

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 15th December 2010
Report of: Democratic Services Manager
Subject/Title: Outcome of Member Consultation: Vehicle Mileage Rates

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel had been asked to consider making a recommendation to Council upon the level of allowances currently paid in respect of Member mileage. This report outlines the conclusion of the Panel based on comments received following a consultation exercise with Members of Cheshire East Council.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Constitution Committee is invited to make a recommendation to Council in response to the views of the Panel.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The Panel has given consideration to the request, but is reluctant to reach a firm conclusion upon the appropriate level of mileage allowance for Members for the purpose of fulfilling the Council's budgetary objectives.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 An agreement to amend the rate of Allowances payable to Members will require an alteration to be made to the Cheshire East Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances 2010/2011.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 A recommendation to reduce the mileage rates currently payable to elected Members would bring about budgetary savings. The changes proposed therefore, would not incur any additional cost to the budget.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council is empowered to pay a range of Allowances to its Members in respect of their roles and responsibilities but must, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel to offer advice and make recommendations on the Members' Allowances Scheme to Council. The report contains the advice from the Panel.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 Consideration of the report enables the Council to comply with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

10.0 Background

- 10.1 To inform its 2010 review of Cheshire East Council's Scheme of Members' Allowances, the Independent Remuneration Panel ('the Panel') commissioned an online survey of Councillors to establish how much time elected Members were spending on Council business.
- 10.2 The Survey, which was launched on 2 November 2010, ran until 30 November 2010, the results from which are to be submitted to the Panel for consideration. Notwithstanding this, the Panel was asked to consider one element of the Scheme urgently in light of the need to identify potential savings across the authority.
- 10.3 On Monday 1st November 2010, the elected Members of Cheshire East Council were consulted on the following suggestion; that there should be one flat-rate mileage allowance payable to Members of the Council whilst undertaking Council business. The rate proposed was 40p per mile for the use of cars, irrespective of the engine capacity of the vehicle in question. There was no suggestion that any changes should be made to the Allowances Scheme in respect of other modes of transport.

11.0 Conclusion

- 11.1 The Panel has given consideration to the request, but is reluctant to reach a firm conclusion upon the appropriate level of mileage allowance for Members, solely to fulfil the Council's budgetary objectives.

- 11.2 However, after considering the responses received from elected Members, the Panel does not have any strong objection to the proposal of a flat mileage rate of 40 pence per mile in respect of travel by car on official Council business, provided there is a mechanism for exceptions for disabled persons or other special situations where higher costs can be justified.

12.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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