

APPENDIX F

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 20TH MAY 2008

Title:

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

[Wards Affected: N/A]

Summary and purpose:

In December 2003, the Council agreed that the Independent Panel's report on Members' Allowances undertaken in 2003 should not be accepted. In 2004 the Council decided not to request the Independent Panel to undertake a further review in 2005. In June 2005 the Council again decided not to request a review from the Independent Panel. This report recommends that a review be undertaken in 2008.

Environmental implications:

There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Social/community implications and equalities issues:

There are no direct social/community implications arising from this report, but having a reasonable level of allowances might enable people from a broader spectrum of the community to stand as a councillor.

E-Government implications:

There are no direct e-government implications.

Resource and legal implications:

The budget for Members' basic and special responsibility allowances was £176,050 in 2007-08. The 2003 Independent Panel's report recommended a scheme which increased the total cost by £28,000. The Council rejected this on the basis of other pressures on the Council's budget. Given the level of allowances in other similar authorities and the large number of Members at Waverley, it is likely that the Panel's report would have financial implications.

The last Panel review of the scheme cost in the region of £2,500 plus staff time. If Members agree to a review by the Panel in 2008, it would be necessary to carry forward unspent democratic representation budgets from 2007/08 to finance the cost.

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 require all councils to establish and maintain an independent remuneration panel. The Panel will be required to make recommendations to the Council whenever the Council decides to revoke or amend its current scheme.

Background

1. In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003, Waverley has established an Independent Panel to consider its scheme of Members' Allowances. The Panel reviews the allowances scheme when the Council requests this and the Panel's last review was in 2003. In December 2004 and in June 2005, the Council decided not to undertake a further review by the Panel at that time. The Council must periodically consider whether it wishes for a review of the Scheme to be undertaken by the Independent Panel. The current allowances are shown at Annexe 1 for information. The Council is under a duty to convene a Panel to allow for an Independent Panel to review its allowance levels and make recommendations.

The Allowances

2. In the last few years, the Council has agreed to only increase the levels of basic and special responsibility by an annual inflation uplift based on the local staff pay award from 1st April each year. However, since the Independent Panel reviewed the Scheme in December 2003, there have been a number of changes made including:
 - the levels of Special Responsibility allowances for the Licensing, Planning and Standards Committees to reflect the new responsibilities of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen; and
 - the level of Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee.
3. These new allowances were agreed by the Council without referring to the Independent Panel. These allowances would be the subject of proper consideration alongside the other committee responsibilities as part of the Panel review.

Recommendation

That the Executive recommend to Council to request the Independent Panel to undertake a review of Waverley's scheme of Members' allowances in 2008.

Background Papers (DCEX/CEX)

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

CONTACT OFFICERS:

Name: Graeme Clark

Telephone: 01483 523236

E-mail: graeme.clark@waverley.gov.uk

Name: Robin Pellow

Telephone: 01483 523222

E-mail: robin.pellow@waverley.gov.uk

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