

REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

FULL COUNCIL 19 MARCH 2018

Chair: Councillor Amin

INTRODUCTION

This report from the Standards Committee of 8 March 2018 recommends that Full Council revoke the Members Allowance Scheme for 2017/18 and approve the new Members Allowance Scheme for 2018/19, to take effect from 1 April, adopt a revised Protocol on Member/Officer Relations and include in the Council's Constitution a requirement for the Council to receive an annual update on progress toward reducing carbon emission in the borough.

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2018/19

As announced at Full Council in March 2017, the Standards Committee has undertaken a review of our scheme of Members' allowances over the last municipal year. We reviewed practice in other London boroughs and the guidance prepared by the Independent Panel on the Remuneration of Councillors in London, which the Council has a duty to consider before adopting an allowance scheme (found at Appendix B of the attached report). The outcome of our review is contained in the attached report and appendix A, and was presented at a recent all-Member briefing.

In reviewing the scheme, the Committee sought to contain expenditure on allowances within the current budget, but to ensure the scheme was fairer and more able to accommodate any potential outcome of the forthcoming election. We recommend a small increase of 1% to allowances, which follows the recommendation of the Independent Panel and would be funded by the savings generated by re-banding some allowances.

We also agreed some small changes to other aspects of the Allowances scheme, including Dependents' Carers' Allowances and co-optees'.

To note, it is a statutory requirement, under the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) regulations 2003, to adopt a Members' Allowances Scheme for the following financial year by 31 March each year. The Committee agree that the recommended Allowances Scheme is a marked improvement on the current scheme and should accommodate any outcome of the forthcoming election – though we also noted that it would be possible for the scheme to be further revised should it be required in the next municipal year.

PROTOCOL ON MEMBER/OFFICER RELATIONS

Over the past year, the Committee has also reviewed the current Member/Officer Protocol to ensure the relationship between elected Councillors and officers, which is so fundamental to the Council's effectiveness in serving its residents, is supported by a clear and sound protocol. The Committee ensured the principles underpinning the

existing protocol were maintained, and looked at a number of other boroughs' equivalent documents to develop the document attached at Appendix C.

This was recently presented at an all-Member briefing, where Members had opportunity to suggest amendments to the draft protocol. The attached draft, agreed at the Standards Committee on 8 March, incorporates these suggestions and is now recommended to Council for adoption.

REPORTING ON REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS

The Committee received a request that the customary annual update on the progress toward reducing carbon emissions in the borough be included in the Council's Constitution to ensure it is continued in the future. The Committee agreed that this should be done, and agreed to recommend an insertion in the Council Procedure Rules to this effect.

WE RECOMMEND

That Full Council:

1. Revoke the Members Allowance Scheme for 2017/18 as of 31 March;
2. Approve the new Members' Allowances Scheme for 2018-19, as set out in Appendix A of the attached report, to take effect from 1 April 2018;
3. Adopt the revised Protocol on Member/Officer relations, found at Appendix C of the attached report;
4. Agree the insertion of a requirement for an annual update on progress of reducing carbon emissions in the borough, as set out at paragraph 6.8 of the attached report.