

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27th September, 2016

2.30 pm

Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone





AGENDA

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27 September 2016, 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

Webcasting Notice

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By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being filmed. If you do not wish to have your image captured please let the Clerk know immediately.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

- 1 Substitutes
- 2 Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
- 3 Minutes - 23 June 2016 (Pages 5 - 8)
- 4 Information Point and Members' Area (Pages 9 - 14)

- 5 Flood Risk Management Committee (Pages 15 - 18)
- 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)

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
03000 416647

Monday, 19 September 2016

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SELECTION AND MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Selection and Member Services Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 23 June 2016.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mr A H T Bowles (Substitute for Mr B J Sweetland), Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms A Harrison, Mr R A Latchford, OBE, Mr G Lymer (Substitute for Mr P B Carter, CBE) and Mr B E MacDowall

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M J Harrison

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes - 19 November 2015

(Item 3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2015 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Members' Allowances and Expenses 2015/16

(Item 4)

(1) A supplementary Appendix setting out Members' use of Taxis for 2015 -16 was tabled and later published on the County Council's website.

(2) The Committee agreed that there should be a brief update report to the next meeting of the Committee setting out the full charges for each of the County Cars.

(3) RESOLVED that:-

(a) the report be noted; and

(b) agreement be given to the publication of the Council Members' allowances and expenses for 2015/16 as detailed in Appendix A of the report and required by the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003.

3. Recruitment of the Independent Member Remuneration Panel

(Item 5)

(1) The Committee unanimously agreed the recruitment process set out in (2) below.

(2) RESOLVED that the political Group Leaders be invited to make appointments to the Panel which will recommend the composition of the Member

Remuneration Panel to the County Council. These appointments will consist of:-

- (a) Honorary Aldermen; and/or
- (b) Persons who are not existing Members or Individuals planning to seek election to the County Council.

4. Independent Person

(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the County Council be recommended to appoint Mr Michael George as the Independent Person for the Member Code of Conduct for the four year term from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2020.

5. Webcasting Contract

(Item 7)

(1) The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services recorded his appreciation of the work of Mrs Denise Fitch in successfully negotiating a 24% discount for the webcasting contract with Public-I for the 5 year period commencing on 30 June 2016.

(2) RESOLVED that the new 5 year contract with Public-I for webcasting services be noted and that the savings achieved through the re-procurement of this service be noted.

6. Proposed Future Arrangements for the Governor Appointments Panel

(Item 8)

RESOLVED that delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills (in consultation with the Members of the Governor Appointments Panel) to make or refuse all appointments to governing bodies where the nominee does not meet the guidelines in full, providing that all Panel Members are in agreement with the Director's proposed course of action.

7. Kent Flood Risk Management Committee

(Item 9)

(1) Mr M J Harrison was present for this Item pursuant to Committee Procedure Rule 2.27 and spoke.

(2) During discussion of this item, the Committee agreed that the current Independent Member Remuneration Panel would be invited to consider the matter under discussion and that the new Panel would be requested to consider the question of Special Responsibility Allowances on a holistic basis in preparation for the next County Council following the elections in May 2017.

(3) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Independent Remuneration Panel be invited to consider the request for the role of Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee

to attract a Special Responsibility Allowance and to make a recommendation to the Committee and the County Council; and

- (b) the new Panel (commencing on 1 November 2016) be requested to consider the question of Special Responsibility Allowances on a holistic basis in preparation for the next County Council following the elections in May 2017.

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By: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Communities
Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services

To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 27 September 2016

Subject: Information Point and Members' Area

1. Introduction

- (1) Following staffing redesign proposals put forward by Libraries, Registration & Archives (LRA) a number of Members raised concerns about proposed changes to the staffing of the LRA's Information Services Team that would affect the Information Point (the Wickham Room).
- (2) In response to the concerns raised, both Mr Hill and Mr Cooke reflected and reviewed the original proposals put forward. As a result of this a new joint approach is being proposed that looks at Member services as a whole.

2. Background

- (1) Members of the Committee will be aware that achieving efficiencies in service delivery and savings is an ongoing challenge for the Council and no area of the Council's activities must be overlooked in terms of potential savings. All areas of service delivery are being reviewed and in the context of KCC becoming a commissioning authority it is correct that a regular review of services takes place to ensure they are still delivering the right outcomes and the best possible value for money. Savings and efficiencies must be made in order for the Medium Term Financial Plan targets to be achieved.
- (2) As Cabinet Member for the Libraries, Registration and Archives service, Mike Hill the Cabinet Member and Barbara Cooper the Corporate Director for Growth, Environment and Transport undertook a staff consultation, which contained a proposal which potentially affected the staffing of the Information Services Team. This was in the context of a wider restructure of LRA which was proposed would save Kent County Council £250K revenue costs.
- (3) For the Committee's information, there are currently four LRA members of staff who, as part of the Information Services Team, as well as providing the Ask a Kent Librarian (AKL) service to the general public also provide the Information Point during a normal working week, with only ever one member of staff on duty at any one time.

3. Information Point

- (1) The Committee will be aware that for a number of years, the Information Point has been viewed by elected members and, in particular, those Members who do not have any dedicated support, as one of the key areas of support for finding information, particularly if it is to do with local or central government. The Information Point also provides a valuable library research and summary service, which is appreciated by elected Members
- (2) The Information Point (TIP) supports the authority, individual Members, committees and the officers who support them through the provision of information and library services. For example:
 - A dedicated confidential and impartial enquiry service – TIP responds to enquiries submitted directly by Council Members or KCC officers face-to-face at the Wickham room in Sessions House, by phone or email
 - TIP does not carry out in-depth research or analysis; staff may document pros and cons for a particular issue as described in the resources used (referencing them as such), but do not provide opinion or recommendations. As with the Ask a Kent Librarian general public service work is limited to 'soft research'- the gathering/compilation of data and information and/or signposting to resources/sources relevant to the user enquiry (the level and depth of which are discussed and assessed as part of the enquiry process).
 - The Information Point also contains a number of computers and workstations, which several non-executive members use as their preferred location when they are in County Hall on Council business.
 - Current awareness monitoring (including Parliamentary business)
 - The Daily Digest is a distillation of relevant news and developments from a wide selection of websites - government departments, think tanks, pressure groups, newspapers and specialist media.
 - The Member Information Bulletin, issued weekly, is a compilation of daily Digest material together with decisions, information on committees, consultations and other KCC information aimed at Councillors.

- 'Special bulletins' are issued to summarise points covered in the Queen Speech, Budget and Autumn Statement, as well as covering election results.
 - Consultation monitoring: TIP compiles a database of current consultations which is used to alert Cabinet and CMT when KCC may need to write a response.
 - Maintain mailing lists of district councillors, mayors, leaders etc. (KCC colleagues use them for mailshots).
 - Small selection of quick reference, reports and statistical volumes
 - Access to LRA-funded online subscription and support for corporate procurement of subscriptions
 - Periodicals, national and local newspapers
 - Hot-desking facilities: phone, workstations printing/copying/scanning and study space
 - Signposting to and/or liaison with other KCC (e.g. Public Health & Social Care Library, Research and Evaluation Team...) and external providers of data and information
 - Document supply (books, reports, articles) through the LRA system
 - Induction training and support with search skills and basic IT issues
 - Professional advice e.g. copyright & licensing, sourcing and use of official publications etc.
 - Access point for LRA library services: joining, reservations (including Inter-library loans), pick up and return of library items. 53 people have the Information Point as their home branch. The Information Point issued 402 items in 2014/15 and 767 in 2015/16.
- (3) The Information Point operates the face-to-face service from the Wickham room 5 days a week - Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm (except for Bank, national holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year).

- (4) In addition, phone and email services are covered remotely for a one hour lunchbreak and 5 to 6pm on week days, Saturdays 9am to 5pm and during the week between Christmas and New Year.

Levels of use of the Information Point for 2016/17 to date

Month	Visitors	Average daily visitor (to the nearest person)	Average Hourly Visitor (to the nearest person)
April	109	5	1
May	105	5	1
Jun	131	6	1
Jul	126	6	1

Total enquiries handled by the Information Services Team in 2015/16 by source

Source	2015/16
Company	369
Contact Centre	3,161
Council Member	159 See note 2
KCC	343
Individual	4,670
Libraries	449
Grand Total	9,151

- (5) Of these, the council member and KCC enquiries could be considered as Information Point enquires, which make up approximately 5.5% of the Information Services Team enquiries.

4. Member Support

- (1) The location of the Information Point close to the Members' lounge and Members' desk was deliberate in providing Members with an opportunity to access support in a central location to assist them in discharging their role.
- (2) The Committee will be aware that there are many other officers from whom Members receive direct support once they are called upon e.g. ICT, self –service for Members expenses etc.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- (1) Having listened very carefully to what Members have said as the responsible portfolio holders, we have discussed the opportunities for a more imaginative use of the Members' area around the Members Desk, Members' Lounge and Information Point.
- (2) Bearing in mind the ongoing efficiencies and savings that the Committee will appreciate have to be made, we propose to commission a piece of work with the existing cohort of members so that we can fully understand what they as elected members require in the way of support. This will be from the perspective of the existing Members' Desk and Information Point
- (3) To do this we will undertake a focussed survey of all elected Members before convening the existing cross-party Member Development Group to discuss the outcomes of the survey and make recommendations to the Cabinet Members. We will also look at what other local authorities are doing to learn from practice elsewhere.
- (4) Our intention is to report back to this Committee in the new-year with proposals for the more imaginative use of the Members' area. The intention will be to put in place any changes following the election in May 2017.

6. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to agree to the:

- (a) commissioning of a survey of all elected Members on Member support;
- (b) researching what other local authorities do so that we can learn from best practice elsewhere; and
- (c) invite the existing cross-party Member Development Group to consider their views on Member support once the outcome of the survey is known and make recommendations to the Cabinet Members accordingly, with a view to changes being put in place after the County Council elections in May 2017

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By: Chairman of the independent Member Remuneration Panel
 To: Selection and Member Services Committee – 27 September 2016
 Subject: Flood Risk Management Committee

1. Introduction

- (1) The Panel met on Tuesday 26 July 2016, to consider a referral to the Panel by the Selection and Member Services Committee of a request made to that Committee by Mr Harrison Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee, regarding the proposed payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance for the post of Chairman which he currently occupied. The Panel invited Mr Harrison to make his case in person to the Panel for a Special Responsibility Allowance.
- (2) This report summarises the unanimous conclusions and recommendation of the Panel.

2. The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003

- (1) The Panel had regard to the following provisions of the regulations:

“Special responsibility allowance

5.—(1) A scheme made under this Part may provide, in accordance with paragraph (2), for the payment for each year for which that scheme relates of an allowance (“special responsibility allowance”) to such members of the authority as have such special responsibilities in relation to the authority as are specified in the scheme and are within one or more of the following categories—

- (a) acting as leader or deputy leader of a political group within the authority;
- (b) acting as a member of an executive where the authority are operating executive arrangements within the meaning of Part II of the Local Government Act 2000;
- (c) presiding at meetings of a committee or sub-committee of the authority, or a joint committee of the authority and one or more other authorities, or a sub-committee of such a joint committee;
- (d) representing the authority at meetings of, or arranged by, any other body;
- (e) acting as a member of a committee or sub-committee of the authority which meets with exceptional frequency or for exceptionally long periods;

(f) acting as the spokesman of a political group on a committee or sub-committee of the authority;

(g) acting as a member of an adoption panel within the meaning of the Adoption Agencies Regulations 1983(1);

(h) acting as a member of any committee or sub-committee that deals with any function arising under any enactment authorising the authority to license or control the carrying on of any activity;

(i) carrying out such other activities in relation to the discharge of the authority's functions as require of the member an amount of time and effort equal to or greater than would be required of him by any one of the activities mentioned in subparagraphs (a) to (h) (whether or not that activity is specified in the scheme)."

- (2) The Panel had before them the report presented to the Selection and Member Services Committee which had appended to it the terms of reference of the Flood Risk Management Committee and the report on the activity of the Committee.
- (3) The Panel also had the Members' Allowances Schemes for a number of other authorities and information as to whether or not they paid a Special Responsibility Allowance to any Member who led in discharging this statutory function.
- (4) Of the other Authorities looked at the Panel found a number of ways in which this function was being discharged. The Panel did not find an authority paying a separate allowance to the Member leading on the discharge of this function. For some authorities the lead was being taken by an executive Member or the Scrutiny Committee.

3. Representation made by the Chairman of the Flood Risk Management Committee

- (1) The Panel invited Mr Harrison the Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee to address the Panel.
- (2) Mr Harrison spoke about the work of the Committee and the relationship with the Regional Flood Defence Committee on which he was one of the appointed representatives for the County Council.
- (3) In answer to a question from the Panel about which post Mr Harrison felt the post was akin to in the existing Members' Allowances Scheme he responded the Chairman of the Planning Committee. Mr Harrison expanded on this citing a recent site visit by the Committee to the village of Yalding.

- (4) The Panel heard from Mr Harrison that the Committee had ten of the 12 District Councils represented on it.
- (5) The Panel asked Mr Harrison for some examples of success of the Committee. Mr Harrison cited the creation of the volunteer role of Flood Warden.

4. Conclusions

- (1) The Panel took into account that the function of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee discharges is a Scrutiny Committee function. There was therefore no statutory reason to have a designated Committee for Flood Risk. The Committee had no decision making powers. Its role was to report annually to the Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) The Panel acknowledged that Mr Harrison had approached the role of Chairman of the Committee with his normal enthusiasm and vigour. However, the Panel felt that this alone and the workload of a Committee which has no decision making powers was not a compelling reason for recommending that the post of Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee should receive a Special Responsibility Allowance.

5. Recommendation

The Panel unanimously agreed that they could not support payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance for the post of Chairman of the Kent Flood Risk Management Committee.

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