

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Selection and Member Services Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 21 October 2015.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mr M Baldock (Substitute for Mr B E MacDowall), Mr H Birkby (Substitute for Mr R A Latchford, OBE), Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms A Harrison and Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute for Mr M C Dance)

ALSO PRESENT: Mr A H T Bowles

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services), Mr P D Wickenden (Democratic Services Manager (Members)) and Mr A Tait (Democratic Services Officer)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Ogden, Mrs S Addis and Mr S Wiggett from the Member Remuneration Panel.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

13. Minutes - 22 May 2015
(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2015 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

14. Dates of meetings in 2016
(Item 4)

The Committee noted the following dates for its meetings in 2016:-

Wednesday, 13 January 2016
Wednesday, 2 March 2016
Wednesday, 20 April 2016
Thursday, 23 June 2016
Tuesday, 27 September 2016

15. Report of the Member Remuneration Panel
(Item 5)

(1) Mr J Ogden, Mrs S Addis and Mr S Wiggett from the Member Remuneration Panel were present for this item.

(2) The Head of Democratic Services introduced the report of the Member Remuneration Panel which had been produced following a request by the County Council in May 2015 for it to give consideration to recommending a mechanism for the Members' Allowances Scheme to be index-linked with effect from 1 April 2016.

(3) Mr G Cooke informed the Committee that discussion of this item should take the following resolution of the County Council meeting of 21 May 2015 into account:-

- (a) *the Remuneration Panel be thanked for its report and that they be requested to recommend an indexation scheme to the July meeting of the County Council for implementation beginning with the financial year 2016/17;*
- (b) *the proposed Members' Allowances scheme as set out in Appendix 2 to this report be adopted for one year; and*
- (c) *While noting the observations of the Panel, as detailed in "(c)" of the original motion, the Council agrees to follow the recommendations of the Section 151 Officer; it being noted that the Selection and Member Services Committee would be discussing the matter at a meeting the following day with the Section 151 officer present to enable him to clarify his advice to Members.*

(4) Mr J Ogden, Chairman of the Member Remuneration Panel said that its Members had considered that as the current Member Allowances Scheme had been adopted for a four year period from May 2013 to May 2017, it would not be appropriate for a new Scheme to come into force in May 2016. Accordingly, the Panel had recommended that the Scheme for May 2017 to May 2021 should include provision for index-linking Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances.

(5) Mr P B Carter asked why the Panel had recommended that the mechanism for index-linking Allowances on an annual basis should be set at 4/5ths of the percentage for the "achieving" level within the County Council's Total Contribution Pay scheme. Mr Ogden replied that the Panel's view had been that there were fundamental differences between the roles of elected Members and those of Council employees. An example of this was that elected Members (unlike paid staff) served in a voluntary capacity.

(6) Members of the Committee asked the Remuneration Panel to take a number of factors into account when considering future Allowances. These included, the need to encourage people of all ages and from all walks of life to put themselves forward for election, the fact that the Council had voluntarily agreed reductions in Allowances since 2009, that KCC Members had not entered the LGPS up to the point when this possibility had been withdrawn by the Government, and that elected Members were less vulnerable than employed staff to losing their positions due to long term sickness absence, and the cost of child care.

(7) The Committee agreed by 7 votes to 2 that the Group Leaders would be invited to seek to agree a written response to the Panel's report for consideration by the County Council.

(8) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the report of the Member Remuneration Panel be noted; and
- (b) the political Group Leaders be invited to agree a written response to the Member Remuneration Panel's report for consideration by the County Council.

16. Data Controllers Registration
(Item 6)

- (1) The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services asked the Committee to endorse his decision that the County Council would register each elected Member as a data controller with the Information Commissioner's Office.
- (2) The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services agreed to seek clarification from the Information Commissioner's Office in respect of the need or otherwise for recently-retired Members to maintain their registrations.
- (3) RESOLVED that the decision taken by the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services be noted with approval.