



GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

MEETING : Tuesday, 16th January 2018

PRESENT : Cllrs. Williams (Chair), H. Norman (Vice-Chair), Hilton, Taylor, Coole and Pullen

Others in Attendance

Peter Jones, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel
Tanya Davies, Policy and Governance Manager
Parvati Diyar, Democratic Services and Elections Officer

APOLOGIES : Cllr. Hanman

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

9. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

10. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)

There were no public questions.

11. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)

There were no petitions and deputations.

12. REVIEW OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2018

The Committee considered the report of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) which reported on the recommendations of the IRP with regard to the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme and to seek a decision on an appropriate scheme for the payment of allowances in 2018-19.

The Chair welcomed Peter Jones, Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel and thanked him for attending the meeting.

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Mr Jones presented his report and thanked his fellow Panel Members for their work. He also reported that Wynn Bartlett had joined the Panel, which went some way towards addressing Members' concerns about the diversity of the Panel.

The Committee was advised that this was a minor review, with the formal review starting in the Autumn.

Mr Jones referred to the recommendations as detailed in the report. He said the Panel had noted concerns regarding taxation of Dependents Carers' Allowance and believed this to be an unfair arrangement.

The Panel had explored how other local authorities operated the allowance and it was noted that the majority of Councils followed the same approach as Gloucester; however, one Council reimbursed the allowance with an uplift to cover taxation. The Panel found this approach to be flawed and were instead suggesting that the Council writes to the Local Government Association to lobby the government in support of making the Dependents Carers' Allowance exempt from taxation.

Mr Jones passed on the Panel's thanks to the Policy and Governance Manager for her support during the review.

The Chair of the Committee thanked Mr Jones and the Panel Members for their work.

The Chair acknowledged that the taxation of childcare was an important issue and commented on the difficulties for people with young children to stand as Councillors. She added that she would ask Council to endorse this recommendation.

Councillor Hilton also passed on his thanks to the Policy and Governance Manager for her clarification regarding the indexation of the Scheme to the Local Government pay award.

General Purposes Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** to Council that:

- (1) Members' Allowances remain unchanged at the levels detailed in the 2017-18 Scheme, subject to the wording of Schedule 2 being amended to reflect the Council's continued commitment to the Living Wage in respect of the Dependents' Carers' Allowance for the reimbursement of childcare costs.
- (2) The Council writes to the Local Government Association asking them to lobby the government in support of making the Dependents' Carers' Allowance exempt from taxation.
- (3) The Scheme of Members' Allowances set out in Appendix 1 be approved for 2018-19.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 13 March 2018 at 6.00pm.

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**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm hours
Time of conclusion: 6.10 pm hours**

Chair