

REPORT OF THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

No. 01/2015-16

COUNCIL 17 MARCH 2016

Chair: Councillor Raj Sahota

INTRODUCTION

Full Council is being asked to revoke the Members Allowances Scheme for 2015/16 as of 31st March 2016; and to approve the proposed new Members Allowances Scheme for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix 2 to this report to take effect from 1st April 2016.

Full Council is also being asked to approve the appointment of Lisa Klein as an Independent Person, and Alison Lowton as secondary Independent Person to the Standards Committee. This is under s28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a period of 4 years commencing 1 July 2016 and ending on 30 June 2020;

Full Council is further asked to approve the allowance paid per annum to the Independent Person, and Secondary Independent person at £1250.00 and £250.00 respectively.

MEMBERS ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2016/17

We noted that 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.

We were advised that before adoption of 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.

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 we considered its most recent report which was published in June 2014 and is attached as Appendix 3. We noted that although the IRP makes recommendations, it is for each individual council to decide the level of remuneration and for which roles. We further noted that the 2014 recommendations had been considered in the preparation of the proposals at Appendix 1.

We noted that there were no proposals to change the level of allowances. There were only small amendments to the scheme which related to year for which the Scheme will operate, and some minor clarifications relating to the description of co-optees for consistency. These are set out in italics at appendix 2 of this report.

WE RECOMMEND

1. The revocation of the Members Allowances Scheme for 2015/16 as of 31st March 2016; and
2. Approval of the proposed new Members Allowances Scheme for 2016-17 as set out in Appendix 2 to this report to take effect from 1st April 2016.

APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS UNDER SECTION 28(7) OF THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 (TO SUPPORT THE OPERATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE) from 1 JULY 2016 to 30 JUNE 2020

We had previously agreed in October 2015 the commencement of a recruitment process to seek an Independent Person (to commence office on 1 July 2016 for a four year term). Interviews for the position took place on 27 January 2016 and the Interview Panel consisted of Councillors Morris, Reith and Sahota. We felt there had been a thorough recruitment process facilitated by Legal and Democratic services.

We considered the report attached at appendix 4, which contained the legal requirements for appointing an independent person, and listed their duties and required work for the council. We noted that there had been a strong shortlist of candidates, and the two recommended candidates had been chosen according to their working experience and knowledge of local government.

We thank Rachel Hatch, the departing, Independent Member of the Standards Committee, for her support and hard work for the Council and Committee over the last 4 years. We wish to record our gratitude to the late Christopher Watts for his role as a secondary independent person on the Committee.

WE RECOMMEND

1. That full Council appoint Lisa Klein as Independent Person, and Alison Lowton as secondary Independent Person under s28(7) of the Localism Act 2011 for a period of 4 years commencing 1 July 2016 and ending on 30 June 2020;
2. That full Council approve the allowance paid per annum to the Independent Person, and Secondary Independent person be £1250.00 and £250.00 respectively.