

# Wolverhampton City Council

## OPEN DECISION ITEM

Committee/ Panel	<b>STANDARDS COMMITTEE</b>	Date: <b>21 April 2011</b>
Originating Service Group(s)	<b>DELIVERY</b>	
Contact Officer(s)/	<b>SUSAN KEMBREY</b>	
Telephone Number(s)	<b>01902 (554910)</b>	
Title/Subject Matter	<b>MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME: REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL – MATTERS REFERRED FROM FULL COUNCIL</b>	

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### 1.0 **Recommendation**

#### 1.1 That full Council be recommended

- (i) to approve a revision to the 2011/12 Members' Allowance Scheme to pay a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Leader of a Minority Opposition Group only if the Minority Group comprises 5 or more Members of the Council, as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report
- (ii) to not approve the renaming of the Member Champion as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report
- (iii) to not approve the payment of an allowance to the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee as set out in paragraph 3.2 of the report

## 2.0 **Purpose**

2.1 To recommend to full Council a number of revisions to the Members' Allowance Scheme

## 3.0 **Background**

3.1 Full Council at its meeting on 15 December 2011, approved revisions to the 2011/12 Members' Allowances Scheme following consideration of the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). However, there were a small number of recommendations from the IRP, set out below, that had not been addressed by either the Special Advisory Group or the Standards Committee:-

- Change in size of minority group size before the Leader of such a Group qualifies for a Special Responsibility Allowance;
- Renaming of the Member Champion to give more clarity to the purpose of the role, and
- Payment of an allowance to the Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee.

3.2 The Special Advisory Group considered these matters at its meeting on 1 March 2011 and subsequently recommend the Standards Committee as follows:-

- To pay a Special Responsibility Allowance to the Leader of a Minority Opposition Group only if the Minority Group comprises 5 or more Members of the Council
- No changes be made to the name of the Member Champion.
- No allowance be paid for the role of Independent Chairman of the Standards Committee.

3.3 In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, the Standards Committee should have regard to the recommendations of the Special Advisory Group when making any recommendations to full Council on revisions to the Constitution

## 4.0 **Legal Implications**

4.1 The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 specify the processes for the review of councillor Allowances including the establishment of an Independent Remuneration Panel and how the Council should consider the reports provided by the Panel.

[MW/150211/J]

## 5.0 **Financial Implications**

5.1 There would be no financial implication if the size of a minority group were reduced to a minimum of five before the leader of such a group qualifies for an allowance rather than six at present as provision for the payment of such an allowance is made within the existing allowances budget even though currently no allowance is paid. The budget provides for a payment of £4,220.

- 5.2 A change to the title of the current Member Champion would have no financial implications
- 5.3 No budgetary provision is currently made for the payment of a special responsibility allowance to the Independent Chair of the Standards Committee

[DM/15022012/Y]

6.0 **Equalities Implications**

- 6.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel has borne in mind the Council's equality and diversity policy whilst carrying out its review of the members allowances scheme in order to ensure that no individual or community group is deterred or prevented from serving or seeking election to the Council.

7.0 **Environmental Implications**

- 7.1 This report contains no direct environmental implications.

8.0 **Schedule of Background Papers**

Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003  
Wolverhampton City Council Constitution Scheme of Member Allowances  
Department for Communities and Local Government. Guidance on Regulation for Local Authority Allowances  
Report to Special Advisory Group 1 March 2011