

Meeting of the Full Council
Meeting to be held on Thursday, 23 February 2017

Report submitted by: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Part A

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Members' Allowance Scheme 2017/18
(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

This reports sets out the proposed Members' Allowance Scheme for 2017/18, and the proposed re-appointment of three members of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

Recommendation

The Full Council is asked to:

1. Approve the 2017/18 Members' Allowance Scheme, as presented at Appendix 'A', to be effective as from 1 April 2017.
2. Note that a further report on the 2017/18 Members' Allowance Scheme will be presented to the Full Council following a review of the Scheme by the Independent Remuneration Panel at its meeting on 5 June 2017.
3. Approve the re-appointment of Keith Leaver, Irene Divine and Terry Whitehead to serve on the Independent Remuneration Panel for a four year term with effect from 28 March 2017.

Background and Advice

1. Members' Allowance Scheme 2017/18

The County Council is required to approve its Members' Allowance Scheme before the beginning of each financial year.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require the County Council to have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel before making or amending the Members' Allowance Scheme.

A meeting of the Panel to consider the Members' Allowance Scheme and make recommendations on any changes to the Full Council would normally take place prior to this meeting of Full Council. However, it is felt that it would be more appropriate for the Panel to meet to consider and make recommendations on any changes to the 2017/18 Members' Allowance Scheme following the County Council elections on 4 May 2017 and after the Council's Leader has been appointed at the Council's Annual General Meeting on 25 May.

A meeting of the Panel has therefore been arranged to take place on 5 June and a report recommending any changes to the 2017/18 Scheme will be presented to Full Council at its meeting on 20 July. The Scheme permits the back-dating of allowances including Special Responsibility Allowances to the date of a councillor's appointment.

Under the above-mentioned Regulations "A scheme may make provision for an annual adjustment of allowances by reference to such an index as may be specified by the County Council and where the only change made to a scheme in any year is that effected by such an annual adjustment in accordance with such an index the scheme shall be deemed not to have been amended."

The existing Members' Allowance Scheme provides for an annual adjustment of allowances in accordance with specified indices. As no other changes are proposed, the Full Council could, at this meeting, approve a Scheme for 2017/18 without a meeting of the Panel having to be convened. However, it is felt that the up-rating of the allowances in accordance with the specified indices should be deferred, and that the Independent Remuneration Panel should be requested to consider this as part of its wider review of the 2017/18 Scheme.

A copy of the proposed Members' Allowances Scheme for 2017/18 is at Appendix 'A'. There are no changes to the 2016/17 Scheme agreed by Full Council.

2. Independent Remuneration Panel

As mentioned above, the County Council is required to have regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel before making or amending the Members' Allowance Scheme.

The existing members of the Panel are:

Irene Divine
Keith Leaver – chair
Dennis Mendoros, OBE, DL
Terry Whitehead

Members of the Panel are appointed for a fixed four year period. The term of office in respect of Irene Divine, Keith Leaver and Terry Whitehead is due to expire on 28

March 2017. The members have confirmed that they are willing to continue to serve on the Panel, and it is recommended that they be re-appointed to serve for a further four year term as from 28 March 2017.

The three Panel members have considerable knowledge and experience of the County Council. They previously served on the Council's Standards Committee until it was disestablished in June 2012, and they have been appointed and continue to serve as Independent persons in relation to Councillor Code of Conduct matters. They have also served on the Independent Remuneration Panel since 2013. The re-appointment of the three members will also ensure that the Panel has the necessary expertise and knowledge to be able to review and make recommendations on any changes to the 2017/18 Members' Allowance Scheme following the County Council elections on 4 May 2017

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

It is a legal requirement for the County Council to approve its annual Members' Allowance Scheme prior to 1 April.

It is important that the Independent Remuneration Panel consists of members who have the necessary expertise and knowledge of the County Council and its decision making process

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A		
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate		
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