

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19th November, 2015

2.30 pm

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Thursday, 19 November 2015, at 2.30 pm
Darent Room, Sessions House, County
Hall, Maidstone

Ask for: **Andrew Tait**
Telephone: **03000 416749**

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting

Membership (9)

- Conservative (5): Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mr P B Carter, CBE, Mr G Cooke, Mr M C Dance and Mr B J Sweetland
- UKIP (2) Mr R A Latchford, OBE and Mr B E MacDowall
- Labour (1) Ms A Harrison
- Liberal Democrat (1): Mrs T Dean, MBE

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

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- 1 Substitutes
- 2 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
- 3 Minutes - 21 October 2015 (Pages 5 - 8)

- 4 Member Development (Pages 9 - 12)
- 5 Dependents' Carers' Allowance (Pages 13 - 14)
- 6 Other items which the Chairman decides are Urgent

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
03000 416647

Wednesday, 11 November 2015

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.

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By: Andrew Bowles, Chairman of the Member Development Steering Group
Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee - 19 November 2015

Subject: Member Development

Summary: This report informs the Committee of the initiatives being undertaken by the Member Development Steering Group.

1. Introduction

The Committee will be aware that in September 2014 the Committee was re-awarded the Member Development Charter Plus for a further three years. Over the coming months the Council will be asked to participate in a mid-term review to assess the progress being made towards the initiatives the assessment team heard when it awarded the Charter Plus Standard.

2. Training for Elected Members as the Council moves towards Becoming a Strategic Commissioning Authority

- (1) Since the awarding of the Charter Plus Standard good progress has been made towards providing all elected Members with the opportunity to participate in workshops and training sessions to ensure that all Members are adequately equipped to discharge and embrace the evolving role of an elected Member in a Strategic Commissioning Authority.
- (2) Workshops have taken place in September 2014 and 2015 which were well supported by elected Members. A further series of workshops around contract management is being arranged for early in the New Year.
- (3) The work of the cross party Commissioning Advisory Board has been a fundamental mechanism in building a dialogue and relationship between Members and Officers which has been invaluable. This has led to several joint sessions of Members and officers enjoying workshop sessions.

3. Member Accreditation Scheme

- (1) The Steering Group has progressed the development of a Member Accreditation scheme. An accreditor has approved the contents of the scheme.
- (2) The next step is to develop the topics into three distinct modules:

- (a) A general module which all elected Members would be expected to complete and contains the core topics which all Members should demonstrate they have the knowledge to discharge the role of an elected Member;
 - (b) An intermediary module for those Members who aspire to be Committee Chairman and Deputy Cabinet Members; and
 - (c) An advanced module for those elected Members in a Leadership role
- (3) If the County Council are able to implement a scheme it is believed that we will be the first to introduce such a scheme to encourage prospective candidates and existing elected Members to participate in a scheme where they can leave with approved transferable skills which have been accredited.

4. Personal Development Plans

- (1) The take up of elected Members wishing to have a discussion around their Personal Development needs has been poor this year to date. This discussion does not need to take very long but is a vital component in developing the overall training plan for elected Members being prepared by colleagues in Organisation and Development as well as about tailored training for individual Members' or small groups.
- (2) The Steering Group are also exploring the development of an online form that Members can complete in confidence as an alternative to a face to face discussion.

5. KNet Members Area

- (1) The Steering Group are continuing to monitor and engage with the Members on the use of the Knet Members Area. This is a valuable resource for Members which despite the large number of hits it receives each month surveys conducted of elected Members indicate that it is not used to its full potential by the Members. This is our resource and we need to ensure the Area includes what we wish to see there and that it is friendly and accessible to use.
- (2) As the County Council starts to prepare for the County Council elections in 2017 we will be refreshing the Area to reflect what the Members have told us.

6. Thinking About Becoming a Councillor Event – Saturday 17 October

At the end of Local Democracy week on Saturday 17 October the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services and representatives of the Member Development Steering Group hosted a successful event for prospective candidates who were contemplating becoming a County Councillor or a District Councillor.

7. Induction for Elected Members in 2017

- (1) Shortly the Member Development Steering Group will be conducting a Member Survey to identify how the County Council can improve on the induction programme delivered for elected Members in 2017.
- (2) A further report on the proposed arrangements will be brought to the Committee in the second half of 2017.

8. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to note the ongoing work programme of the Member Development Steering Group.

Contact Details:

Paul D Wickenden
Democratic Services Manager (Members)
Tel: 03000 416836

Background Documents: None

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By: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services
Amanda Beer, Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design and Development
Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee - 19 November 2015

Subject: Dependents' Carers' Allowance

Summary: Following consultation with relevant senior officers and the Member Remuneration Panel the Panel recommend a minor amendment to the Dependents' Carers' Allowance paragraph in the Members' Allowance Scheme which will permit an elected Member with childcare responsibility to participate in the Childcare Voucher Scheme offered by the County Council to employees.

1. Introduction

Following a request from an elected Member with childcare responsibility asking whether it would be possible for an elected Member to participate in the County Council childcare voucher scheme We have discussed this possibility with relevant senior officers and sought the advice of the independent Member Remuneration Panel.

2. Dependents' Carers' Allowance

(1) Within the Members' Allowance Scheme is the following paragraph on Dependents' Carers' Allowance

"Members who incur expenses themselves in respect of care responsibilities for dependent children under 16 or dependent adults certified by a doctor or social worker as needing attendance will be reimbursed, on production of valid receipts, for actual payments to a carer while the Member is on Council duties, up to a maximum of £10 per hour for each dependent child or adult. Money paid to a member of the Member's household will not be reimbursed. In the case of an allowance for the care of a dependent relative, the relative must reside with the councillor, be reliant on the councillor and require constant care"

(2) We have checked the feasibility of an elected Member, even though they are not employees, being able to participate in the Childcare Voucher Scheme and there is no reason why this is not possible.

(3) The proposal has also been checked with the County Council tax advisers who have confirmed that there is no reason why this facility cannot be made available to elected members from a tax standpoint. The internal auditor has also been consulted and is content.

3. Member Remuneration Panel

- (1) Following this consultation process we have sought the views of the Member Remuneration Panel.
- (2) The Panel unanimously support the re-wording of the Dependents' Carers' Allowance paragraph as follows with the additions shown in bold type face:

*"Members who incur expenses themselves in respect of care responsibilities for dependent children under 16 or dependent adults certified by a doctor or social worker as needing attendance will be reimbursed, on production of valid receipts, for actual payments to a carer while the Member is on Council duties, up to a maximum of £10 per hour for each dependent child or adult. Money paid to a member of the Members household will not be reimbursed. In the case of an allowance for the care of a dependent relative, the relative must reside with the councillor, be reliant on the councillor and require constant care. **Subject to the Childcare Voucher Scheme's standard terms and conditions* any Member may, if they wish, sacrifice a portion of their Basic Allowance for Childcare Vouchers which are not subject to tax and national insurance deductions.**"*

**For reference these terms and conditions include (but are not limited to):*

- *The childcare provider must be OFSTED registered.*
- *The children must be aged between 0 and 16.*
- *A sacrifice agreement would need to be signed.*
- *The amount that can be sacrificed varies depending on whether the applicant is a basic, higher or additional rate tax payer.*

- (3) The Panel expressed the view that this extension to the scheme will be a valuable addition to attract those persons with childcare responsibility to take on the role of an elected Member.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to agree the rewording of the Dependents' Carers' Allowance paragraph in the Members' Allowance Scheme as recommended by the Member Remuneration Panel and submit this suggested change to the scheme to the County Council for approval.

Contact details:

Paul D Wickenden
Democratic Services Manager (Members)
Tel: 03000 416836

Background Documents : None