

REPORT TO: INDEPENDANT REMUNERATION PANEL

DATE: 29th NOVEMBER 2011

CONTACT Andrea Grant, Head of Governance and Civic Services

1.0 Background

1.1 At its meeting on 7th September 2011, the Panel made a number of requests for information as follows:

- (1) the Panel wishes to explore the reduction in the number of Members receiving Special Responsibility Allowances from 50% to 40%;
- (2) in connection with (1) above, the Head of Governance and Civic Services be requested to seek the views/options of the Leaders' Group and Members on how this reduction could be achieved;
- (3) it was noted by the Panel that it was obliged to undertake a full review of the Members' Allowance Scheme for implementation in 2012/13 and that to aid them in the review, the Head of Governance and Civic Services be requested to provide information:
 - (i) on reviews being undertaken by Independent Remuneration Panels at other Merseyside Local Authorities to help the Panel focus its deliberations and set benchmarks;
 - (ii) in tabular form showing all Members and the Special Responsibility Allowances they receive;
 - (iii) in chart form showing Cabinet Members and their portfolio responsibilities;
 - (iv) on the attendance of Members at meetings;
 - (v) job descriptions for Members; and
 - (vi) the activities of a selected group of Members over a monthly period that indicates how much time each Member spends on their Council/representative duties;
- (4) a meeting of the Panel be held at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 29 November 2011 at Bootle Town Hall to consider the information referred to above and to formulate recommendations on the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2012/13; and
- (5) Party Group Leaders (or their representatives) be invited to the meeting on 29 November 2011 and to attend at 10.30 a.m.

1.2 This report provides progress and information to the Panel on these issues.

2.0 SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES (SRA's)

2.1 In relation to resolutions (1), (2), (4) and (5) above, the Party Leaders (or their representatives) have been invited to attend the meeting as requested.

3.0 REVIEWS ACROSS OTHER MERSEYSIDE AUTHORITIES

3.1 In response to resolution (3)(i), Wirral MBC has recently reviewed its Scheme of Allowances and the report of their Independent Remuneration Panel is attached at Appendix A. None of the other Merseyside Authorities have reviewed their scheme yet. A table showing allowances across Merseyside is attached at Appendix B.

4.0 CURRENT SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES

4.1 Appendix C shows Members currently receiving special responsibility allowances as requested in resolution 3 (ii).

5.0 CABINET PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 In response to resolution (3)(iii), attached at Appendix D is a table showing Cabinet Portfolio responsibilities across Council functions and the corresponding remits of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. A large scale colour version has been circulated separately.

6.0 ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

6.1 Members attendance from 17th May 2011 (when Committee appointments were made) to date is shown at Appendix E. This fulfils the request contained in resolution 3 (iv). Members of the Panel are asked to note that absence on Council business (eg where there is a clash of meetings) and sickness absence is not identified in these statistics.

7.0 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

7.1 Job descriptions for Councillor posts are set out at Appendix F as requested in resolution 3(v).

8.0 LGA SURVEY

8.1 Attached at Appendix Gi is a summary of the results of the national survey of Councillors carried out by the LGA which indicates time spent on Council activities. Appendix Gii

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

9.1 That Members of the Panel note the information circulated.