
Meeting: Council
Date: 24 February 2011
Subject: Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12
Report of: Cllr Maurice Jones, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and People
Summary: The report proposes the renewal of the current scheme of allowances for the financial year 2011/12.

Contact Officer: John Atkinson, Head of Legal & Democratic Services
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The provision of a fair scheme of allowances for Members is essential to the democratic process by ensuring an equal opportunity to all to become a councillor.

Financial:

There is sufficient base budget to cover the existing scheme. Any changes to the existing scheme could result in a base budget pressure. Following the elections in May 2011 the number of Members on the Council will reduce from 66 to 59 with a consequent reduction in the overall cost of allowances.

Legal:

Under the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) Regulations 2003 the Council is required to adopt a scheme of allowances each year. Before the Council makes or amends a scheme, it is required to have regard to the recommendations made by an independent remuneration panel.

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

The Scheme of Members' Allowances includes allowances for Dependents' Carers' to provide equality for any Member who has caring responsibilities.

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. **that the Council resolves to make no changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme for the year 2011/12.**
2. **that a meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel be convened in the summer of 2011 to review the Scheme and submit a report to the Council.**

Annual Review

1. The Council is required to adopt a scheme of allowances before the start of each financial year. The current scheme which forms Part K of the Council's Constitution was approved in February 2010. It is proposed that this Scheme be adopted without any amendments for the financial year 2011/12.
2. The Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to report and make recommendations on the Scheme. The Council is required to receive a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel before it makes or amends a scheme. The Council received a report from the Panel in February 2010 before it adopted the current Scheme.
3. A meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel has not been convened since February 2010. The Scheme provides that the Independent Remuneration Panel should undertake a review in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 prior to 1 April 2011. Assuming that the Council decides to make no changes to the Scheme, the Council may conclude that it would be more appropriate for the Panel to meet early in the new financial year to consider any changes that may be required for the financial year 2012/13.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Members Allowance Scheme 2010/11

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None