqualified from being a Councillor by a court.

We are looking for people who have no contractual relationship with the Council beyond those of any other citizen, and who are not in regular social or professional contact with Councillors. Neither should you be owed money by, or owe money to, the Council. Not only must you be independent of the Council, but also you must enhance public confidence in the Panel and its work. The question you should ask yourself is whether a member of the public who was aware of any contact you have with the Council or Councillors would think that this was so significant that it was likely to prejudice your judgement. If you think that a member of the public would reasonably question your independence, you should not apply. Please ask if you have any doubts about your qualification to be a member of the Panel.

You will be someone that the public will trust to do a good job. For example, you may have a background of public service with charities or through other voluntary or community work. You may have a background in local business and an understanding of the local economy. You could be an academic with an interest in local democracy or the public service. You could be a local person who wants to help to make sure that our local democracy flourishes. If you think that you are right for the job then please submit an application, whatever your background.

Members of the IRP need to be willing and able to give their time to undertake their role and to prepare for and attend meetings of the Panel. It will be for the Panel itself to decide when, where and how often it needs to meet. For example, meetings in the late afternoon or early evening at the Council offices may be needed for gathering evidence from existing Councillors about their roles and responsibilities. The Panel also could decide to share out the workload between its members. The first meeting of the IRP is likely to be in mid/late September. In the past, around 8 meetings of the Panel have been held to gather information and to prepare the report containing its recommendations. The facilities of the Council's offices and its staff will be made available to support the Panel.

The Selection Process

The Democratic Services Manager will consider the applications. Interviews may be held but these will be kept as informal as possible. The Council will appoint people who they think will best meet the requirements of the role described in this note. They also will try to avoid all of the people appointed having the same background or experience or coming from the same part of the district. The appointment process will be as open as possible. The names of the successful candidates will be available to the public.

Background Information

If you have any questions or if you would like any further information about the role and duties please contact:

Tracy Couper, Democratic Services Manager
Telephone: (01353) 616278
E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk



**EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

Application for Appointment

Part 1 – About you

Surname: Forename(s): Previous Names <i>if applicable</i>	Address: Post Code: Tel: (day) Tel: (evenings) Tel: (mobile) E-mail address:
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Part 2 – Your occupation

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Part 3 – Your educational / professional qualifications (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

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Part 4 – Public/voluntary/Community service

Please tell us whether you have/do belong to any national, regional or local groups or organisations involved in public/charitable/voluntary service, any offices you hold in these organisations, or any other community work you do (continue on separate sheet if necessary).

Part 5 – your experience

Please tell us of any relevant knowledge/skills/experience that would help you as a member of the Panel. This could be something similar to the role that the Panel will perform or it could be other experience of gathering and interpreting information, applying regulations, interview skills, writing or presenting reports. This could be in your working life or outside of work (continue on separate sheet if necessary).

Part 6 – About your independence from the Council

Please answer all questions by placing a tick in the appropriate box:

	Yes	No
Are you a Councillor or Co-opted Member of East Cambridgeshire District Council?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you employed by, or do you hold office under, the Council?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a close friend or relation of any East Cambridgeshire District Councillor?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you in regular social or professional contact with any East Cambridgeshire District Councillors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you officially bankrupt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 6 continued

Have you been sentenced within the last 5 years to a term of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) of three months or more without the option of a fine?

Yes**No**☐☐

Have you been disqualified from being a Councillor by a court?

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Have you any contractual relationship with the Council beyond that of any other citizen?

☐☐

Are you owed money by, or do you owe money to, the Council?

☐☐

Are you satisfied that a member of the public who was aware of any contact you have with the Council or councillors would have confidence in your independence?

☐☐**Part 7 – Your declaration**

I certify that the to the best of my knowledge and belief the above details are correct

Signed

Date

Please return the completed form marked 'personal' to:

Tracy Couper
Democratic Services Manager
East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange, Nutholt Lane,
Ely, Cambs CB7 4EE

E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is: Monday 22 August 2016