

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL FROM CABINET ON 15 MARCH 2022

CAB114 CALLED IN MATTERS - MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

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The Chair reported that CAB103 Members Allowances Independent Review from the meeting on 9 February 2022 was called in, considered and upheld at the Corporate Performance Panel meeting on 3 March 2022.

The CPP minute had been distributed and the recommendations were considered by Cabinet.

Councillor Moriarty spoke under standing order 34 and explained that the call in had been upheld on his casting vote and had resolved as below:

RESOLVED: The Corporate Performance upheld the call in and supported the Cabinet recommendations subject to:

- 1) Requesting Cabinet to ask the Independent Remuneration Panel to undertake a review on the special responsibility allowances for them to be equitable as a matter of urgency.
- 2) Asking Cabinet to take into account the debate and discussion at the Corporate Performance Panel before coming to a decision to go forward to Full Council.

Councillor Parish addressed Cabinet under standing order 34 in support of the allocation of increased levels of opposition leader special responsibility allowances.

The Chair drew attention to the advice received from the Monitoring Officer in relation to the matter in that no changes other than inflationary should be made at this stage. He drew attention to the Cabinet's recommendations made at its meeting on 9 February.

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Corporate Performance Panel, had listened to the members addressing Cabinet under standing order 34 and debated the matter. On being put to the vote it was agreed that the original recommendations made by Cabinet be adhered to and considered by Council at its Special Meeting on 23 March 2022.

RECOMMENDED: 1) Having considered in detail the recommendations of the IRP, Cabinet considers that there two issues for not making significant changes Members' Allowances for the year commencing 1 April 2021. Firstly, the current financial climate is not propitious for increasing the overall sum paid to Councillors, which is the effect of the IRP's review. Secondly, there have been significant changes to working practices as a result of the pandemic, with Councillors seeing a wholesale change of having to carry out all of their duties from home, with all meetings conducted via online means, i.e. Teams and Zoom. This has resulted in what might amount to permanent changes to working practices and therefore a review would be better conducted when those revisions have been fully evaluated.

2) That existing allowances be increased in line with the inflationary increase of the officers' pay award, effective from 1 April 2021.

3) In accordance with the Regulations, Cabinet recommends that allowances for a maximum period of the next 3 years commencing 2022/23 should continue to be indexed in line with the officers' pay award. This is in compliance with the Regulations. An IRP may be called at any time should the need arise or be otherwise appropriate but in any case will be called no later than autumn 2024 to conduct a further review and to report its findings in sufficient time to allow a revised scheme to be approved by Council, in accordance with the regulations, to come into effect on 1 April 2025.

4) That, subject to receiving Council approval, the pecuniary implications to be paid in the current financial year.