

Report for: Standards Committee 7th March

Item number:

Title: Members Allowances Scheme for 2016-17

Report

authorised by : Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

Lead Officer: Alison Vydulinska

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: Non key decision

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Each year before 31st March, full Council is required by the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to adopt a Members Allowances Scheme for the following financial year.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

N/A

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Standards Committee recommend to Council:
- a) The revocation of the Members Allowances Scheme for 2015/16 as of 31st March 2016; and
 - b) Approval of the proposed new Members Allowances Scheme for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix 1 to this report to take effect from 1st April 2016.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 The Council has a legal duty to approve a Members Allowances Scheme before the end of each year to cover the following year. The Council can amend a scheme any time during the year but can only revoke a scheme with effect from the beginning of the year. The scheme must make provision for basic allowances and, if they are to be paid, special responsibility, dependents' carers, travelling and subsistence and co-optees allowances.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 No alternative options were considered as there is a duty to adopt a meMbers' allowance scheme annually.

6. Background information

- 6.1 This report asks Standards Committee to consider the scheme proposed for 2016-17 and recommend it for approval by full Council, in accordance with Article 14.03 of the Council's Constitution.
- 6.2 Before it can adopt a Members Allowances Scheme the Council has a duty to consider the recommendations of an Independent Remuneration Panel in relation to the payment of Members Allowances.
- 6.3 The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 allow London Boroughs to use an independent remuneration panel set up for the purpose of making recommendations across London. London Councils set up a panel for this purpose in 2001 and its most recent report was published in June 2014 and is attached as Appendix 2. Although the IRP makes recommendations, it is for each individual council to decide the level of remuneration and for which roles. The 2014 recommendations have been considered in the preparation of the proposals at Appendix 1.
- 6.4 The changes to the Scheme for 2016-17 are shown in italics and underlined. There are no proposals to change the level of allowances. Small amendments to the scheme relate to year for which the Scheme will operate, and some minor clarifications relating to the description of co-optees for consistency.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

- 7.1 Members of the Council are directly responsible for the setting and oversight of all strategic priorities.

8. Statutory Officers comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities)

8.1 Finance and Procurement

The Chief Finance Officer has reviewed the proposed new scheme, noting that there is no proposed increase in allowances. The cost of the scheme is within the agreed budget provision for 2016-17.

8.2 Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

Legal implications are contained within the body of this report.

8.3 Equality

The decision to approve allowances to members does not have a direct impact on the equality duty of the council, other than that the scheme includes provision for payment for parent/carers allowances to facilitate the attendance of parents and carers at meetings and in relation to carrying out the general responsibilities of councillors.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix 1: Members Allowances Scheme 2016-17

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None