

**HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE PANEL**

Thank you for your interest in joining the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) looking at the allowances that Councillors should be able to claim at Huntingdonshire District Council. This information pack contains some information detailing the arrangements for determining Members' allowances and what might be expected of you should you become an IRP member. 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 in Spring 2022.

APPLICATIONS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED BY: Noon on Tuesday 31 May 2022.

About the Council

Huntingdonshire is the largest district in Cambridgeshire, with a population of 169,500 and land area of over 900 square km (350 square miles). Huntingdonshire District Council falls within the two parliamentary constituencies of Huntingdon and North West Cambridgeshire and is made up of 26 wards which are served by 52 councillors. The Council has 71 Town and Parish Councils within its boundaries. Elections are all out elections and occur every four years. The last election was held in May 2018. Huntingdonshire has a majority Conservative administration.

The Role

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

Under Part 4 of The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, the Council must have regard to the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) before it determines a scheme of Members' Allowances.

Huntingdonshire District Council is currently seeking five new members of the IRP, (the statutory minimum is 3). Each review will be made of three panel members drawn from the membership of five.

It is important that the electorate have confidence in the process for determining the payment of allowances to Members. Bringing in independent people to be part of this arrangement helps to build confidence within the community that the Council is operating an independent, open and transparent process when the Council is setting members' allowances.

What is the role of an Independent Person?

All Members receive a Basic Allowance with additional Special Responsibility Allowances paid for certain other duties. The current schedule of Councillors' Allowances is set out on the Council's website:

<https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/media/1370/members-allowances-scheme.pdf>

The IRP's role is to make recommendations to the Council on the level of member allowances to be paid. In order to do this the IRP must assess the 'value' of the respective member roles within the wider and overall Council political structure, taking account of changes it considers appropriate and relevant, without any preconceived result or directed outcome. The IRP also considers benchmarking or specialist data as appropriate.

Government Guidance relating to Members Allowances schemes is available at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/employment-income-manual/eim65960>

The Council is required to publicise the main recommendations of the IRP to ensure transparency and openness.

Following consideration of the Panel's recommendations, the Council determines its Scheme of Member Allowances which then forms part of the Council's Constitution. Any approved scheme is required to be advertised in accordance with the statutory requirements.

Who is eligible?

A person may only be considered for membership of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel if he or she:

- Is not a Councillor or employee of Huntingdonshire District Council;
- Is not disqualified from being a councillor of a local authority;
- Is not a relative or close friend of a councillor or employee of the Council;
- Is over 18 years of age;
- works for an organisation which receives grants from the Council.

How long is the appointment for?

There is no prescribed statutory term, but it is likely that the Council will retain the Panel for several years. However, as a matter of best practice the Council will re-advertise to refresh the Panel from time to time, or as required by any resignations within the IRP.

Do I have to live or work in the District?

Not necessarily, but a connection to the district, or local knowledge of the area will add to the merits of your application.

How will the successful candidate be appointed?

The positions are being advertised via the Council's website. The Council may only appoint someone who makes a formal application. The Elections and Democratic Services Manager will consider the applications. Interviews may be held, but these will be kept as informal as possible if required. The Council will appoint people who they think will best meet the requirements of the role described in this pack.

What sort of person is the Council looking to appoint?

We are looking for persons who can demonstrate independence from the Council, have an analytical mind, good interpersonal skills, an ability to give clear and reasoned advice and an awareness of the political environment in which local government operates.

They should be considered impartial, have a good standing in the community, and supportive of the Council's goals of being accountable, open, principled and committed to equality of opportunities. A full person specification is attached as an Appendix to this pack. The following would be an advantage:-

- Experience of similar work such as committee or other advisory activities.
- Making sound judgements based on the information and analysis available in a fair, independent and objective way.
- A questioning approach.
- Experience of assessing and reporting information in a structured and logical way to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience.
- An understanding of how local government and councillors work.
- A positive commitment to public services.
- Good analytical, interpersonal and communication skills.

New people appointed to the Panel will gain a wide range of experience and skills, including the mechanics and challenges of local government, the range of work and services provided, how councillors and officers work, how councils are funded and how money is spent. Full support is provided.

Is the position paid?

The position is paid at a fixed rate of £250 per review.

How much time does it involve?

The workload of the Panel may vary. However, the time commitment is usually up to two days per full review plus personal time required to consider draft reports and data and to read various e-mail communications. A full review is currently performed every four years to help ensure that allowances and expenses are fit for purpose and reflect current trends.



The next full review is due in 2022, with a partial review having been undertaken in 2021 to consider allowances paid to the Council's appointees to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

How to apply

Should you wish to apply for one of these positions please complete the application form and include a statement to demonstrate how you consider that you meet the relevant criteria and would be suitable for the role.

Please e-mail the completed form to Democratic.Services@huntingdonshire.gov.uk by the deadline of **Noon on Tuesday 31 May 2022.**

APPENDIX - Person Specification

(The knowledge, skills, attributes and experience needed for fully competent performance of the job.)

Job Title: Independent Remuneration Panel Member

Knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A broad knowledge of the workings of local government. b) Good communicator with questioning and listening skills c) Inquisitive and open minded, non- judgemental. d) Understanding and complies with confidentiality requirements
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Tact, diplomacy, patience, good interpersonal skills. b) A person in whose impartiality and integrity the public can have confidence in. c) Ability to make sound judgements based on the information and analysis available in a fair, independent and objective way. d) A positive commitment to public services. e) Able to make a significant contribution to the work of the Panel.
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A demonstrable interest in local issues b) Experience of assessing and reporting information in a structured and logical way to meet the needs and understanding of the intended audience.
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Must be aged over 18 b) Is not a councillor of Huntingdonshire District Council or a parish councillor of a parish within this District. c) Is not a friend or relative of a councillor or employee of the Council. d) Is not disqualified from being a councillor of a local authority. e) Must not work for any organisation which receives grants from the Council.
Equality & Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Considers and shows respect for the opinions, circumstances and feelings of colleagues and members of the public, no matter what their position, background, circumstances, status, appearance and whether they are one of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex or Sexual Orientation).