

Item 13(b)

By: Benjamin Watts, General Counsel
To: County Council – 17 June 2020
Subject: UPDATE OF THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME
Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to update the Members' Allowances Scheme consequent on the Leader's decisions on Executive arrangements and ongoing developments in the governance of the Council.

Recommendation:

That the County Council be asked to agree to the adoption of the updated Members' Allowance Scheme as set out in Appendix B1 to this report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The election of the Leader of Kent County Council took place on 17 October 2019. Under Sections 9.5 and 9.6 of the Constitution, the Leader made determinations about the allocation of responsibilities between the Executive Members and made arrangements for the discharge of Executive functions.
- 1.2 One of these changes was the deletion of the Lead Member for Traded Services role and the introduction of the Lead Member for Partnerships role. The Members' Allowances Scheme requires updating to reflect this change.
- 1.3 Prior to agreeing any substantive changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme, Members must have before them a report of the independent Members Remuneration Panel (MRP). The current Panel were appointed on 20 October 2016 with a term covering 1 November 2016 to 31 October 2020. The Panel members are:
 - a) Steve Wiggett (Chair).
 - b) Margaret Ryder.
 - c) Haider Khan.
- 1.4 On 2 December 2019, the Selection and Member Services Committee requested that the MRP consider the change set out in 1.2 above along with several other changes considered necessary to keep the Scheme in line with the developing governance of the Council (see part 2 below).

- 1.5 The MRP has met to consider these changes and its independent report is contained in Appendix B2. The figures quoted in this report all refer to the 2019/20 scheme.

2. Proposed Changes to the Members' Allowances Scheme

- 2.1 The updated Scheme as proposed is set out in Appendix B1 (the numbering is as set out in the Constitution). The changes from the current scheme are as follows:

- a) Deletion of the SRA for 'Lead Member for Traded Services'. This was set at 65% of the Leader's SRA.
- b) Addition of an SRA for the 'Lead Member for Partnerships.' In line with the recommendation of the MRP, this is to be set at 45% of the Leader's SRA.
- c) Inclusion of the Chair of the Selection and Member Services Committee in the 'Other Committee Chairs' list set out in 21.15(a). This role would receive an SRA of 17.5% of the Leader's SRA in line with the recommendation of the MRP. This SRA will be introduced in full but will be reviewed as part of the review of the entire Scheme due to commence later this year.
- d) Additional wording to clarify the formula for determining the SRA payable to the Leader of each Opposition Group (of at least five Members). This is taken from the recommendation of the MRP.

- 2.2 The updated Scheme raises the total number of SRAs from 39 to 40, which is below the 50% of the total number of Members recommended by the MRP.

- 2.3 In line with the recommendation of the MRP, the question of an SRA for non-executive Members on the Shareholder Board will be considered once it is clearer what the nature of the role will be in practice.

- 2.4 Appendix B1 shows the amended version of the Members' Allowances Scheme as it would look with these changes and is inclusive of the annual increase agreed in Agenda item 13(a). If agreed the Constitution will be amended.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The proposed changes will see a net reduction of £1,280.86 in the total amount payable through SRAs¹.

¹ This figure is based on the Members Allowances Scheme for 2019/20 in place when the MRP produced their report.

4. Recommendation:

That the County Council be asked to agree to the adoption of the updated Members' Allowance Scheme as set out in Appendix B1 to this report.

5. Background Documents

Minutes of the Selection and Member Services Committee, 2 December 2019,
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MId=8516&Ver=4>

6. Contact details

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