

**RECRUITMENT PACK FOR**

**MEMBERS OF THE**

**ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**STATUTORY**

**INDEPENDENT**

**REMUNERATION PANEL**

**September 2022**

Dear Applicant

**Application to serve as a Member of Rother District Council’s Statutory Independent Remuneration Panel**

Thank you for your recent enquiry about becoming a Member of the Independent Remuneration Panel. I am very pleased that you have expressed an interest in the position as we are looking to recruit a new Panel of three independent members.

The appointment process is as follows: -

9 September 2022 - Advertisement of panel member appointments

23 September 2022 - Closing date for applications

28 September 2022 - Selection process and notification to candidates

3 October 2022 - Interviews

5 October 2022 - Confirmation of panel membership

You must return the completed application form at the end of this pack by 4pm on Friday 23 September 2022, either by e-mail to lisa.cooper@rother.gov.uk or by post (at the address shown below):

Lisa Cooper

Democratic Services Manager

Rother District Council

Town Hall

Bexhill-on-Sea

East Sussex TN39 3JX

Your application will then be considered and a shortlist of candidates for interview will be produced. You will be notified if you have been shortlisted and invited for interview. The interviews will take place on **Monday 3 October 2022** at the offices of Rother District Council, Bexhill-on-Sea.

The interview process will not involve any other tests or activities. If you want to know anything more about the process, please contact Lisa Cooper on 01424 787813.

**Making an application**

We want to ensure that every applicant is treated fairly. In making recruitment decisions we will not consider previous applications or our personal knowledge of you (if applicable).

The information that you supply us in your application must include all of the information requested. This is all we will use in deciding whether or not you will be shortlisted for the selection process. It is therefore very important and the following advice is designed to help you complete it as effectively as possible.

The Person Specification for the role outlines the skills, experience and aptitudes we are looking for. Wherever possible, please relate your own skills and experiences back to these requirements, giving specific examples of how you can demonstrate competence in these areas.

Please indicate why you are the right person for this role – remember to demonstrate why you are suitable against each of the points described in the Person Specification. This might be through qualifications or descriptive examples from your work/personal experience, (which clearly illustrates what you did and the effect it had).

We will shortlist for interview based on the information you provide; failure to include any of the requested information is likely to result in you not being shortlisted. Therefore, it is important that you indicate why you cannot meet any of the criteria, e.g. No work history, as I have never worked before.

We will not accept CVs.

**About our Council**

At Rother we are very proud of what we have achieved in recent years. Our Corporate Plan 2020-2027 sets out the Council’s vision to put residents at the heart of all that we do and identifies our priority objectives, some of which have already been achieved, as follows:

* **Climate Emergency** - To establish and deliver a plan to ensure Rother District Council is carbon neutral by 2030.
* **Financial Stability** - To rectify the financial deficit and bring the Council to a secure financial footing by the end of 2025/26.
* **Increase the supply of Affordable Homes throughout the district** - To deliver 400 affordable rent homes by end 2023.
* **Housing List Reduction** - To reduce the Rother Housing list from 1,600 (as at December 2019) to 1,200 by the end of 2023.
* **Housing** -To bring Rother above a 5-year land supply by the end of 2023.
* **Empowered Organisation** -To create an organisational structure that allows for a clearer, more effective resident focused organisation by the end of 2023.
* **A Fairer Society** - To build a fairer society by promoting acceptance and equality in the district, developing an Anti-Poverty Strategy to improve existing support services and identifying new ways of working in collaboration with the voluntary sector to reduce poverty and hardship within the district.
* **Development of Rother’s Economy** - To lift the average indexed wage in the Rother District from the bottom of the national league table by the end of 2023.
* **An Open Council** - To improve access to Council meetings, ensuring increased transparency, meaningful consultation and better visibility by the end of 2023.
* **A Town Council for Bexhill-on-Sea** - To form a Parish (Town) Council for Bexhill with effect from 1 April 2021, with the first elections in May 2021.

**Our Political make-up**

Rother District Council comprises 38 Councillors representing 21 Wards, who are elected to determine the policies and priorities of the Council. The district also has 32 Parish/Town Councils and 1 Parish Meeting.

The current breakdown of Councillors across political parties is currently as follows:

Conservative Group – 15

Association of Independents – 12

Liberal Democrat – 7

Labour – 2

Green – 1

Non-Group Member – 1

Rother District Council is currently controlled by an alliance of the Association of Independents, Liberal Democrat, Green and Labour Members.

The Council has adopted what is called the Leader and Executive model. This means that the Leader of the Council is elected by Full Council for a four-year term. The Leader has responsibility to appoint a Cabinet and it is currently made up of nine Councillors. The Cabinet is responsible for implementing the budget and policy framework approved by the Council and can take all decisions that fall under the budget and policy framework.

Councillors undertake a wide range of roles and receive financial allowances in accordance with a Members’ Allowances Scheme which sets out the payments to be made for each role.

All Members of the Council receive a basic allowance that is intended to recognise the time commitment of Members, including such inevitable calls on their time as meetings with officers and constituents. Some Members are also paid a special responsibility allowance (SRA) to recognise significant additional responsibilities.

SRAs are paid, for example, to Members of the Cabinet and Chairs of Committees.

Expenses are also paid to offset the cost of travelling to meetings.

**The role of the Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require every local authority to establish an Independent Remuneration Panel, made up of at least three independent people, to provide advice on its Members’ Allowances Scheme.

The Council must have regard to the advice of the Independent Remuneration Panel when reviewing or amending its scheme or any allowance under the scheme, but it does not necessarily have to agree with the Panel’s advice.

The Panel will initially meet to undertake its four-yearly review during November / December at the Council’s offices in Bexhill-on-Sea or remotely, or a combination of the two. The Panel is appointed for four years (unless extended) but should only be required to meet again should there be significant changes to the Council’s political management structure or if new Councillor roles are created that have Special Responsibilities that may require an allowance.

A copy of the current Members’ Allowances Scheme is available at Part 6 of the Council’s Constitution at the following link:

[Constitution - Rother District Council](https://rother.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=280)

**What exactly is the Panel’s job?**

The statutory Independent Remuneration Panel’s role is to make recommendations to the Council:

* as to the amount of basic allowance that should be payable to its elected Members;
* about the roles and responsibilities for which a Special Responsibility allowance should be payable and as to the amount of each such allowance;
* as to whether the Council’s allowances scheme should include an allowance in respect of the expenses of arranging for the care of children and dependants and, if;
* such a recommendation is made, the amount of this allowance and the means by which it is determined; and
* on other allowances (i.e. travel and subsistence allowance and allowances for attendance at certain meetings and conferences).

**How many people will be appointed to the Panel?**

The Panel will have three members. All Panel members should be truly independent, qualified to undertake the functions of the Panel and representative of the communities of Rother.

**Main duties and responsibilities of Panel members**

1. To attend regularly and actively participate in meetings of the Panel. If necessary, to attend Council and committee meetings to gain an appreciation of the work of Members of the Council and/or carry out research by watching webcast meetings via the Council’s website at:

<https://rother.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

2. To receive and analyse both written and oral information and benchmarking data in respect of Members’ allowances.

3. To conduct interviews and meetings with Councillors to gather evidence and information, as appropriate.

4. Using evidence gathered, to discuss and assess the roles and responsibilities of Councillors and the level of allowances which they should receive.

5. To collectively contribute to the production of a report, making recommendations to the Council:-

(a) As to the amount of basic allowance;

(b) As to the responsibilities or duties in respect of which the following should be available and the amount of such allowances:-

(i) Special Responsibility allowance;

(ii) travelling and subsistence allowance;

(iii) co-optees’ allowance; and

(iv) dependants’ carers’ allowances.

(c) As to whether, in the event that the scheme is amended at any time so as to affect an allowance payable for the year in which the amendment is made, payment of allowances may be backdated.

(d) As to whether adjustments to the level of allowances may be determined according to an index and, if so, which index and how long that index should apply, subject to a maximum of four years before its application is reviewed.

6. To ensure that a copy of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel is prepared and received by the District Council within the time constraints set.

7. To sit as the Parish Remuneration Panel for the parish councils in the Council’s area as required.

**What qualifications, skills and experience are required to be a member of the Panel?**

As well as being a resident of Rother, or someone with very close links to the area, some of the key skills which are considered important to carry out the work of the Panel are set out below. This includes the ability to:

* read and assess information and identify key points/issues;
* listen to and assess information and identify key points and issues;
* ask questions in order to obtain information and open up discussion;
* analyse information and use it to form opinions and conclusions;
* work as part of a team; and
* communicate effectively with a wide range of people.

It would be helpful (but not essential) if you have an understanding of:

* local government;
* the functions of/and how the Council works;
* the roles of Councillors; and
* the regulations and guidance which apply to Members’ allowances.

The Council will provide training and guidance in order to help you to develop the skills required and the Panel receives comprehensive support and advice from Council Officers. A two hour remote training session has been arranged to take place at 10:00am on Wednesday 2 November 2022 and successful candidates will be expected to attend.

More importantly, Panel members should be able to approach issues with an open mind and ask relevant questions.

**Disqualifications**

**Panel members cannot be:**

* an elected Member of Rother District Council or any of its Parish / Town Councils;
* a person who would be disqualified from being an elected Member of a local authority;
* a co-opted Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council; or
* an employee of Rother District Council.

You will be required to declare that you are not associated with any political party or related to or a personal friend of any elected Member of Rother District Council. Any member of the Panel found guilty of a criminal offence would be removed from their role.

**What support would be provided to members of the Panel?**

The Council will provide training, administrative support and technical advice to the Panel. You will be briefed on the current Members’ allowances scheme and be able to ask for information and research to be provided to assist you in reaching conclusions and making recommendations on the type and level of allowances payable to Councillors in the future.

**How often will the Panel have to meet and when and where will meetings be held?**

It is expected that the Panel will be required to meet on at least three occasions either remotely or at the Council offices in Bexhill-on-Sea, and then if/when required. Sufficient notification will be given of any Panel meetings required.

**Will I be able to claim expenses?**

You will receive an allowance of £30 per hour, with a minimum payment of £90.00 for each meeting you attend (whether in person or on-line), plus travelling expenses paid in line with HM Revenue & Customs ‘Approved Mileage Allowance Payment’ (45p per mile).

**How to find out more**

If you would like more information or an informal discussion about the Independent Remuneration Panel, please contact Lisa Cooper on 01424 787813 or email any queries to lisa.cooper@rother.gov.uk.

**Person Specification**

|  |
| --- |
| **Experience** |
| Working to a high standard of behaviour, demonstrating honesty, probity and the highest level of integrity in conduct.Decision making role in some previous capacity.Knowledge/experience of local government or the public sector.Understanding of the challenges facing Rother District Council and its communities.Serving on a Board or Committee.Knowledge and understanding of Board or public sector remuneration. | EssentialEssentialEssentialDesirableDesirableDesirable |
| **Skills** |
| Ability to analyse and weigh up complex evidence and reach rational evidence based conclusions.Ability to make sound, independent and objective judgments.A good understanding of the concepts of standards, ethics and probity.Ability to work effectively as a member of the Panel, putting forward points of view clearly and persuasively and having tolerance and respect for the views of others.Ability to attend meetings with a commitment to undertaking the background work in preparation for meetings.Ability to work with a non-party political approach.Ability to respect and maintain confidential information. | EssentialEssentialEssentialEssentialEssentialEssentialEssential |
| **Other** |
| Aged 18 or over.Live, work in or have an affinity with the area.Able and willing to devote the necessary time to the role.Must have no personal relationship with Rother District Council (including employees or Members or former staff/Members of the Council) or any other relationship/activity which might represent a conflict of interest.Able to demonstrate political independence.Digitally aware, with good IT skills and the ability to access reports, information and communication electronically. | EssentialEssentialEssentialEssentialEssentialEssential |

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**INDEPENDENT PERSONS TO ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL’S REMUNERATION PANEL**

**APPLICATION FORM**

|  |
| --- |
| **Name:** |
| **Address:****Post Code:** |
| **Telephone Daytime:**  | **Mobile:** |
| **Email:**  | **Date of Birth:**  |
|  |
| **Employment Status\*** (please delete as appropriate) Employed/Self-employed /Retired |
| **If employed or self-employed please give the following details. If retired please give the relevant details at the time of retirement.****Name of Employer/Business:** **Nature of Business:****Position Held:** |
|  |
| Please describe any links which you have or have had with the district or with the community of the district e.g. living or working in the district, through work or business, through voluntary bodies, public bodies etc. |
|  |
| **Are you currently a Member of any other Local Authority? (This includes Parish Councils, Police and Fire Authorities)****Yes/No****If yes please provide the name of the Authority:** |
| **Are you a relative or a close friend of any Member or officer of the Council?**Yes/No(Note: a relative is defined as (a) a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step- son, step-daughter, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or (b) the spouse or parent of any of (a))If yes, please give details: |
| **Please provide details of any organisations (including political parties) you are, or have been a member of during the past five years.** |
|  |
| **Relevant Experience and Qualities**Please explain why you wish to be a member on the Independent Remuneration Panel and give details of any relevant experience you may have for the role.  |
|  |
| **Please supply the name and address of a person whom we may contact for a reference as to your suitability for the role.****Name:** **Address:****Email:** **Tel:** |

**DECLARATION**

I confirm that:

• I have read the background information and understand and accept the commitment needed to be an active member of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

• The information that I have provided on this application form is correct.

• I would fully respect the confidentially of the information provided to me as a member of the Panel.

• I would observe any rules set by the Panel and act in good faith in the interests of the Panel.

Signed …………………………………………………………………

Date ………………………………………………………………...

Please return this form to:

Lisa Cooper

Democratic Services Manager

Rother District Council

Town Hall

Bexhill-on-Sea

East Sussex TN39 3JX

Or via e-mail to: lisa.cooper@rother.gov.uk