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**Report of Principal Corporate Governance Officer**

**Report to Head of Governance Services**

**Date: tbc**

**Subject: Annual Updating of Members' Allowances Scheme**

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|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Are specific electoral wards affected?<br>If relevant, name(s) of ward(s):   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Is the decision eligible for call-In?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?<br>If relevant, access to information procedure rule number:<br>Appendix number: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

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**Summary of main issues**

1. This report sets out the annual update in accordance with paragraph 5.1 of the Member Allowances Scheme

**Recommendations**

2. The Head of Governance Services is requested to approve the consequential amendments to Schedule 1 to the Members' Allowances Scheme (shown at Appendix A attached) in order to reflect the annual update in allowances now due for 2016.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 This report sets out consequential amendments to Schedule 1 of the Members' Allowances Scheme, necessary to give effect to the annual uplift linked to the negotiated pay settlement agreed through the National Joint Committee for 2016/17 which is now due.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 The Members' Allowances Scheme sets out details of the Basic, Special Responsibility, Travel and Dependent Carers' Allowances payable to Councillors and Co-optees in respect of their roles.
- 2.2 In June 2016 Full Council considered a report from the Independent Remuneration Panel recommending inter alia an extension of the period for the annual updating of allowances. As a result of this Paragraph 5.1 of the Members' Allowances Scheme now provides that the amounts referred to "will be increased yearly on 1 October in line with the headline pay increase negotiated through the National Joint Committee for Local Government Employees... until June 2020 or until an earlier review by the Independent Remuneration Panel."
- 2.3 Following discussions with the Leader, the previous settlement agreed through the NJC (for 2014/15) was not applied by way of an uplift to Members' allowances in 2015. In addition from 2011 to present, Members have taken a voluntary 3% reduction on all Special Responsibility Allowances over the value of £7,000 per annum.

## **3 Main issues**

- 3.1 Schedule 1 to the Members' Allowances Scheme sets out the sums payable in respect of Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances. Schedule 2 sets out the sums payable in respect of Travel Allowances and Carers Allowance.
- 3.2 The NJC pay settlement for 2016/17 has been agreed at 1% for local government employees.
- 3.3 Appendix A to this report sets out Schedules 1 as amended to give effect to the agreed 1% uplift. This Appendix also sets out Schedule 2 which illustrates, as per paragraph 8.1 the Members' Allowances Scheme, changes to the Travel and Subsistence rates to ensure these are now are comparable with those claimable by officers.
- 3.4 It is the intention of Members that the voluntary reduction of 3% on Special Responsibility Allowances over £7,000 will continue for the time being.

## **4 Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

4.1.1 The Leader and Deputy Leader have been consulted in respect of whether to proceed with the uplift for the 2016/17 year and have indicated that they are in favour of so doing. This report sets out the consequential amendments to the Allowances scheme necessary to give effect to the annual uplift.

4.1.2 Opposition Group Leaders have been notified of the proposed changes; the Leaders of the Conservative Group, the Liberal Democrat Group and Morley Borough Independent Group have indicated that their groups are supportive of the annual uplift whilst the Leader of the Green Group has advised that his group's view is that the members allowance scheme is too generous and that any proposed increase would not be taken by his group's members.

### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

4.2.1 There are no implications for this report.

### **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

4.3.1 There are no specific considerations for this report.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 Having regard to the overall budget cost of applying the uplift (this being a full year effect of £25k) to Members' allowances the uplift is affordable from funds available within the allowances scheme budget.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, access to information and call In**

4.5.1 This decision sets out consequential amendments to the Constitution will be treated as a significant operational decision and published in accordance with the Executive and Decision Making Procedure Rules. The Members' Allowances Scheme and its schedules are published within the Council's Constitution and available to the public.

### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 There are no specific considerations for this report.

## **5 Conclusions**

5.1 The consequential amendments are in accordance with the provisions of the Members' Allowances Scheme as amended in accordance with the decision of Council in June 2016 to extend the period of annual uplift to June 2020.

## **6 Recommendations**

6.1 The Head of Governance Services is recommended to approve the consequential amendments shown at Appendices A and B to this report.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.