



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** will be held David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40 1BN on **THURSDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2019 AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING**

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 20 November 2019

This meeting will be filmed for inclusion on the Council's website.

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Councillors

Bill Soane (Chairman)

Malcolm Richards (Vice-Chairman)

Lindsay Ferris

John Halsall

Clive Jones

John Kaiser

Substitutes

Prué Bray

Wayne Smith

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- 9.** **APOLOGIES**
To receive any apologies for absence
- 10.** **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING** **5 - 8**
To confirm the Minutes of the Special Council Executive Committee Meeting held on 30 May 2019.
- 11.** **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**
To receive any declarations of interest
- 12.** **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
To answer any public questions

The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the item included within this agenda.

Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to the item which is on the agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions
- 13.** **MEMBER QUESTION TIME**
To answer any Member questions relating to the item included within this agenda
- 14.** None Specific **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL MEMBERS** **9 - 12**
To consider a report relating to the appointment of an Independent Remuneration Panel.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Special Council Executive Committee appoint:

1) David Harwood and Angela Slade to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of 4 years, commencing on 29 November 2019;

- 2) Diana Anderson, Robert Nancarrow and Ian Newlove to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of 3 years, commencing on 29 November 2019.

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Agenda Item 10.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 MAY 2019 FROM 8.00 PM TO 8.22 PM

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Bill Soane (Chairman), Prue Bray, Lindsay Ferris, John Kaiser and Wayne Smith

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Rachel Bishop-Firth, UllaKarin Clark, Pauline Jorgensen, Stuart Munro, Gregor Murray, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Bill Soane was elected Chairman of the Special Council Executive Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Malcolm Richards was appointed Vice Chairman of the Special Council Executive Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Halsall, Clive Jones and Malcolm Richards.

Councillor Prue Bray substituted for Councillor Jones and Councillor Wayne Smith substituted for Councillor Halsall.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Special Council Executive Committee held on 14 August 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions received.

7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions received.

8. FUTURE HOUSING CONSULTATION

The Committee considered a report from the Executive in relation to a proposed consultation on future housing numbers in Wokingham Borough.

Councillor Bray, whilst confirming that she was in support of the consultation which she felt should be undertaken on an all-party basis, queried what level of response would be seen as successful and what would happen if the expected number of responses were not received? Councillor Smith stated that it was difficult to predict how many responses would be received however he hoped, given the number of people who had recently signed petitions relating to housing in the Borough and from discussions with resident

groups etc that in excess of 15,000 would respond. In addition he hoped that all Members would encourage their residents to respond to the consultation.

Councillor Bray felt the proposed question was not the right one as it was only asking whether people agreed with the housing figure and didn't take account of whether people agreed with the figure because they felt it was too high or too low. She felt that if this finding was presented to the Government they could argue that the Council had not got complete validation from residents as they might have answered it the other way. Councillor Bray therefore proposed that the question be reworded to say "is the current target for the Borough too high, about right or too low" as this would give more clarity to the final outcome. A box asking "why do you think that" would be useful as this might provide additional supporting evidence that could be presented to the Government.

Councillor Ferris agreed with Councillor Bray's comments as although he believed that the sentiment of the question was right he too felt that more work was needed on the wording. He too did not want something presented to the Government that would enable them to argue against the findings. The question had to be really clear and simple in order that the answer coming out was not ambiguous.

Councillor Bray asked that information explaining how the housing targets were derived at, and who they were imposed by, should be included in the consultation preamble. This could also include an explanation of the number of houses the Council was expected to build and the number of houses that had been built so that a comparison could be shown. Councillor Smith acknowledged the point that was being made but highlighted the complicated nature of how the targets were derived at and how difficult it was to explain this which was why a single question was being proposed.

In relation to the cost of the consultation, which was shown as £45k-80k in the report, Councillor Bray queried what the breakdown of this figure was including how much the costs were for: creating the mailshot; distribution; publicity; postage replies and processing the replies as there were different ways of undertaking the consultation which would impact the costs.

Councillor Bray also queried information within the report which she felt was contradictory. In one bullet point it stated "postcards or letter with freepost response provided to be sent directly to all households..." while another bullet point stated that "responses will be submitted through an online survey". Given that it was cheaper to administer and process she felt the consultation should state that the Council would prefer people to take part in the online survey, but acknowledged that there needed to be an option for people who did not have online facilities. Councillor Smith confirmed that the Council would prefer people to respond online but there had been a very strong feeling amongst Members that a pre-paid envelope should be provided in order to maximise the responses.

Councillor Bray put forward the idea of including the consultation on the front of the Borough News so that people could cut out the response form and return them, possibly into boxes placed in the libraries, rather than posting them back which would save postage and the cost of printing the postcards. Taking account of the fact that it was intended to include a unique reference number on the postcard Councillor Bray suggested that there were a number of online tools eg change.org or Survey Monkey that had the facility for unique responses to be made which would allow the same home address to have different responses but not allow the same e-mail address to be used, which she believed would provide sufficient level of control. She also felt that asking residents to type in a unique

reference number when completing the consultation online was adding a layer of complication that might put people off completing the consultation or could lead to errors when inputting the number.

Councillor Smith confirmed that the consultation would be included on the front page of the Borough News however the Council was unsure of how many residents actually read the Borough News and therefore a large number of residents could be missed if that was the only form of communication. He also felt that the implications of not using a unique number needed to be understood. Councillor Smith clarified that the proposal was that the letter sent to residents would include a unique number which they would use if going online and which would already be on the return slip.

Councillor Bray also asked that consideration be given to the GDPR consent wording that would be included on the consultation response form as she wanted to ensure that it would provide the requisite consent for any data arising from the Consultation to be sent to the Government and any other uses the Council might wish to use the information. She also asked that if the intention was to carry out the consultation over the summer that it not be confined to the school holiday period.

In order to make the consultation truly cross-party Councillor Bray proposed an amendment to recommendation 3 as follows:

“authorise the Director of Corporate Services and Director Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council **and the Leaders of the other Groups**, to agree minor amendments, if necessary, prior to consultation.”

The amendment was agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) the future housing consultation, in the form set out in paragraph 3.1, be approved;
- 2) a supplementary estimate of £45,000-£80,000 be authorised to fund the consultation;
- 3) the Director of Corporate Services and Director Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the other Groups, be authorised to agree minor amendments, if necessary, prior to consultation.

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Agenda Item 14.

TITLE	Appointment of Independent Remuneration Panel Members
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Special Council Executive Committee on 28 November 2019
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director Governance

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To ensure transparency, openness and scrutiny of the Members' scheme of allowances and enable Wokingham Borough Council to fulfil its statutory obligation to review the remuneration paid to its elected Members.

RECOMMENDATION

The Special Council Executive Committee is recommended to appoint:

- 1) David Harwood and Angela Slade to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of 4 years, commencing on 29 November 2019;
- 2) Diana Anderson, Robert Nancarrow and Ian Newlove to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a period of 3 years, commencing on 29 November 2019.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Following the submission of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) report to Council on 22 November 2018 the IRP resigned en masse; which has resulted in vacancies on the panel.

This report advises the Special Council Executive Committee that following a recent recruitment process, it is recommended that Diana Anderson, David Harwood, Ian Newlove, Robert Nancarrow and Angela Slade be appointed to the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Background

1. Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, as amended by section 99 of the Local Government Act 2000, makes provision in relation to basic, special responsibility, childcare and dependents' carers' allowances for Members of local authorities. The Secretary of State makes regulations under this section requiring local authorities to make a scheme of allowances for their Members and to establish and maintain a panel to make recommendations to the Council about the scheme.
2. Section 100 of Local Government Act 2000 allows the Secretary of State to make provision in relation to travel and subsistence allowance for Members of local authorities and an allowance for non-Councillors who are members of a Council's committee or sub-committee. This includes the amendment or repeal of provisions of sections 173 to 178 of the Local Government Act 1972.
3. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 have been made under these provisions. The Regulations provide that it is for each local authority to decide its scheme and the amounts to be paid under that scheme.
4. Councils are required to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel which will broadly have the functions of providing the local authority with advice on its scheme and the amounts to be paid as allowances where relevant. Local authorities must have regard to this advice.
5. In November 2018, all of the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel members resigned. The Council was therefore required to appoint a new Independent Remuneration Panel.
6. Following a recruitment process, carried out in accordance with the Constitution, members of the public came forward and following interviews with the Monitoring Officer and the Lead Specialist Democratic and Electoral Services, it was recommended that the following be appointed to serve on the panel:

Diana Anderson is married and has lived in Crowthorne (Wokingham Without) for 37 years and has strong connections with Wokingham. Both her children now live there; her daughter attended The Holt School and her granddaughter has just started Year 1 at Walter Infant School. Before retiring Diana was Campus Administrator for 25 years at Imperial College's postgraduate campus at Silwood Park, Ascot, looking after both staff and students. She has been Clerk to the Local Advisors (Governors) at St Crispin's School for nearly six years and for the last 15 years has been an independent member - and now Chair - of Wokingham's School Admission Appeals Panels. More recently she is a member - and Chair - of Wokingham's Independent Review Panels for School Exclusions.

David Harwood has been living in the Wokingham Borough for fifteen years having moved to Twyford in 2004. He is married with a teenage daughter. He has been working as a company secretary for the past 11 years and previously worked in financial control in the retail and financial services sector.

Robert Nancarrow has lived in Remenham beginning in 1991. At that time and until retirement in 2010 he was Principal Lecturer in Management Accounting at the University of West London, Ealing. He was for several years treasurer of the local branch of NATFHE, the lecturers union. Educated at King Edward V1 School, Bath and the University of Hertfordshire, he achieved a BA in Business Studies. He trained as an Accountant with Deloitte, London and was a Company Secretarial Professional with Allied Domecq, Bristol. He is qualified as a Chartered Secretary and also a Chartered Management Accountant. He was Branch President of the Berkshire Branch of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants, 1994/5 and 1995/6. He also has a teaching certificate from the University of Roehampton, London. He keeps physically fit by swimming a kilometre almost daily at the Henley Leisure Centre pool.

Ian Newlove has lived in Crowthorne (Wokingham Without) since 1973. He is married with two grown up daughters who also live in Crowthorne. He is an independent Member and Chairs Education Appeals Panels for Wokingham, Reading and Bracknell since around 2001. Prior to retiring he worked for a major food retailer based in Bracknell for 28 years. His role within the company at various times involved heading the Internal Audit function and also other Financial roles including systems and procedures. He was also a member of a Patient Participation Group in Crowthorne.

Angela Slade has lived in Wokingham since 1980. After graduation from the University of St Andrews, her career, mostly in the field of Procurement was with Unilever, 3M and Smithkline Beecham (now Glaxo Smithkline). This final position involved responsibility for a portfolio valued at £13 million. Fortunately made redundant before her 40th Birthday, she was able to set up her own business and has remained self-employed for the last 25 years. Angela has 5 years as a contributing guest on BBC Radio Oxford's live phone-in on the Sunday Gardening programme. She now advises on an ad hoc basis on BBC Radio Berkshire when the resident gardener, Colin Evans, is unavailable.

7. Following a review by Constitution Review Working Group, it was agreed by Council that IRP reviews would move from being carried out annually to biennially. Therefore a review will be carried out in calendar year 2020, with the next review scheduled for calendar year 2022

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Expenses for panellists will be met from the Democratic Services' Budget. There are no additional financial implications related to this report.

Cross-Council Implications

There are no cross-Council implications related to this report.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard has been given to statutory duties required under the Equality Act.

Advertisements were made both in print and digitally, with advice given over the phone and by email to prospective candidates.

List of Background Papers

- 1) Sections 173 to 178 of the Local Government Act 1972
- 2) Section 18 of the Local Government & Housing Act 1989 (as amended by section 99 of the Local Government Act 2000)
- 3) Section 100 of the Local Government Act 2000
- 4) Part 3 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003
- 5) Regulation 26 of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014

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Date 18 November 2019	Version No. 1