

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE: 10TH FEBRUARY 2021
REPORT OF: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE AND COMMISSIONING
AUTHOR: ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT: MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME 2021-22

Purpose of Report

1. To allow Members to approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22.

Recommended: That Members

- [1] Approve the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2021-22 (Appendix 1);
and
- [2] Confirm that a review of Member Champion roles should be concluded
within the next 12 months.

Background

2. A review of the Members' Allowances Scheme has recently been concluded. It was overseen by the Governance and Constitution Committee. A copy of the report considered by the Committee at its meeting on 27th January 2021 is attached to this report as Appendix 2. This includes a report from the independent reviewer (a member of a local independent remuneration panel). The minutes of the Committee appear elsewhere on the Agenda.

Information

3. The Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22, as recommended by Governance and Constitution Committee, is attached to this report as Appendix 1. Members will see that the Scheme is substantially the same as the scheme that it replaces.
4. The independent reviewer commented in her report upon the number of Member Champions and recommended that a review should take place within 12 months so that the Fire Authority can 'consider whether each of the Member Champion roles is necessary and satisfy itself that each provides a meaningful benefit'. This was accepted by Governance and Constitution Committee which plans to oversee the review. The rationale is explained in section 5.3 of the independent reviewer's report (see page 51 of the agenda pack).

Financial Implications

5. The Members' Allowances Scheme 2021-22 is substantially the same as the existing scheme. The small changes included within the Scheme can be funded from the Authority's existing budget for Members' allowances. Currently, it appears unlikely that Members' allowances will be uplifted during 2021-22.

Legal Implications

6. The provisions governing members' allowances are contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. Regulation 10 requires a members' allowances scheme to be made before the beginning of each year.
7. Part 2 of the Regulations prescribes the allowances that may be paid and rules relating to such allowances. Part 3 of the Regulations sets out the requirements for members' allowances schemes, e.g. the application of indexation for annual adjustments to schemes. Part 4 of the Regulations is concerned with the role of the independent remuneration panel [IRP]. Local authorities (e.g. district, county and London boroughs) must have regard to recommendations of an IRP before they make or amend their scheme. A combined fire authority has a different obligation: it must have regard to the recommendations made by the IRPs of local authorities that appoint its Members (i.e. the constituent authorities). The Fire Authority is not required to have its own IRP.

Equality and Diversity Implications

8. There are no equality and diversity implications.

Environmental Implications

9. There are no environmental implications.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE