

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

ITEM : 6

MEETING OF : CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY
DATE : 10 FEBRUARY 2016
REPORT OF : HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
AUTHOR : ANDREW LEADBETTER

SUBJECT : MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2016-17

Purpose of Report

1. To provide Members with details of the Members' Allowances Scheme and current allowances to assist them in determining the level of Members' Allowances for 2016-17.

Recommended That Members determine:

- [1] the Members Allowances Scheme for 2016-17 (contained in Appendix 1); and
- [2] that any National Joint Council (NJC) increase be applied to the Scheme from the date specified in the NJC notification.

Background

2. The Fire Authority previously decided that the index to be used in relation to any annual increase to the Members Basic, Special Responsibility (and independent (non-elected) members) allowances should be the National Joint Council (NJC) rate.
3. The current scheme for 2015-16 was approved by the Fire Authority at its meeting on 11th February 2015. Members approved an increase of 2.20% in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services agreed Payscale and Allowances 2014-2016. They also applied the increase from 1st January 2015.

Information

4. The National Joint Council is currently negotiating the 2016 pay deal with the relevant unions and it is anticipated that any increase, once agreement has been reached by the parties, will be applied from 1st April 2016. With this in mind, Members are asked to consider and approve the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2016-17 (**attached as Appendix 1**). This Scheme will be applied until such time as the NJC publishes the Payscale and Allowances for 2016. At that point the Scheme will be uplifted by the NJC rate from the date specified by the NJC.

Review of Members' Allowance Scheme

5. A comprehensive review of the Members' Allowances Scheme is normally carried out by the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel was due to reconvene in Autumn 2015 but the Governance and Constitution Committee agreed to defer the review until 2016 (to take effect from 2017-18). The Committee also asked officers to seek alternatives to the engagement of the Panel provided that an independent element was retained in any review. Appendix 2 to this report provides an extract of the minutes of the Governance and Constitution Committee on 15th July 2015, for Members information.

Financial Implications

6. Any annual increases applied to Members' allowances can be contained within the Authority's budget.

Legal Implications

7. Whilst the Authority has already agreed its approach to the uplift of allowances Members could apply a different rate if they believed this was justified.

Equality & Diversity Implications

8. There are no equality and diversity implications.

Environmental Implications

9. There are no environmental implications.

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