



MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL RECRUITMENT PACK

2023

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RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

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INDEPENDENT PANEL MEMBERS REQUIRED

Surrey County Council is looking for two local people to join its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP), which makes recommendations to the Council on the type and level of allowances paid to County Councillors. The ideal candidate will be a respected and active member of the local community and representative of one of the Council's stakeholder groups; for example social care, education, the voluntary sector or the local business community.

You do not necessarily need experience of local government and the roles of elected councillors but should have an interest in public affairs.

The work involves carrying out a review of the existing allowances scheme, taking into account changes to the roles and responsibilities of County Councillors. The Panel will meet (typically one review per year) to gather information and prepare reports with recommendations for consideration by the County Council. This usually involves a time commitment of up to 10 days during the course of any review (an allowance of £1,000 plus travel expenses is provided per review). The appointment will be for a period of three years, with the opportunity for re-appointment for a further three years.

You will not be eligible for appointment if you are employed by, or serving as a councillor for Surrey County Council, or actively involved in a political party. Anyone who would be disqualified from being an elected member of a local authority ([section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972](#)) is also disqualified from being a member of an IRP.

A briefing pack is available giving more details about what's involved. If you are interested in joining the IRP and would like an informal discussion, please contact Elliot Sinclair (elliott.sinclair@surreycc.gov.uk).

APPLICATIONS

Electronic applications in the form of a CV and covering letter should be submitted to Elliot Sinclair (Support Services Manager, Democratic Services) at elliott.sinclair@surreycc.gov.uk.

The closing date for applications is 12 March 2023.

Appointment and induction process:

- Closing date for applications is 2359hrs on 12 March 2023

- Shortlisting will take place in March
- Interviews will be held on Thursday 20 April 2023
- County Council ratification of appointments on Tuesday 23 May 2023
- 1 day Induction training for the whole IRP in June 2023

ABOUT SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Surrey County Council is the fifth largest County Council in the country, serving a population of approximately 1.2 million people. The Council's budget is over £1 billion, and over 7,000 staff are employed to provide services such as schools, roads, social care, fire & rescue and libraries, to name but a few. More local services such as housing, waste collection and environmental health are provided by eleven district and borough councils.

The County Council has 81 elected [Councillors](#) (or 'Members') elected every four years, each of whom represents a [constituency](#) (known as a division) with an average electorate of 10,000 voters. The last elections were held in May 2021, following which the Conservatives retained control of the Council. The number of seats currently held by each party is Conservative 46, Residents'/Independent Association 16, Liberal Democrat 15, Labour 2 and Green 2.

Our County Hall (Woodhatch Place), Surrey's administrative headquarters, has recently relocated from Kingston upon Thames to Woodhatch Place, Reigate. Since the borders of Surrey were altered in 1965, County Hall ceased to be located within the County. This was changed as part of the Council's Moving Closer to Residents programme.

County Councillors are elected to direct the policies and activities of the Council on behalf of the public. The Council has agreed a [constitution](#) which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and achieve local accountability. Some of these processes are required by law, and others are a matter for the Council to determine. Councillors have to agree and follow a [code of conduct](#) to ensure high standards in the way they undertake their duties.

All Councillors meet together as the [Council](#), which is the ultimate decision-making body with responsibility for approving the corporate strategy, budget and other designated statutory and non-statutory strategies. The Council appoints Members to serve on its various [committees](#) and boards, and the [Chair](#) also fulfils a range of civic and ceremonial functions as civic leader.

A [Cabinet](#) of ten Members is collectively responsible for most day-to-day decisions of the Council. This consists of a Leader, Deputy Leader and eight other Members with specific service portfolios, for example [Adults Social Care](#), [Public Health and Domestic Abuse](#). The Cabinet leads on the preparation of the Council's policies and budget. In addition there are currently four [Deputy Cabinet Members](#) who provide additional support to specific Cabinet members.

Councillors who are not on the Cabinet serve on various committees of the Council. Regulatory Committees, where non-executive (non-Cabinet) decisions are taken, include the [Planning & Regulatory Committee](#), which deals with strategic planning applications (for example for waste disposal

facilities) and development control and the [Audit & Governance Committee](#) which considers corporate governance issues.

Scrutiny of decisions is undertaken by Select Committees (for example [Adults and Health Select Committee](#)) that are responsible for policy development and review, scrutiny of services and Cabinet decisions, and performance management.

THE WORK OF THE PANEL

The Independent Remuneration Panel will consist of three members, and will be responsible for advising the County Council on the type and level of [allowances](#). These include the Basic Allowance, which is paid to all Councillors, Special Responsibility Allowances which are paid to recognise additional duties such as serving on the Cabinet or chairing a committee/board, and various other allowances such as childcare and subsistence. The Panel submits a report with recommendations for consideration at a meeting of the Council each year.

[The Local Authorities \(Members' Allowances\) \(England\) Regulations 2003](#) provide for independent remuneration panels to have the following functions:

- to make recommendations to the authority as to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected members
- to make recommendations to the authority about the responsibilities or duties which should lead to the payment of a special responsibility allowance and as to the amount of such an allowance
- to make recommendations to the authority about the duties for which a travelling and subsistence allowance can be paid and as to the amount of this allowance
- to make recommendations as to the amount of co-optees' allowances
- to make recommendations as to whether the authority's allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and, if it does make such a recommendation, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
- to make recommendations on whether any allowance should be backdated to the beginning of a financial year in the event of the scheme being amended
- to make recommendations as to whether annual adjustments of allowance levels may be made by reference to an index, and, if so, for how long such a measure should run

In addition, the County Council might request the IRP to consider other matters related to allowances.

The County Council has a responsibility to ensure that the Panel is clear about its remit and the timetable to which it is working, and provides the Panel with information about the business of the Council, the roles of councillors in the authority, and the way in which the authority operates and discharges its functions. In addition, the Panel may itself consider recent research on the role of councillors, or perhaps seek information about the work of other independent remuneration panels.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Good candidates will be:

- active in their local community, and living or working in Surrey.
- representative of one of the Council's stakeholder groups, for example social care, the voluntary sector, the local business community or education.
- keenly interested in public affairs and able to command respect and confidence.
- willing to learn about local government and the roles of elected councillors.
- independently-minded and able to weigh/sort information and evidence and reach objective conclusions.
- good communicators and able to work well with others.
- numerate and computer-literate.

You will not be eligible for appointment if you are employed by or serving as a councillor for Surrey County Council, or are actively involved in a political party.

Given the nature of this work, candidates anyone who would be disqualified from being an elected member of a local authority ([section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972](#)) is also disqualified from being a member of an IRP. Appointees will be required to sign a declaration to this effect.

REMUNERATION

An allowance of £1,000 is paid for this work, plus travel expenses, with an additional £500 paid to the Chair of the Panel. The Panel will meet between July 2023 and December 2023 to gather information and prepare a report with recommendations for consideration by the County Council. This will involve a time commitment of up to 10 days over the course of the review. Although the

review will take place in 2023, the appointment will be for a period of three years, with the opportunity for re-appointment.

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