

## **CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

### **ITEM: 9**

**MEETING OF** : CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY  
**DATE** : 12 FEBRUARY 2014  
**REPORT OF** : HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES  
**AUTHOR** : ANDREW LEADBETTER

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**SUBJECT : REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS' ALLOWANCE  
SCHEME**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. This paper provides details of the final recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel following a series of meetings held to conclude the current review of the Members' Allowance Scheme.
2. The Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Suzanne Geoghegan) will introduce the report at the meeting and Members are asked to consider the final recommendations of the Panel.

### **Recommended That:**

- [1] the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Members' allowances as set out in the report be considered, accepted and implemented as from 1 April 2014;
- [2] the revised Members' Allowance scheme be approved for 2014/15 (attached at Appendix 2); and
- [3] it be noted that the next comprehensive review of the Members' Allowance Scheme is scheduled for 2016/17, subject to any significant changes to the current structure prior to this date.

### **Background**

#### **Independent Remuneration Panel Review 2013-14**

3. The Authority's Independent Remuneration Panel met on a number of occasions between October 2012 and January 2013 to conduct a comprehensive review of the Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme.
4. The Panel's final report was submitted to the Authority in February 2013 for consideration. Members accepted the recommendations of the Panel for 2013/14 and also agreed that the Panel should reconvene in Autumn 2013 to complete its review and make recommendations for 2014/15 and beyond.

## **Information**

### **Conclusion of Independent Remuneration Panel Review**

5. The Panel has met on three further occasions to conclude the review of the Authority's Members' Allowance Scheme and has received a range of information in respect of the allowances which it had identified for further review. Member representatives attended one meeting of the Panel to provide their views/comments.
6. A summary of the Panel's work and the Panel's final recommendations is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. A copy of the proposed Members' Allowance Scheme for 2014/15 is also attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
7. It was agreed, as part of the recommendations in 2013, that any annual increase to the allowances would match the NJC (Green Book) pay award. This was applied for 2013-14 and will be applied for 2014/15 and 2015/16 in line with the implementation of pay awards to employees.
8. The Independent Remuneration Panel will be reconvened in the autumn of 2015 to carry out the next comprehensive review of members' allowances for 2016/17 and beyond. However if there are any significant changes to the current Fire Authority structure prior to this date the Panel will be asked to reconvene to review any allowances which are affected.

### **Financial Implications**

9. The cost of the existing scheme for the Basic, Special Responsibility Allowances and other payments (excluding travel and subsistence) is £133,747. The cost of the proposed scheme would be £130,233. However some contingency will need to be built into the budget for any costs incurred through the introduction of those allowances that are paid on an ad-hoc basis (e.g. payment to Independent Persons and attendees of North West Fire and Rescue Partnership Board meetings).
10. The cost of any annual increases, in line with the employees pay increases, will need to be factored into the budget-setting process. The budget will be subject to the Authority's routine budget monitoring processes.

### **Legal Implications**

11. The Fire Authority is required to have a scheme to cover its Members' Allowances. However it is not bound to have an Independent Remuneration Panel.

## **Equality & Diversity Implications**

12. There are no specific equality and diversity implications in relation to this report.

## **Environmental Implications**

13. There are no specific environmental implications in relation to this report.

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) 2003.