

AT AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL held in the Council Chamber, Town hall, Maidenhead on Tuesday 29 January 2008

PRESENT: The Mayor (Councillor Walters), The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs Kemp), Councillors Adams, Miss Barton, Baskerville, Mrs Bateson, Beer, Bicknell, Burbage, Mrs Bursnall, Bursnall, J Evans, Mrs Evans, Fido, Gard, Grey, Harris, Hendry, Mrs Herdson, Hilton Holness, Mrs Howes, Mrs Hunt, Kellaway, Mrs Knight, Lenton, Mrs Luxton, Majeed, Maxwell, Meadowcroft, Muir, Mrs Napier, Mrs Newbound, Penfold Mrs Pitteway, Mrs Proctor, Mrs Quick, Rayner, Richards, Saunders, Smith, Mrs Stock, Story, Stretton, Thompson, Werner, Wiles, D. Wilson, Mrs Wilson and Mrs Yong.

Officers: Ms Bowry, Messrs Brooker, Mrs Dackombe, J Gould, Herlinger, Mrs Naismith, Oram, and White.

PART I

70. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

were received from Councillors Chelani, Dudley, Mrs Endacott, Etherington Ms Javed , Mackay and McBride.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Napier declared a personal interest in the item ‘Scheme of Members’ Allowances’ as a registered carer.

72. SCHEME OF MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES

Council considered the report of the independent Remuneration Panel which had conducted a thorough review of the Scheme of Members’ Allowances and made a series of recommendations for altering the Scheme and increasing the level of allowances. Members were reminded of the independent nature of the Panel which had praised the Council for its frugal approach in the past to the Scheme but which now pointed out that the level of allowances was considerably lower than similar authorities in the country. The rationale behind the recommendation to raise the level of the basic allowance was detailed in the report of the Panel.

The Leader of the Council in moving a motion to adopt the Panel’s recommendations thanked the Panel and their independent advisor for all their hard work in producing such an excellent and exhaustive report which recognised that the Borough’s current level of allowances was very low. Councillor Burbage was in favour of the recommendations of the Panel as, when viewed against comparator authorities shown in the report, the proposals would bring the Royal Borough in line with the average for basic allowance of about £7,200. He was concerned at the tone of some of the recent press coverage of this matter and urged Members to take an objective view of the proposals and endorse an average wage level for the work that Members did, which seemed reasonable and proportionate.

Councillor Mrs Knight seconded the motion.

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Several Members spoke against the proposals pointing out the financial implications and claiming that the rise represented a 91% increase in the budget which was unjustifiable especially when compared to other pay rises for public sector employees. The value for money of the proposals was questionable and it was also pointed out that the level of allowances were known when Members stood for office. Reference was made to a national survey of Councillors which had indicated that most candidates were not attracted by the level of allowances.

Other Members speaking in favour of the proposals pointed out that the Council had not increased allowances for over 7 years and that in fact many Members put in a lot more hours than even the revised scheme would recompense for. It was important to recognise the great benefits the new allowances would bring in attracting candidates and for adequately rewarding the many hours of work that all Members put in to serving their constituents. The proposals represented a fair and equitable scheme and that if the Council had reviewed the Scheme more regularly it would not be faced with such a rise now. Members were also reminded that they were not obliged to accept their full allowances if they did not want to.

It was moved by Councillor Burbage and seconded by Councillors Mrs Knight and Hilton that there be a named vote:

There voted for the motion:

The Deputy Mayor, Councillors Miss Barton, Mrs Bateson, Beer, Bicknell, Burbage, Mrs Bursnall, Bursnall, J Evans, Mrs Evans, Gard, Grey, Harris, Hilton Mrs Hunt, Kellaway, Mrs Knight, Lenton, Mrs Luxton, Majeed, Maxwell, Meadowcroft, Muir, Mrs Quick, Rayner, Saunders, Smith, Story, Stretton, Thompson, Wiles, D. Wilson, Mrs Wilson and Mrs Yong.

There voted against the motion:

Councillors Adams, Baskerville, Hendry, Mrs Herdson, Holness, Mrs Howes, Mrs Napier, Mrs Newbound, Mrs Pitteway, Mrs Proctor, Richards, Mrs Stock and Werner.

Those abstaining:

The Mayor, Councillors Fido and Penfold

The motion was carried by 34 votes to 13 with three abstentions and it was

RESOLVED: That the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be adopted and the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Members' Allowances Scheme as detailed in the appendix to these minutes.

73. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Council considered the recommendation of the Employment Panel for the appointment of a new Chief Executive following the retirement of the current postholder. The recommendation had been arrived at after a thorough and exhaustive shortlisting and interview process and Members were pleased to note that the process had produced a clear favourite who had been offered and had accepted the post. The Chairman of the Employment Panel thanked all those

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Members and officers who had taken part in the process as well as the Head of HR and her team and the team from Veredus who had guided the Council in attracting suitable candidates.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That

- a) **Ian Trenholm be appointed as Chief Executive of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead at a salary of £140,000 plus 15% performance related pay.**
- b) **David Oram be appointed interim Chief Executive (David Scott to be appointed interim Strategic Director of Community Services) from 1 March 2008 until Ian Trenholm commences employment with the Borough.**
- c) **That David Oram be appointed as Returning Officer and Registration Officer within the terms of the Representation of the People Act 1983 until Ian Trenholm commences employment with the Borough whereupon he will be appointed to those roles.**

Following the resolution Mr Trenholm was welcomed to the Chamber by all Members.

74. MEETING

The meeting which started at 6pm ended at 7pm

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APPENDIX – SCHEME OF MEMBERS’ ALLOWANCES:

Post	Numbers Payable	Basic Allowance	Special Responsibility Allowance	Total Allowance Per Member	SRAs Total Payable
Basic Allowance	57	£7,180	.	.	.
			.	.	.
Leader	1	£7,180	£18,596	£25,776	£18,596
Deputy Leader	1	£7,180	£11,158	£18,337	£11,158
Cabinet Members	7	£7,180	£10,228	£17,408	£71,596
Main Opposition Group Leader	1	£7,180	£6,509	£13,689	£6,509
Chairmen Overview & Scrutiny Panels	4	£7,180	£4,649	£11,829	£18,596
Chairmen DC Panels	2	£7,180	£4,649	£11,829	£9,298
Chairman Licensing Panel	1	£7,180	£4,649	£11,829	£4,649
Chairman Audit & Performance Review Panel	1	£7,180	£3,719	£10,899	£3,719
Deputy Leader Main Opposition Group	1	£7,180	£2,325	£9,505	£2,325
Chairmen Area Forums	2	£7,180	£1,860	£9,040	£3,720
Chairman Pension Fund Panel	1	£7,180	£1,860	£9,040	£1,860
Chairman Rights of Way & Highway Licensing Panel	1	£7,180	£1,860	£9,040	£1,860
Chairman Sustainability Panel	1	£7,180	£1,860	£9,040	£1,860
Sub Totals	24 SRAs	£409,260	.	.	£155,746
Total	.		.	.	£565,006
Leaders of Minority Opposition Groups (min of 5 members)	Not Payable	.	£930	.	.
Co-Optees' Allowance Chair of Standards	1	.	£718		£718
Co-Optees' Allowance Statutory Others	10	.	£359	.	£3,590

The Panel also recommends the following:
SRAs to be Discontinued

I. That the following SRAs are discontinued:

- The open-ended category of ‘any duty, as authorised...’
- Members of Licensing Panel Sub-Committees
- Members of Other Appeals Panels

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Other Posts Considered but not recommended

II. The Panel considered the merit of recommending a SRA for the following posts but decided against at this stage:

- Vice Chairmen of Committees, Panels and Sub-Committees
- Member Champions

One SRA per Member

III. The current policy on the payment of one SRA per Member regardless of the number of posts a Member may hold is continued.

Travel Allowances

IV. The current rates, and terms and conditions (including the definition of approved duties) applicable to the travel allowances scheme are not changed.

V. In particular, that the mileage allowance continues to be payable at and indexed to the Authorised Mileage Allowance Payment (AMAP) rates.

Subsistence Allowances

VI. No change to the subsistence allowances scheme.

The Dependants' Carers' Allowance (DCA)

VII. That the DCA scheme needs further clarification, and makes the following recommendations:

- A. The DCA scheme should establish eligibility, i.e. any Member with a dependant and who has incurred expenses for the care of said dependant while on approved duties.
- B. The DCA scheme should distinguish between 2 categories of care – a childcare element (which is explicitly recognised in the current scheme) and care for dependants on social/medical grounds, e.g. elderly parents or disabled children/siblings who are dependant upon a Member. It should make clear that the DCA is claimable for the full range of potential dependants and is not limited to children.
- C. Childcare – the scheme should make clear that claims for dependant children are limited to any children who are 15 years of age and under. The claimant must sign a statement when making a claim for DCA that the carer is 18 years of age or over and not an immediate member of the claimant's family.
- D. The hourly rate payable for childcare to be paid at and indexed to the hourly minimum wage applicable to the age of the carer (who must be 18 years of age or over) or less for actual reimbursement.
- E. Medical/Social care element – the hourly rate applicable should be the average hourly rate paid to a home help by RBWM Social Services.
- F. The total amount claimable per approved duty should be capped at 4 hours and within any one week a maximum of 18 hours, and can include travel time up to a maximum of one hour per claim. No claims for when dependant children are at school permitted.
- G. Receipts must be provided for social/medical care and if possible for childcare claims.

The Local Government Pension Scheme

VIII. That Members are not eligible to join to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Out of Pocket Expenses not Reimbursed by Council

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- IX. That the recommended levels of allowances are to cover routine out of pocket expenses not otherwise reimbursed by the Council.

Information and Computer Technology (ICT) Allowance

- X. That the ICT Allowance continues and be increased to £250 per annum. The ICT Allowance should only be paid upon production of receipts and the scheme should clearly state what it can be claimed for, to include computer consumables, IT support and maintenance.

Indexation

- XI. The Panel approves the current indices in place for another 4 years. In addition, it recommends that further indices are included in the scheme, including:
- The DCA: maximum hourly rates indexed to minimum wage for age of carer/average hourly cost of RBWM home help.
 - Co-Optees' Allowance: indexed by same index applied each year to the Basic Allowance and SRAs, namely in line with the average pay increase given to Royal Borough employees.
 - ICT Allowance – the same percentage increase applied each year to Basic, Special Responsibility and Co-Optees' Allowance

Implementation

That the new allowances scheme is implemented from 1 April 2008 or as soon thereafter as agreed by the council.