

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM WORKING GROUP

MONDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2001 AT 1.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Mitchelson (Chairman), Councillor Bloxham (as Substitute for Councillor Stevenson), Mrs Bradley, Firth, Guest and Prest (G).

LGR.62/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Pattinson, Stevenson and Weber.

LGR.63/01 MEMBERS ALLOWANCES

The City Treasurer circulated a copy of Financial Memo 2001/02 No 80 on the Members Allowances Scheme. He informed Members that because of a number of matters which remained unresolved, including the final recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel, he had reformatted the existing Members Allowances Scheme to set out an entitlement to each of the appropriate class of allowance in the body of the proposed new Scheme, but that the amount of each allowance and the rates to be applied were specified separately in a Schedule to that Scheme. He set out for Members a copy of the Core Scheme.

The City Treasurer also circulated a copy of a Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel which submitted recommendations from the Panel in the light of information from the Members' Survey and discussions with Officers. He set out for Members the level of Basic allowance and Special Responsibility Allowance which was recommended by the Panel.

Members, in considering the Report, noted the proposal to pay Special Responsibility Allowance in respect of the Chairman of the Development Control Committee at the standard level of Basic allowance and felt that this should be reduced to a level of £2,625 (or 0.75% of the level of Basic allowance).

Members also commented on the proposal to allocate funding of £300 per Councillor to a Personal Training and Support Budget and stressed the need for expenditure against that budget to be monitored in terms of both expenditure and effectiveness, and for any expenditure against that code to be accountable.

The City Treasurer sought Members' comments on the Draft Schedule 1 to the Members Allowances Scheme and drew Members' attention to

forthcoming guidance from the Government with regard to both Conference Allowances and Travel and Subsistence Allowances.

RESOLVED - (1) That the City Council be recommended:-

- (a) To agree the adoption of the Core Members Allowances Scheme as set out in Financial Memo 2001/02 No 80.
- (b) That subject to the amendment of Paragraph 10, Waiving of Allowances, so as to refer to the fact that for those Members receiving State Benefits, then their entitlements would still be affected and the amendments to the level of Special Responsibility Allowance for the Chairman of the Development Control Committee to be amended from £3,500 per annum (1 x Basic) to £2,625 (0.75% x Basic), the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel be received and the City Treasurer request the Independent Remuneration Panel to review the Working Group's recommendations prior to the meeting of the City Council on 11 September 2001.

If this were not possible then the amendments of the Working Group would be put directly to Council on 11 September 2001.

- (c) That the provision of a Personal Training and Support Budget of £300 per Councillor be agreed in principle. The details of the monitoring of expenditure and the effectiveness of that Scheme be included in a further Report to be submitted to Members with regard to Members' Support by the Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy.
- (d) That with regard to the Draft of Schedule 1 in the Members Allowances Scheme the Working Group agree with the Scheme subject to:
 - (i) the amendment of the level of Special Responsibility Allowance in respect of the Chair of Development Control Committee being amended from £3,700 to £2,625.
 - (ii) the determination of the level of Conference Allowance by the full Council
 - (iii) that in respect of Travel by Private Motor Vehicle it be agreed that the maximum of the rates specified by the Secretary of State for cubic capacity of a car used for a journey up to 250 miles round distance and any distances paid over 250 miles be reimbursed at the petrol element as set out in the City Treasurer's Report.
 - (iv) that a further recommendation be included with regard to Air Travel to specify that if the option of using Air Travel proves to be the most cost efficient method, Members be entitled to use Air Travel where reasonably possible.

- (v) that with regard to Subsistence, the Scheme to specify that Members are not entitled to claim Subsistence payments in respect of attendances within the Carlisle City Council's area and that the level of subsistence rates as set out be unamended.
- (vi) that with regard to the qualifying approved duties, that attendance at site meetings to which Councillors have been invited by the Development Control Committee, be not included for payment of Travel and Subsistence and Dependent Carers' Allowance.
- (vii) that attendance at Parish Council meetings should qualify for the payment of Travel Allowance only.

LGR.64/01 REVIEW OF MEMBERS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES

The City Treasurer circulated copy of Financial Memo 2001/02 No 79 which reviewed the methods of calculating Members' Car Allowances and outlined alternative methods available for Members' consideration. The City Treasurer commented that the conclusions and recommendations as set out in the Report had been considered as part of the earlier item on the Draft Schedule 1 to the Scheme of Members' Allowances.

RESOLVED - That the Report be noted and received.

LGR.65/01 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM WORKING GROUP

The Chairman reported that this would be the last meeting of the Local Government Reform Working Group. He thanked Members for their time and input in considering and progressing work on the Council's new Constitution. In response to questions from Members, the City Solicitor and Secretary commented that any proposals which arose as a result of reviews of the new political structures could be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive prior to being submitted to Council.

(The meeting ended at 2.00 pm)

