

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEMBERS ALLOWANCE PANEL

The Independent Panel met on 3rd February, 2006 at Cambourne

Present: Ruth Rogers (Chairman)
John Bridge
Valerie Bright

In attendance, by request: Councillor Mark Howell
Councillor Cicely Murfitt
Councillor John Batchelor

Comments heard from the above and taken into consideration included:-

1 Workload of the Council has increased dramatically e.g. the amount of full Council meetings has tripled, there is a large amount of reading for all Council members, e-mails etc. take up a lot of time.

2 In addition to the above, there is parish work to do.

3 There have been difficulties during the last year with loss of jobs, capping, and no Chairman's reception when networking can be achieved.

4 Pressures have increased. Staff morale is low and amongst non-executive councillors.

5 Political reality makes it difficult to change but a more professional approach is needed.

6 If a member of the Cabinet, it is almost impossible to hold down other full-time work.

7 The voluntary contribution that Councillors make is significant and has to be a personal decision.

8 The Group Leader's job is very time-consuming!

9 Young mums who are back benchers would appreciate an increased allowance!

10 It is difficult to justify increasing allowances, but it is a source of concern.

By early summer, all Councils will have decided on their figures for allowances. This background information could be useful to the panel.

But if you have a bench-mark exercise, you must be able to compare like with like. South Cambs has a unique population growth like no other.

RECOMMENDATION:-

Acknowledging the workload of the Council, our recommendation is a cost of living increase of 2.5% for the basic allowance and for the special allowances to go up by the same amount.

Motor vehicle and subsistence and carer's allowances to stay the same.