

# MINUTES

meeting: **STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

date: **18 NOVEMBER 2010**

**PRESENT:-**

Mr W A Parker (Chairman)  
Councillors Gwinnett, Jones, Miles and Turner  
Mr K R Aithal, Mr J Harris, Mr G W Hurd, Mr A W Lee and  
Mr R C Tyler-Morris  
(Independent Members)

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:-**

P Main - Chief Finance Officer  
F Davis - Group Manager (Advocacy Services)  
L Banbury - Democratic Support Officer, Office of the  
Chief Executive

**BY INVITATION:-**

Mr D Seager - Chairman of the Independent  
Remuneration Panel

**Wolverhampton**  
City Council



### **Declarations of Interest**

- 36 Councillors Gwinnett, Jones, Miles and Turner declared personal interests in agenda item 5 (Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel) as Members of the Council and therefore affected by the proposals outlined in the report.

### **Minutes**

- 37 Resolved:-
- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2010 be approved as a correct record.
  - (b) That the minutes of the meeting of the Assessment Sub-Committee held on 7 October 2010 be approved as a correct record and adopted.

### **Freedom of the City – Rachael Heyhoe Flint**

- 38 Pursuant to resolution 27, the Chairman advised that Honorary Freedom of the City had been conferred on Rachael Heyhoe Flint at an extraordinary meeting of full Council on 3 November 2010.

### **Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (Appendix 1/29)**

Mr D Seager, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, attended the meeting to present the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for a revised Scheme of Members' Allowances.

The Democratic Support Officer circulated the resolution from the Special Advisory Group, who had considered the report on 12 November 2010. The main objections of the Special Advisory Group related to the proposals to remove the Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) for Shadow Chairs, Shadow Vice-Chairs and Shadow Portfolio Holders. The Special Advisory Group resolved that:-

- I. The current basic allowance be frozen at £8,890.
- II. A 6% reduction be made on all Special Responsibility/Mayoral Allowances.
- III. No new SRAs be paid outside the total number of SRAs in the current Members' Allowance Scheme.
- IV. 20% of any savings be redirected into Member Development.
- V. The Member Allowance Scheme be revised in accordance with I. and III. Above and the revised Scheme be implemented with effect from the start of the 2011/12 municipal year.

The Council Members at this meeting indicated that the SAG had taken regard of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel but the SAG recommendations had received cross party support.

On a point of clarification, the Group Manager (Advocacy Services) advised that the revised Members' Allowance Scheme was subject to final approval by full Council and that Council would have

regard to the recommendations of this Committee and the SAG. She further advised that the Members' Allowance Scheme was implemented for a specific period and that any revisions could not be pre-dated with the consequence that Members had to pay back allowances already received.

The Committee noted that the SAG did not address the following recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel:-

- Recommendation 9 – Change in size of minority group before leader qualifies for Group Leader Allowance
- Recommendations 17-19 and 21-23 – Transfer of Superannuation Committee Allowances to the West Midlands Local Government Pension Fund.
- Recommendation 35 – Renaming of the Member Champion
- Recommendations 44-45 – Payment of an allowance to the Standards Committee Chairman.

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Resolved:-

(a) That the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel and recommendations of the Special Advisory Group be referred for consideration by full Council with a recommendation that the revised Members Allowances Scheme be implemented with effect from 1 January 2011.

(b) That the issues not addressed by the Special Advisory Group, as outlined above, be considered in order for any revisions to be implemented with effect from the commencement of the 2011/2012 municipal year.

(NOTE:- Councillors Jones, Miles and Turner requested that there names be recorded as voting against the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. Mr Hurd abstained from the vote on this issue)

### **Revision of the Constitution 2010/2011 (Appendix 1/30)**

The Group Manager (Advocacy Services) presented a report, which sought endorsement of mid year revisions to the Council's Constitution for approval at the next full Council meeting.

The Democratic Support Officer circulated amendments to the recommendations made by the Special Advisory Group at their meeting on 12 November 2010; these were supported by the Standards Committee.

Responding to a question from an Independent Member regarding foreign travel, the Chief Finance Officer advised that the detailed itinerary for any such travel would be subject to approval of the relevant service director.

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Resolved:-

That the proposed amendments to the May 2010 version of the City Council's Constitution, as outlined in the report, be endorsed for approval by full Council, subject to the following amendments made by the Special Advisory Group:-

- (i) The proposed addition to Part 6/4 (Members Travelling and Subsistence Allowance) being included as a note rather than a clause;
- (ii) Further consideration by the Chief Legal Officer, as part of the planned fundamental review of the Constitution, as to whether the Code and Protocol proposed in Part 5 (Code of Practice for Employees – Travel, Subsistence, Hospitality and Gifts – Section 7 [Foreign Travel]) needs to be included in the Constitution or would be best suited for inclusion elsewhere;
- (iii) The inclusion of the words 'and a record be maintained' at the end of the proposed condition (ix) to part 5 (Code of Practice for Employees – Travel, Subsistence, Hospitality and Gifts – Section 7 [Foreign Travel]), and
- (iv) The inclusion of the words 'officer of the Council' after the word 'No' and the deletion of the word 'person' in point 1 of the proposed new section after Accounting in Part 4/71 (Financial and Procedure Rules).

**Revision of the Constitution 2010/2011 – Contract Procedure Rules (Appendix 1/31)**

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Resolved:-

That consideration of this item be deferred until the meeting of the Standards Committee scheduled to take place on 13 January 2011.