

MEETING	THE COUNCIL
DATE	13, MAY, 2010.
SUBJECT	MEMBERS ALLOWANCES SCHEME
PURPOSE	TO ADOPT THE SCHEME SHOWN IN THE APPENDIX.
AUTHOR	DILYS PHILLIPS, HEAD OF DEMOCRACY AND LEGAL.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER	COUNCILLOR J. R. JONES, SENIOR LEADER RESOURCES.

1. The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales was published in February, 2010. In it the Panel recommends allowances for members for 2010/11.
2. As a result of the Panel's report the Council must revise its allowances scheme. The proposed allowances were discussed and scrutinised at the Principal Scrutiny Committee on the 23, April, 2010. The Committee recommends that the Council adopts the scheme in the appendix.
3. Attention is drawn to the following matters in the scheme:
 - 3.1 The allowances for 2010/11 will be frozen at 2009/10 levels, without an inflation increase. This follows on from the Council's decisions in setting the budget not to include any extra funds in the budget for increasing allowances.
 - 3.2 Allowances will no longer be paid to Vice-Chairs (nor to the Chair of the Employments Appeals Committee). This is in accordance with the Panel's decision to abolish allowances for Vice-Chairs and to restrict the number of Committees on which an allowance may be paid to the Chair. On the recommendation of the Principal Scrutiny Committee a letter has been sent to the Panel to express dissatisfaction with the decision to remove the Vice-Chairs' allowances.
 - 3.3 Although the Panel has placed allowances for the Chairs of scrutiny, planning, licensing and audit committees in the same category, the scheme maintains the historic differentiation between the allowances for the chairs of scrutiny and area planning committees on the one hand and the chairs of audit, licensing and central planning committees on the other hand.
 - 3.4 Abolishing the allowances of vice chairs gives a budgetary saving of £20,448. The recommendation of the Principal Scrutiny Committee is that this money should be recycled in order to close some of the gap in the allowances of Board Members since the biggest variation between the recommendations of the Panel and the payments made by Gwynedd Council is to be found in the allowances of Board Members. The scheme in the appendix includes these additions divided amongst Board Members in proportion to the difference in their special responsibility allowances.

- 3.5 Minor revisions have been made to the terms for claiming a Care Allowances in order to make it clear that the claims will be for repayment on presentation of receipts.
 - 3.6 The overnight allowances for London and Cardiff have increased.
 - 3.7 The scheme continues to denote the payments as “allowances” even though the Panel recommends that the wording should be changed to “salary”.
4. The Principal Scrutiny Committee noted that there was a wide gap between the allowances paid in Gwynedd and the maximum sums recommended by the Panel. It was also noted that allowances for Gwynedd members are amongst the lowest in Wales. It is anticipated that the Panel will set allowances in future (possibly from 2012 onwards) rather than set a maximum. If the Panel sets the allowances at the maximum, the financial gap will be substantial. The Principal Scrutiny Committee recommended that this should be considered in setting the budget for 2011/12.
 5. Whilst discussing the allowances for leaders, the Principal Scrutiny Committee recommended that the structure and portfolios of Board Members should be reviewed following the restructuring of the Council’s senior management.

RECOMMENDATION.

6. The Council is asked to adopt the allowances scheme in the appendix for 2010/11.