

Agenda Item: 20

Executive Board

15 July 2009

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Members allowances

Summary

The current scheme of Councillor allowances does not make provision for the new overview/scrutiny committee structure and therefore it is recommended that the Board invites the Independent Remuneration Panel to meet in October/November 2009 to assess the workloads and levels of responsibility of the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of the new Overview/Scrutiny Committees with a view to recommending whether or not special responsibility allowances should be paid, and, if so, the recommended level. When agreed by Council, any decisions in respect of these special responsibility allowances will be backdated.

Recommendation

That arrangements be made for the Independent Remuneration Panel to meet in October/November 2009 to consider specifically the responsibilities and workloads of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees established at the annual meeting of the Council in May 2009 with a view to making recommendations in respect of Chairman/Vice Chairman special responsibility allowances of each of these Committees.

a) Reasons for Recommendation

To up-date the current scheme of allowances to include any special responsibility allowances in respect of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

b) Alternative Options

The current scheme does not make provision for the new Overview and Scrutiny Committees and so retaining the existing scheme is not possible. Extending the existing scheme without consulting with the Independent Remuneration Panel could be criticised by the electorate.

c) Risk Considerations

The workload and responsibilities of the four Overview and Scrutiny committees may not be easy to identify so soon in the new structure.

d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

The recommendation conforms to the Council's policy of being open and transparent.

e) Date for Review of Decision

November 2009

1 Main Body of the Report

Background

The scheme of allowances for Councillors was considered by the Board at its meeting on 4 March 2009. The Independent Remuneration Panel had recommended an increase in the 2009/10 basic allowance payable to Councillors in line with the employee pay award.

However, due to the economic down-turn, the Council agreed to freeze the 2009/10 pay award at the previous year's level; the only addition being to include the £20 per month to cover Broadband costs.

The Board also agreed that the Independent Remuneration Panel should meet early in 2010 unless Councillor workloads/responsibilities changed or unforeseen issues arose, in which case a meeting of the Panel would be convened at an earlier date.

At the annual meeting of the Council in May, Members agreed the new arrangements for the Overview and Scrutiny function of the Council. The previous Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committees were replaced with four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, namely Co-ordinating, Communities, Economy and Performance/Service Delivery.

Review

The Board is asked to consider the appropriateness of convening a meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel to analyse the responsibilities and workload of the new Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Chairmen and Vice Chairmen as the current scheme of allowances does not provide for payment in respect of these positions. Due to the previous decision by Council in respect of freezing any increase in 2009/10, it is not considered necessary to ask the Panel to review the Basic Allowance or the other Special Responsibility Allowances.

Recommendations of the Panel will be considered by the Board and decided by Council. Any payment of agreed allowances will then be back dated to date of inception.

Legal Implications

There are no legal observations.

Financial Implications

Details contained in the report.

Consultation on Reports to the Executive

The recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel will be considered by the Board.

Background Papers

- Executive Board minutes 4 March 2009
- Annual Council papers re: new Committee arrangements – 20 May 2009
- Existing scheme of allowances.

Diana Vernon
Democratic Services Manager

Executive Board
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