

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT ON WEDNESDAY 6TH JUNE, 2012

PRESENT: Canon R. Driver (in the Chair)
Mr. E. Davies, Mr. S. Dickson, Mr. J. Fraser and
Mrs. S. Lowe.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Brodie-Browne, P. Dowd and Papworth
Ms. A. Grant, Head of Governance and Civic
Services
Mr. P. Fraser, Senior Committee Administrator

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

6. MINUTES

The Panel considered the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2012.

RESOLVED:

That subject to reference being made in the Minutes to the fact that:

- (1) due to increasing work commitments, the meeting would be the penultimate one to be attended by Mr. S. Dickson as he had tendered his resignation as a Panel Member; and
- (2) Mr. E. Davies and Mr. J. Fraser were in attendance at the meeting in a shadow capacity prior to becoming full, voting Members of the Panel on 1 July 2012;

the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2012 be confirmed as a correct record.

7. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE SCHEME 2012-13

The Panel considered statistical information relating to Basic Allowances (BA's) paid to Members in the north west region and BA's paid to Members of comparable local authorities, by population, that was extracted from the most recent Local Government Association Survey undertaken in 2008.

The Panel also considered written submissions from Councillors Brodie-Browne, Sir Ron Watson and Welsh regarding the Members' Allowance Scheme; and a draft scheme of Members' Allowances that had been devised in accordance with a proposal submitted by the Chair to the last meeting held on 9 May 2012. The proposal aimed to simplify the Members' Allowance Scheme by introducing only 3 "bands" of Special

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Responsibility Allowance (SRA) based on a multiplier of the BA; and that the introduction of the Scheme as proposed would achieve a £76,680 saving on the current scheme.

Following deliberations on the proposals, the Panel then heard oral representations from Councillors P. Dowd, Brodie-Browne and Papworth (the Labour, Liberal Democrat and Conservative Group Leaders respectively) on the Members' Allowance Scheme. Following their submissions, Councillors P. Dowd, Brodie-Browne and Papworth left the room to enable the Panel Members to formulate their recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

(1) (a) the Council be recommended to adopt the following Members' Allowance Scheme:

Band	Position	How allowance is calculated	Level of Payment	Number of Councillors holding this position	Total Cost
4	Leader of the Council	Basic allowance x 3	£25,560	1	£25,560
3	Cabinet Members (excluding the Leader of the Council)	Basic allowance x 2	£17,040	6	£102,240
2	Senior Councillor	Basic allowance x 1.5	£12,780	9	£115,202
1	Councillor	Basic allowance	£8,520	66	£562,320

- (b) a Senior Councillor as referred to in Band 2 be defined as a Chair of a Committee or a Party Group Leader;
- (c) it be noted that Party Group Leaders have been selected to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance as this is specifically referred to in the "Guidance on Members' Allowances for Local Authorities in England" published by the Department for Communities and Local Government. This guidance stipulates that:

"16. Where one political group is in control, and where an Authority has decided to pay special responsibility allowances, the Authority must make provision for the payment of a special responsibility allowance to at least one member of a minority group"; and

- (d) the payment of allowances in accordance with the above scheme be backdated to 15 May 2012;
- (2) it be noted that the Panel at its next meeting to be held in October will consider the principle of linking increases in the Basic Allowance to APT and C pay rises or the Retail or Consumer Price Index;
- (3) the travelling and subsistence allowance be set at the same rate as for Council officers;
- (4)(i) a dependant's carers' allowance be payable at the national minimum wage up to £60 per week (National minimum wage is £6.08 per hour for over 21's and this equates to nearly 10 hours per week); and
 - (ii) the uptake of the allowance be monitored and reported to the Panel meeting in October;
- (5) the payment to the Chair of the Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority be ended for 2012/13 but be reviewed in subsequent years;
- (6) although the Mayoral Allowance does not fall within the scope of the Members' Allowance Scheme, it be recommended that the Mayoral Allowance be linked to Band 2 (Senior Councillor); and
- (7) it be noted that any Councillor, regardless of level of payment, is able to renounce the receipt of all or any part of their allowance if they choose to do so; and that Members are only entitled to receive one Special Responsibility Allowance even if they hold more than one eligible position.

8. MR. S. DICKSON

The Chair advised that this would be Mr. S. Dickson's last meeting of the Panel; and thanked Mr. Dickson for his valuable contributions and commitment to the Panel over the past 3 years.

RESOLVED:

That the best thanks of the Panel be extended to Mr. Dickson for his valuable role on the Panel and that he be wished every success for the future.