

**North Tyneside Council
Report to Council
Date: 17 May 2012**

ITEM 16

**Title: Members'
Allowances Scheme
2012/13**

Portfolio(s): Elected Mayor

Cabinet Member(s): Mrs L Arkley

Report from Directorate: Chief Executive's Office

Report Author: Viv Geary, Head of Legal, Governance and Commercial Services (Tel: 643 5339)

David Brown, Legal, Governance and Commercial Services (Tel: 643 5358)

Wards affected: All Wards

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

This report requests the Council to agree that no changes to the current level of Members' allowances are made for 2012/13.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

The Council is asked to approve the Members' Allowance Scheme for 2012/13, attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

1.3 Forward plan:

This report was not listed on the Forward Plan for the period 1 May – 31 August 2011. However, it needs to be considered at this meeting to enable the Council to approve a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2012/13.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework:

This report has no direct relevance to the Council's Strategic Plan priorities or to the Policy Framework.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Details

Following consultation with the Leaders and Deputy Leaders of each of the Political Groups represented on the Council, the Independent Remuneration Panel has given

Appendix 2

consideration to the level of Members' allowances for 2012/13. It considered the Groups' views that no increases in allowances be approved in view of the current economic climate and the financial pressures currently facing local authorities. The Panel noted the fact that the Council has previously agreed that Members' allowances should be index linked to the NJC employees (formerly APT&C staff) annual pay award, and that no such pay award has been made for 2012/13. The Panel recognises the valuable work undertaken by Councillors but agrees, and recommends, that there should be no increases in allowances for the year 2012/13.

The Panel has however previously carried out detailed research on Members' allowances which demonstrates that the Council's allowances are out of line significantly with national and regional allowances. The Panel believes that the current North Tyneside Members Allowance Scheme does not recognise the qualities and time commitment required to fulfil the various roles of a councillor, nor does it provide sufficient recompense for undertaking those various roles. With this in mind, the Panel will undertake a full review of the levels of Members' allowances in North Tyneside prior to the Council agreeing allowances for 2013/14.

1.6 Decision options:

The Council can:

- (i) Approve the recommendation to make no changes to Members' Allowances for 2012/13: or
- (ii) Approve alternative levels of Members' Allowances for 2012/13.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

To ensure that the Members' Allowances continue to be index linked to any NJC employee annual pay award.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Members' Allowances Scheme 2012/13.

1.9 Contact officers:

David Brown – Legal, Governance and Commercial Services (Tel. 6435358)
Alison Campbell – Finance and Resources (Tel. 6437038)

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers and research reports have been used in the compilation of this report and are available for inspection at the offices of the author.

Members' Allowances Scheme
The Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

Appendix 2

The costs of Members' allowances are included in the 2012/13 budget and assume no increase from 2011/12.

2.2 Legal

The Council is required to approve a Members' Allowances Scheme each year, following advice from the Independent Remuneration Panel, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 (as amended).

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

The Strategic Leadership Group, comprising the Elected Mayor and Leaders and Deputy Leaders of each of the political groups represented on the Council, have been consulted on the proposal set out in this report.

2.4 Human rights

The proposals within this report do not themselves have direct implications in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct equalities or diversity implications arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

The risks associated with this report will be managed in accordance with the North Tyneside Council risk management process.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no direct environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Strategic Manager of Policy and Partnerships