

PROCEDURES COMMITTEE – DECISION NOTICE

1 February 2024

Present:-

Councillors J Hart, S Hughes, C Leaver, C Whitton, P Prowse (Chair) and F Letch MBE

Councillor Hodgson (virtual attendance)

Apologies:-

Councillors Y Atkinson

* 1

Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2023 be signed as a correct record.

* 3

Report of the Independent Members Allowances Remuneration Panel for 2024/2025

RESOLVED

(a) that the Report of the Independent Panel be welcomed and its Members be thanked for their work;

(b) that the Committee notes the Report's conclusions and asks the County Council to accept the recommendations outlined below.

i. The basic structure of the current scheme is endorsed and retained.

ii. The Panel feels it important not to depart from its established formula of calculating the basic allowance and therefore the basic allowance increases to £15,082 to take effect from May 2024 and the multipliers be recalculated accordingly. This is based on the Panel's standard formula and other benchmarking, as outlined at paragraphs 6.6 and 6.8.

iii. Careful consideration should be given, in the future, to the levels of allowances to ensure they keep pace with the economy generally.

iv. That based on the benchmarking and the evidence obtained, the Audit Committee Chair SRA be increased to a multiplier of 0.5 from its current rate of 0.25;

v. The overnight rate for London be increased to £180.00, in line with the methodology and reasoning outlined in paragraphs 6.12 and 6.13 and that a more suitable benchmark will be researched.

vi. The sustained reduction in the number of SRA's be welcomed and that the levels be kept below the 50% threshold, as is currently the case;

vii. That the information in Elections literature should be made clearer, especially with regard to the payment of allowances, the public sector discount and the status of access to the LGPS. These are matters that Group Leaders may wish to ensure are brought to the attention of prospective candidates;

viii. That the work being undertaken to support the LGA's debate not hate campaign be supported and welcomed;

ix. That the Panel reiterate their desire that Group Leaders continue to take a robust approach to the performance management of their Members' and places on record their thanks for the levels of reassurance provided by Group Leaders for dealing with performance issues; and

x. The Panel place on record their appreciation to Councillors for their continued Leadership and tireless working in their communities, especially given concerns raised throughout the Report, in terms of workload and added pressures of increased abuse and intimidation.

* 4 **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) - Bailey Report**

(a) that the Report and Recommendations of the independent review carried out by Simon Bailey CBE, QPM which contains a recommendation of enhanced DBS checks for all Councillors in Unitary and Single Tier Authorities who are being considered for appointment to any Committee involved in decisions on the provisions of children's services or services for vulnerable adults, be noted;

(b) that the recommendation of this Report requires legislation and therefore would delay any implementation; and

(c) that Council be recommended to update its DBS Policy to reflect this good practice recommendation for enhanced criminal record checks being mandatory for the Cabinet, given their role in making decisions on the provision of children's services or services for vulnerable adults.

* 5 **Delegated Member Decisions - Revised Guidance and Operating Procedures**

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to amend Part 3c of the Constitution, section 11 as outlined above, with new text shown in red and purple and removed text with a strikethrough, be recommended to the Council.

* 6 **Member Questions at Council Meetings - Review of the Governance Working Group and Proposed Changes.**

RESOLVED that the proposed amendments to section 17 of Standing Orders of the Constitution, as in section 5 of the Report and outlined above with additional text in red (and purple for amendments agreed at the meeting) and a strike through for deleted words, be recommended to the Council.

* 7 **Cabinet Member Reports at Council Meetings - Review of the Governance Working Group and Proposed Changes.**

RESOLVED that

(a) the proposed amendments to the Cabinet Procedure Rules at section 4c of the Constitution (paragraph 16), as outlined in section 5 of the Report and above with new text in red (and purple for that agreed at the meeting) and a strikethrough for removed words be recommended to Council;

(b) that delegated authority be given to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Governance working group, to create a revised template for Cabinet Member Reports; and

(c) Standing Order 5 (m) be recommended for amendment to cross reference the new Cabinet Member Report process and template requirement.

* 8 **Health Scrutiny - New Arrangements**

RESOLVED that sections Part 2: Article 7, Part 3b, and Part 4d, of the Constitution, as set out above be recommended for approval to the Council.