

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

22 OCTOBER 2019

Title:

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCES FOR THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Summary and purpose:

On 17 July 2018, Council agreed to re-designate the Standards Panel, as the Standards Committee. At the re-appointment of the Standards Committee in May 2019, a Vice-Chairman of the committee was appointed. The Head of Policy & Governance was asked to review the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) for the positions of Standards Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

This report draws on the findings and recommendations of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel of February 2018, and recommends the increase of the SRA of the Chairman of the Standards Committee, and the introduction of an SRA for the Vice-Chairman, both at the same level as the SRAs for the Chairmen and Vice-Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny, Planning, Licensing & Regulatory and Audit Committees.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Strategy:

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

Financial Implications:

The effect of increasing SRAs for

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed*</u>
Chairman of Standards Committee	£1936.54	£3,299.54
Vice-Chairman	<u>Nil</u>	<u>£1,651.12</u>
	£1,936.54	£4,950.66

*backdated to Annual Council

Total SRAs increase by = £3,014.12

The budget for SRAs is set on the basis of all SRAs being claimed each year, and includes an allowance for up to 8 Executive members in addition to the Leader and Deputy Leader. The Leader currently has only appointed 7 Executive members (besides the Deputy Leader), which generates a saving against the budget of £6,599.37 for the year.

In addition, a member may only claim one SRA, even if they hold more than one qualifying role.

Due to the current arrangements for appointment of the JPC Chairman and Vice-Chairman (also Chairmen of the area planning committees) there is a saving of £4,950.66.

Therefore the increased payment can be accommodated within the current SRA budget of £127,357.36.

Legal Implications:

There is a requirement that local authorities must make any scheme for the following year to commence on 1 April. Schemes can be amended at any time but new schemes can be introduced only from the start of each year commencing on 1 April. The approval of the full Council is necessary to any amendments to existing schemes or the adoption of new schemes.

Climate change implications:

There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

1. Background

- 1.1 On 17 July 2018, Council agreed to re-designate the Standards Panel, as the Standards Committee. This change reflected the way in which the committee operated in practice, which was as a committee meeting quarterly rather than as a standing panel of members to hear code of conduct complaints against councillors as required.
- 1.2 The Standards Panel chairman received a SRA of £1,893 in 2018/19. There was no Vice-Chairman appointed.
- 1.3 At the re-appointment of the Standards Committee in May 2019, a Vice-Chairman of the committee was appointed. The Head of Policy & Governance was asked to review the SRAs for the positions of Standards Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- 1.4 Full Council decides the scheme of Member Allowances, having regard to the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). Council last considered a report and recommendations of the IRP in February 2018 (attached at Annexe 1). The IRP had been convened to review SRAs for the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the O&S committees and to make recommendations, following the increase in the number of O&S committees from 2 to 4.
- 1.5 The IRP also made recommendations on the SRAs for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Audit Committee, with the effect that the SRAs for Chairmen of and Vice-Chairmen of the O&S Committees, the Planning Committees, Licensing & Regulatory Committee and Audit Committee, were all aligned at the following (2019/2020) rates:

Chairmen	£3,299.18
Vice-Chairmen	£1,651.12

- 1.6 In coming to their recommendations on the SRA, the IRP recognised the importance of the vice-chairmen's role, including as a development opportunity for members, and on that basis recommended an increase to the SRA budget to accommodate the level of SRAs for the O&S and Audit Committee chairmen and vice-chairmen.
- 1.7 There is a requirement that the IRP reviews the Member Scheme of Allowances at least every 4 years, so there is no pressing requirement to review the Scheme. Given the Governance Review now underway, we would not expect to launch a review of the Scheme before the outcome is known, although it may be worth carrying out a review at that point.
- 1.8 We have consulted with South East Employers, who provide advice to Councils on member allowances, on whether the Council could take account of the report and recommendations of the IRP's 2018 report in agreeing a change to the Scheme to address the issue of the Standards Committee SRAs. They have confirmed this would be an acceptable approach to take.
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Recommendation

It is recommended that Council agrees to amend the Schedule Special Responsibility Allowances within the Scheme of Members Allowances to increase the SRA for the Chairman of the Standards Committee to same level as for other Committee Chairmen, and to introduce an SRA for the Vice-Chairman of the Standards Committee at the same level as for other Committee Vice-Chairmen, and that these SRAs are backdated to the beginning of the current Council year.

Background Papers

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

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