

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

**MEMBERS (up to 2 vacancies)**

**APPLICANT Information PACK**

## CONTENTS

Section Page Number

1. About the Council 5
2. About Members’ allowances and the

Independent Remuneration Panel 6

1. Description of the Panel’s Role 7
2. Personal Qualities Required 8
3. Application Process 9

**1. ABOUT THE COUNCIL**

The City Council comprises 61 elected members covering 28 wards. Its current political composition (with one vacancy) is:

Labour 23

Green 21

Liberal Democrats`` 7

Conservative 5

Morecambe Bay Independents 3

Independent 1

Elections to the City Council are held every four years, and the next election will be in May 2027.

The City Council’s democratic arrangements are as follows:

**COUNCIL**

Sets Budget & Policy

Framework & Constitution

**REGULATORY & OTHER COMMITTEES**

* Planning Regulatory
* Licensing
* Standards
* Appeals
* People and OD
* Audit
* Council Business

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

* Holding Cabinet to account
* Scrutinise
* Call-ins
* Policy Initiatives
* Performance monitoring
* Review management of resources
* Task Groups Time limited reviews

**LEADER AND CABINET**

Implement aims and objectives set out in Budget & Policy Framework

For further information about the Council, visit [www.lancaster.gov.uk](http://www.lancaster.gov.uk)

**2. ABOUT MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES AND THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

The Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) Regulations 2003 require each local authority to have a scheme providing for the payment of allowances to Members. The main elements of the scheme are:

* Basic allowance – a flat rate allowance which must be paid to all members. The allowance must be the same for each member. It is intended to recognise the time commitment of all members, including attendance at meetings and undertaking ward work.
* Special responsibility allowance – paid to members who have significant responsibilities, eg Leader, Cabinet members, Committee chairmen
* Dependants’ carers’ allowances – payments to those Members who incur expenditure for the care of children or other dependants whilst undertaking particular duties.
* Travelling and subsistence expenses – the reimbursement of expenses incurred in undertaking particular duties.

The Regulations also require each local authority to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel. Before making or amending an allowances scheme, a local authority must have regard to the recommendations of its independent remuneration panel.

An independent remuneration panel must be established by the local authority, and must consist of at least three members.

The City Council’s Panel currently has three members, and the Council is seeking to appoint up to two more to increase the pool of members to draw a panel of three from.

A member of the Independent Remuneration Panel must not be an elected Member of the authority or of any parish or town council within the district, and must not be disqualified from becoming a Member of the authority, i.e. must be over 18 and not :

* be an employee of Lancaster City Council
* be subject to a bankruptcy restriction order
* have been sentenced to imprisonment for 3 months or more within the last 5 years.

Meetings normally take place over Microsoft teams, generally 2 - 4 times a year at Lancaster Town Hall, although more frequent meetings may be required in the year before an election, some of them in person at Lancaster Town Hall, when a full review of the scheme is undertaken.

Appointment is on a voluntary permanent basis, although may be terminated by either the Council or the Panel member at any time. A small allowance, currently £300 per annum, is paid. Any travelling expenses incurred will be reimbursed.

**3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLE**

# Main Duties and Responsibilities

To work with the Council’s Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections to keep under review the Council’s Members’ Allowances Scheme, receive evidence and make recommendations to the Council on any proposed changes to that Scheme.

The Independent Remuneration Panel’s main functions include the following:

* To make recommendations to the Authority on the amount of basic allowance which should be payable to its elected members
* To make recommendations to the authority about the roles and responsibilities for which a special responsibility allowance should be payable and as to the amount of each such allowance
* To make recommendations as to whether the Authority’s allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of expenses for the care of children and dependants, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined
* To make recommendations on travel and subsistence allowances

Legal advice and administrative support are available from officers of the Council. Officers will provide the Panel with information about the roles of elected members in the authority and the way in which the authority operates and discharges its functions.

The Panel will have regard to this information and in addition may hold discussions with elected members to understand their roles and responsibilities. The Panel may seek to undertake research on the role of councillors and the work of other independent remuneration panels.

A copy of the Members’ Allowances Scheme in effect from May 2024 is online in the Council’s Constitution, starting on page 252. <http://www.lancaster.gov.uk/the-council-and-democracy/about-the-council/lancaster-city-council-constitution>

The Independent Remuneration Panel established by the Lancaster City Council also acts as the Independent Remuneration Panel for all Parish and Town Councils within the District (should that be required).

**4. PERSONAL QUALITIES REQUIRED**

The following criteria will be used when assessing the suitability of applicants for the role:

**Knowledge, Skills and Experience**

**Essential/Desirable**

Ability to:

1. Absorb and analyse information E

2. Question and challenge E

3. Make sound and objective judgments E

4. Work with other Panel members as part of a team E

5. Communicate confidently and effectively E

Understanding of:

1. Local government D

2. The role of councillors D

3. The importance of being seen to be independent of the Council E

4. The values of public service E

5. The concepts of standards, ethics and probity E

6. The importance of confidentiality E

**Personal Circumstances**

1. You must have no formal political party affiliation E

2. You must not be an employee of, or an elected member of the

City Council or a parish or town council within its district, or disqualified

from being such a member E

3. You must not be a close friend or relative of a city councillor E

4. You must not have any interestwhich might conflict with the role

of Panel member E

**5. APPLICATION PROCESS**

The closing date for receipt of applications is **no later than 5.00 p.m. on Friday 25th May 2024**

Please submit your completed application form by email to [dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:dchambers@lancaster.gov.uk) or alternatively, by post to:

**Debbie Chambers**

**Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections**

Lancaster City Council

Town Hall

Dalton Square

## Lancaster LA1 1PJ

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Short listing for these appointments will be based upon an assessment of how applicants demonstrate in their application form that they meet the criteria in the ‘Personal Qualities Required’ document. When completing the additional information section of the form, please show how you meet the criteria.

It is anticipated that informal interviews will be held as soon after the closing date as possible but before the end of June.

Appointments will be made by full Council on the recommendation of the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

**How your personal information will be used:**

Application forms will be held securely for all applicants until the recruitment process is completed. They will then be disposed of securely for any unsuccessful applicants and contact details for the successful applicant(s) will be kept by Democratic Support and used to convene meetings and send out review materials by email or post.

The names of those appointed will be included in a public agenda and minutes, along with a very brief resume of their suitability for the role. No other personal information will be made public.