

COUNCIL

17 March 2015

Report of the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer

REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

Purpose of Report

To advise Council of the recommendations of the Members Independent Remuneration Panel who have recently undertaken a review of Members Allowances in accordance with regulations. The report of the panel is attached as **Appendix 1**,

Recommendations

Council is recommended to consider the Panel's report and:

- a) **Adopt the recommendations in full or**
- b) **Adopt the recommendations in part and put forward alternative recommendations for those not accepted or**
- c) **Reject the recommendations in full and put forward alternative recommendations.**

Executive Summary

The Members Remuneration Panel was convened on 22 December 2014 and their recommendations and deliberations are attached as **Appendix 1** to this report.

It is a statutory requirement that a summary of the independent remuneration panel recommendations, whether the authority has made or amended the Scheme of Allowances, and the period of time for which the scheme will have effect, are all published in a local newspaper. This will be undertaken following the Council meeting.

Council is requested to consider the recommendations of the panel and after taking regard thereof either accept the proposals or put forward reasonable alternatives.

The amended scheme (either as approved following the Panel's recommendations or following Council Proposals) is to be adopted following the elections on 7 May 2015.

This report does not seek a key decision, but Council is responsible for reviewing and adopting a scheme of allowances for members.

Options considered

This is a statutory obligation and a legal requirement.

Implications of this report

Should the Council decide to adopt the proposed scheme to come into effect from 11 May 2015, the financial implications would mean a reduction in budget for Members Allowances from 2015 / 16 onwards of £3,235.. This saving has been built in to base budget following approval of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) by Council on 24th February 2015.

Other recommended changes e.g. discontinuing mileage allowance for attending approved duties within the Borough and paying an SRA of £45 per meeting under 4 hours/ £90 per meeting of 4 hours or more to the Chair of Licensing Sub-Committees are not easily quantifiable given that they depend on the level of duties and claims in the year, but should not have a significant financial effect. **Appendix 2** contains a summary of the proposals for easy reference

It should be noted that the panel is recommending it reconvene in 2 years time to review the Members Allowance Scheme. The legislation allows an authority where the allowances have regard to indices to rely on the indexation for a period of four years before seeking a further recommendation of the panel. Accordingly the Council has to decide whether a review in two years time is appropriate.

The risk of not updating the allowance scheme is that the political management structure of the Council may not be accurately acknowledged in accordance with statutory and regularity requirements.

Background Information

Statutory regulations came into force in May 2003 which require the Council to review and adopt a scheme of allowances for members.

All Councils are required to convene an Independent Remuneration Panel and seek its advice before they make any changes or amendments to their allowance scheme and they must “pay regard” to the Panel’s recommendations before setting a new or amended Members Allowances Scheme.

Report Author

If Members would like further information or clarification prior to the meeting, please contact Jane M Hackett on Ext. 258

List of Background Papers

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989

The Local Government Act 2000

The Local authorities (Members' allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

Appendices

Appendix 1

A Review of Member's Allowances for Tamworth Borough Council; The Sixth Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Appendix 2

Costing of recommended changes to Members Allowances Scheme for 2015/16

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