

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority

Human Resources Committee

Item: 6

28 October 2015

HFRA Members' Allowances Scheme

Report of the Clerk

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1 Summary

- 1.1 This report discusses options the HFRA Members' Allowances Scheme prior to the agreement of a new Scheme from April 2016.

2 Recommendation

That the Human Resources Committee:

RECOMMEND TO THE FULL AUTHORITY:

- 2.1 That the current Members' Allowances Scheme is fit for purpose and be frozen and if necessary extended until the outcome of the review of governance structures is known and any agreed changes are implemented.
- 2.2 That the Human Resources Committee be tasked with a full review of Members' Allowances, on conclusion of the governance review, to take into account any governance changes agreed by the Authority and make appropriate recommendations to the Authority for revisions to the Scheme.

3 Statutory Requirements

- 3.1 The Local Authority (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 require local authorities, including fire and rescue authorities, to make a scheme providing for the payment to members of basic allowance and any other specified allowances the Authority intends to make in respect of each year commencing 1 April. The scheme must be made by the Authority before it comes into force. Under the provisions of the Members' Allowances Regulations, it is possible for the Fire and Rescue Authority to make a scheme for an annual adjustment of allowances to be ascertained by reference to an index specified by the Authority, for a maximum of four years.
- 3.2 Before making a scheme, county and district councils are required to have regard to the recommendations of an independent remuneration panel. The position is slightly different for fire and rescue authorities, who are required to have regard to any recommendation of independent remuneration panels established by those authorities by whom its members are nominated. In this

case, those authorities are Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council.

- 3.3 For a number of years, the Fire Authority has agreed to extend the Members' Allowances Scheme for 12 months at a time, thus the Scheme has effectively remained stable since 2010.

4 Current Members' Allowances Scheme

- 4.1 The current Members' Allowances Scheme was adopted by the HFRA in February 2015, for implementation in April 2015, for a one year period. The Scheme that was agreed was an extension of the 2010-15 Schemes. The current Scheme is attached at appendix 1 of this report.

- 4.2 At the meeting of the Fire Authority in February 2015, it was also resolved:

"The Authority agreed to task the Human Resources Committee to undertake a review of the Authority's Scheme during 2015/16 and to make recommendations on any proposed amendments to the Authority during 2015/16"

5 Review of Governance

- 5.1 At the September 2015 meeting of the Fire Authority, it was announced that Councillors Fairhurst and Fuller would take on the informal positions of efficiency and effectiveness champions. Through these positions, and in consultation with other Members, officers and stakeholders, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Fire Authority will be reviewed. The aim is to ensure that the Authority is in the best position to lead the Service in its delivery of excellent quality services to Hampshire and to remain resilient and responsive to change and challenges in the future.
- 5.2 The scope of the review will focus on the role, capacity, robustness and responsiveness of the Authority and as yet its recommendations, if any, are unknown.
- 5.3 Should an Authority, such as Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority, agree significant changes to its governance structure, including to the roles and responsibilities designated to specific Members, it would be necessary to evaluate the Members' Allowances Scheme in light of those changes.

6 Review of Members' Allowances

- 6.1 There are a number of methods through which the Human Resources Committee could review the Members' Allowances Scheme in light of the duty placed upon it to do so by the Authority.
- 6.2 There is no known dissatisfaction with the current Scheme, which has been in place since 2010, nor has there been a structural change requiring a review of any Special Responsibility Allowances. The current context is of the review of governance described in paragraph 4 above and the unknown impact, if any,

that this will have on the future structure of the Authority and the roles of Members. The combination of these factors suggests that it is not appropriate at this point to dedicate Member and officer time to a review of the Scheme. Such a review would be better held on the conclusion of the governance review, at which point a clearer picture of the future would be available.

7 People Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The proposals in this report are considered compatible with the provisions of the equality and human rights legislation.
- 7.2 The payment of allowances to local authority members enables persons from a wide variety of backgrounds and economic circumstances to consider participation in public life.

8 Environmental and Sustainability impact assessment

- 8.1 There are no environmental impacts identified.

9 Resource implications

- 9.1 A review of the Members' Allowances Scheme would draw on officer resources from democratic services, legal services and human resources. It would also require consultation with Members of the Authority and with representatives from the Independent Remuneration Panels of each of the three Authorities.

10 Section 100D – Local Government Act 1972 – background papers

- 10.1 The following documents disclose the facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and has been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report.

N.B. The list excludes:

Published works.

Documents that disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.

TITLE	FILE
None	

HAMPSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

**THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES' (MEMBERS ALLOWANCES) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS
2003**

MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2015/16

	£ per annum
(i) Basic Allowance	2,943
(ii) Special Responsibility Allowances	
<p>Only one special responsibility allowance is payable to any Member under the scheme. <u>(The allowances in brackets will not be paid whilst the current post holder receives a higher special responsibility allowance in respect of another post).</u></p>	
Chairman of the Authority	14,469
Vice-Chairman of the Authority	(1,769)
Chairman of Committees (x 4)	
Finance and General Purposes	7,305
Standards and Governance	3,535
Human Resources	7,305
Performance Review	4,121
Vice-Chairman of Committees (x 4)	
Finance and General Purposes	1,769
Standards and Governance	881
Human Resources	1,769
Performance Review	1,063
Independent Person to the Fire Authority (In accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act)	500
Minority Spokespersons on HFRA:	
Liberal Democrat Party	7,238
Labour Party	3,616
UK Independence Party	3,616
Member for Communication Liaison (no appointment made)	(1,063)
<p>Financial recognition for Members involved in Disciplinary/Grievance Hearings (should it be necessary for Members to be involved, financial recognition to equate with LGA rates in such cases)</p>	