

Agenda Item: 17

Meeting: Council

Date: 18 June 2009

Subject: **Members' Allowances Scheme 2009/10**

Report of: Director of Corporate Services

Summary: To consider the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance to the 4 former non-portfolio Members of the Executive and an enhanced Special Responsibility Allowance for the Deputy Leader of the Council, who served as Vice Chairman of the Executive without Portfolio, for the second transitional period, that being the period from 1 April 2009 until the fourth day after the ordinary election on 4 June 2009.

Contact Officer: Stephen Cooke, Electoral/Member Services Manager

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Council, having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, consider whether:

- (a) a Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid, during the second transitional period, that being the period from 1 April 2009 until the 4th day after the ordinary election held on 4 June 2009, to those Members of the Executive without Portfolio, and**
- (b) an enhanced Special Responsibility Allowance should be paid to the Deputy Leader of the Council, who was also Vice-Chairman of the Executive, but without Portfolio, for the second transitional period.**

The Members' Allowances Scheme for the Period of the Shadow Council

1. The Members' Allowances Scheme for the Shadow Period, 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009, provided for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances for all Members of the Shadow Executive.
2. For the Shadow Period in addition to the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the Executive consisted of 6 Portfolio Holders, 4 Non-Portfolio Holders. The Special Responsibility Allowances for all positions within the Shadow Executive during that period were as follows:

Position	Special Responsibility Allowance	% of Leader's Allowance
Leader of the Council	£18,275	
Deputy Leader of the Council	£13,706	75%
Executive Member – with Portfolio	£10,965	60%
Executive Member – Without Portfolio	£7,310	40%

3. When the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) met to consider and make recommendations to Council as to the Scheme of Members' Allowances for the year 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010, it was anticipated that the Executive would consist of the Leader of the Council and those Members with Portfolio responsibilities. As a result the recommendation of the Panel was that the Special Responsibility Allowances for Members of the Executive be limited to Portfolio Holders. For that reason the Special Responsibility Allowance recommended for the Deputy Leader was set at 15% of the Leader's SRA, on the assumption that the Deputy Leader would have Portfolio responsibilities.
4. The Department for Communities and Local Government, in a Statutory Instrument made on 30 March 2009, specified that those persons who, on the coming into force of the Order, were members of the Executive, should continue as members of the Executive during the second transitional period, being the period from 1 April 2009 until the ordinary elections in June. During this period of transition, during which the intended range of Overview and Scrutiny Committees had not been fully developed, the Executive discharged an enhanced range of functions, and all of its Members played a crucial role in the development of the new Council.
5. As a result of the responsibilities placed upon the Executive as a whole, during the second transitional period, the Panel has been consulted with a request that consideration be given to the provision of a Special Responsibility Allowance for non-portfolio members of the Executive and an enhanced allowance for the Deputy Leader of the Council to cover this period of time given the exceptional circumstances that have existed.
6. At the time of preparing this report the members of the Panel are considering this matter and their findings will be reported to the meeting.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposed special responsibility allowances recognise the considerable amount of time during which Executive Members were engaged on Council business during this second period of transition.

So as to make sure Central Bedfordshire provides value for money and the Council maintains rigorous standards of transparency and accountability in setting members allowances, an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) reviews and make recommendations on all proposals relating to these allowances and the views of that Panel will be reported to full Council.

Financial:

Financial implications will be limited to the possible payment of Special Responsibility Allowance to the non-portfolio members of the Executive for the period from 1 April 2009 until the ordinary election in June 2009. As not all positions, for which a Special Responsibility Allowance was approved, were filled during the second transitional period, any recommendations of the Panel will be budget neutral.

Legal:

Sections 85 and 86 (1) (c) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Risk Management:

None

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

None

Community Safety:

None

Sustainability:

None

Appendices: N/A

Background Papers: N/A