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**Meeting:** Council  
**Date:** 19 May 2011  
**Subject:** Proposed Amendment to the Members' Allowances Scheme 2011/12

**Report of:** The Monitoring Officer

**Summary:** The report proposes an amendment to the Scheme to take account of changes that are proposed to the portfolio structure of the Executive.

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**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 and the changes proposed in this report will not create any additional budget pressures.

**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:**

None arise directly from this report. 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

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 1. that the Council agrees to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme by adding an additional Special Responsibility Allowance payable to Executive Members without a portfolio of £10,721.20 per year;**
- 2. that an early meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel be convened to consult the Panel about this proposed amendment to the Scheme and to undertake a review of the current Scheme.**

**The Current Scheme**

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 2011 for the financial year 2011/12. At that meeting the Council resolved to reduce the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances payable under the Scheme by 2%.

**Consultation with the Independent Remuneration Panel**

2. The Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel to report on 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 members of the Independent Remuneration Panel (the IRP) were consulted about the proposed 2% reduction in allowances following the meeting in February 2011.
3. The IRP had submitted a report to the Council in February 2010 in which they had recommended a reduction in certain allowances. Their recommendations were not accepted by the Council. The reaction of the IRP to the proposed 2% reduction was that it did not go far enough and they were of the view that the Council should adopt the proposals that had been recommended in their report. A meeting of the IRP will be convened shortly to review the position and, in the meantime, the 2% reduction has been implemented on that understanding.

## **Proposed Amendment to the Scheme**

4. It is understood that the Council's new Leader may vary the existing portfolio structure and appoint Executive Members without specific portfolios. It is open to the Leader to change the portfolio structure under the Council's Constitution but the Members' Allowances Scheme makes no provision for the payment of an allowance to Executive Members who are not Portfolio Holders.
5. The Council is asked to consider amending Schedule 1 of the Members' Allowances Scheme by adding an additional category of Special Responsibility Allowance as follows:

Executive Members without portfolio	£10,721.20
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## **Background Papers:** (open to public inspection)

None