

Part I
Item No:
Main author: Ka Ng
Executive Member: Cllr James
Broach
All wards

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL
COUNCIL – 5 FEBRUARY 2024
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY ALLOWANCE

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the last Council meeting on 15 November 2023, Council agreed to expand the remit of the Campus West Cabinet Panel and rename it to Community Cabinet Panel. Council also agreed to promote the Climate Change Member Panel to Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel. These will take effect in the new municipal year.
- 1.2 It was also agreed that the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) will need to be called to consider the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the new Cabinet Panel Chairs as well as to review the SRA for the Standard Committee Chair.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the recommendations from the IRP, which are detailed in Appendix A.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That Council agrees the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel and approves the proposed Special Responsibility Allowance for the new Cabinet Panel Chairs and Standard Committee Chair as set out in Appendix A, payable with effect from the beginning of the Municipal year 2024/25.

3 Explanation

- 3.1 At the Council meeting in November 2023, Council agreed the terms of reference for the new Community Cabinet Panel and the Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel. These were shared with the IRP as well as the Council report setting out the rationale for setting up these panels.
- 3.2 Members of IRP also considered the Standards Committee Chair SRA at the request of the Council.
- 3.3 The IRP met and their recommendations are set out in Appendix A
- 3.4 It should be noted that as agreed by Council in July 2022, the current Member Allowance Scheme would end in May 2025, with a new four-year scheme required to be developed by Officers and the IRP to take effect from 1 June 2025. Therefore, these proposed SRAs could change again after 2024/25.

Implications

4 Legal Implications

- 4.1 Each council must set members' allowances in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. Before an authority makes or amends a scheme, it has a legal duty to have regard to the recommendations made by its IRP.
- 4.2 The IRP must form at least 3 members, none of whom is a councillor of the authority nor would be so disqualified from being a councillor. The current IRP consist of 5 members who meet these criteria.
- 4.3 The council must ensure that any IRP recommendations and agreed members' allowance schemes are duly publicised in accordance with the statutory requirements.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 It is proposed that the level of SRAs for Community Cabinet Panel, Climate Biodiversity Cabinet Panel, and Standards Committee are amended in line with the IRP's recommendations.
- 5.2 These proposals will lead to a net increase in costs of around £2k. However, the actual costs may be less than the total budget for allowances, as Councillors may only receive one special responsibility allowance at any time. Therefore the actual final implications will not be known until after May 2024 Elections.

6 Risk Management Implications

- 6.1 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

7 Security and Terrorism Implication(s)

- 7.1 There are no security and terrorism implications arising from this report.

8 Procurement Implication(s)

- 8.1 There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

9 Climate Change Implication(s)

- 9.1 There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

10 Human Resources Implication(s)

- 10.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

11 Health and Wellbeing Implication(s)

- 11.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

12 Communication and Engagement Implication(s)

12.1 There are no communications and engagement implications arising from this report.

13 Link to Corporate Priorities

13.1 The subject of this report is linked to the priority of running an effective council.

14 Equality and Diversity

14.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was not completed because this report does not propose changes to existing service-related policies or the development of new service-related policies.

Name of author: Ka Ng
Title: Chief Executive and Returning Officer
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