

Council – 8 February 2007

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Report of the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances

Statutory Powers:- The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003

Financial Implications:- If the revised Scheme is approved, this will require a maximum increase of £9,454 in budgetary provision for the payment of Basic Allowances and Special Responsibility Allowances in 2007 / 08.

Purpose of report

1. To determine the new Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2007 / 2008 having regard to the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances.

RECOMMENDED

That the Council RESOLVES that the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Members' Allowances presented at Appendix A be agreed and that the revised Scheme of Members Allowances, as shown at Appendix C, be adopted from 1 April 2007.

Background

2. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, it is a requirement that any changes to a Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances are considered initially by an Independent Panel appointed for that purpose which then makes recommendations to the Council. The Panel met on 11 January 2007 to consider changes to the Scheme which would take effect from 1 April 2007.
3. A copy of the Panel's report is attached at appendix A including its various recommendations. A summary of the budget implications of an increase to the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances should the recommendations be adopted is shown at appendix B. The proposed Scheme of Members' Allowances, incorporating the Panel's recommendations is attached at appendix C.

Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
A revised Scheme of Members' Allowances is not adopted	The Council is required by law to adopt a Scheme of Allowances and to consider the recommendations of its Independent Panel in doing so.
Impact on Council reputation through the adoption of a revised Scheme	Regulations require that an Independent Panel is appointed to ensure objectivity in proposing the rates of allowances payable through the Scheme.
Impact on budgets	The Panel were mindful of the cost implications of increasing the rates of allowances significantly and have recommended that increases are kept in line with inflation.

Conclusion

4. The Panel was appreciative of the comments and representations submitted by Members. It is hoped that its report provides the background and explanation as to the recommendations and decisions which the Panel is putting forward. A representative of the Panel will be at the meeting to answer any questions which Members may have.

Independent Panel on Members Allowances

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Background Documents:

Scheme of Members Allowances April 2006

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003