

Meeting: COUNCIL

Agenda Item:

17

Portfolio Area: Members' Services

Date: 23 FEBRUARY 2011

OFFICER REPORT – MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2011-2012

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1. PURPOSE

To recommend to Council a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2011-2012.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That a Members' Allowances Scheme be agreed for 2011-2012 as set out in Appendix A, attached.

3. BACKGROUND

Local authorities are required to make a Members' Allowances Scheme before the beginning of each financial year whether or not the existing scheme is to be altered.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTIONS AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1 In October 2007 an Independent Panel made recommendations to the Council on a revised Members' Allowances Scheme. The recommended Scheme was adopted on 3 October 2007 and subsequently approved for each year since. The Scheme based on the recommendations of the Panel included provision for index linked increases to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in line with the NJC national salary awards. As this provision may only continue for four years from the date of the original Scheme being adopted this indexation can no longer apply. However, it should be noted that in 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 Members did not accept any percentage increase.
- 4.2 Since 2009 a guide to the Members' Allowances Scheme and other support and assistance provided to Members has been available and appears on the Council website. The Council has also introduced an electronic recording system for Members' expenses and from 2010/2011 rather than only publishing payments made under the Allowances scheme just at the end of the financial year, they will now be published at the end of each quarter showing the total payments

made at the end of June, September and December. Individual Members are able to request their own records at any time.

- 4.3 Given the introduction in May 2011 of the new Executive Arrangements in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the length of time since the last Independent Panel report the Chief Executive considers it appropriate for a new Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances to be called in 2011. Any resulting report would be submitted to Council

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial Implications

The budget provision for the Members Allowances Scheme in 2010/2011, inclusive of travel and subsistence is £469,720. A draft budget provision of £449,120 has been included for 2011/2012.

5.2 Legal Implications

The provisions of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 have directed the convening of the Independent Panel. The appended draft Scheme for 2011-2012 is in accord with that recommended by the Panel.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Report of Independent Panel - August 2007
- Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

APPENDICES

- Appendix A - Recommended Scheme for 2010-2011