

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Governance and Constitution Committee

Date of Meeting: 30 September 2009
Report of: Democratic Services Manager
Subject/Title: Members' Allowances Scheme 2009/2010

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to invite the Governance and Constitution Committee to reconvene the Independent Remuneration Panel for the purpose of i) reviewing the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2009/2010; and ii) considering an additional paper relating to associated allowances.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That

- (1) the Independent Remuneration Panel be reconvened for the purpose of reviewing the Members' Allowances Scheme 2009/2010;
- (2) a report be submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel for the purpose of clarifying and quantifying the range of additional allowances which are claimable by Members; and
- (3) until such time as Council considers the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel, the current arrangements for the payment of Members' Allowances/additional Allowances continue to apply.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The request to review the Members' Allowances Scheme is in accordance with Council's decision made on 2 April 2009. The operation of the Scheme has identified issues which require clarification in respect of associated allowances not contained within the formal Scheme. It is appropriate that the Independent Remuneration Panel be asked to consider these matters.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All

6.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 6.1 There are no such implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

7.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond

- 7.1 There are currently no identifiable implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council is empowered to pay a range of Allowances to Members in respect of their roles and responsibilities, but must appoint an Independent Remuneration Panel to offer advice and recommendations on the Allowances Scheme.

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The reconvening of the Independent Remuneration Panel reduces risk to the authority and its Members by introducing an independent perspective to the process.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 On 14 July 2008, the Governance and Constitution Committee considered a report which set out recommendations with regard to the adoption of a Scheme of Members' Allowances for Cheshire East Council during its shadow year, based on the advice of Cheshire County Council's Independent Remuneration Panel. The Committee recommended the Scheme to Council on 30 July 2008 and it was subsequently adopted.
- 10.2 A new Independent Remuneration Panel was constituted in December 2008 to make recommendations in respect of the Scheme of Members' Allowances which would apply to Cheshire East Council from Vesting Day. Having met on a number of occasions the Panel submitted its report initially to Governance and Constitution Committee on 9 March 2009 and, having received support for its proposals, the report together with an addendum was considered by Council on 2 April 2009. The recommendations were approved (Appendix).
- 10.3 The Scheme has now been in operation for six months and in accordance with Council's decision is now due for review. The Committee is therefore invited to reconvene the Independent Remuneration Panel for this purpose.
- 10.4 On the whole, the Scheme has been working well and claims are being dealt with in a timely manner. Whilst the Independent Remuneration Panel considered and made recommendations on the formal elements making up the Scheme in line with the Regulations, (e.g. Basic, Special Responsibility Allowances, Travel and Subsistence); there is now a need for a review to take place of a small number of other additional allowances e.g.

telephone/broadband connections, consumables etc. These allowances and associated expenses are payable to Members and have been paid by the demising authorities but there is now the need for a consistency of approach for Cheshire East.

- 10.5 To provide the clarity required and improve the operation of the scheme, it is suggested that, in addition to the main review, a paper be submitted to the Independent Remuneration Panel for consideration, outlining options for determining and quantifying these associated allowances/expenses.

11.0 Access to Information

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

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