



Leicester
City Council

CABINET
COUNCIL

19 MARCH 2001
29 MARCH 2001

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES SCHEME – 2000/2001
MODIFICATIONS

REPORT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND
DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to ask Members to consider suggested modifications to the Members' Allowances Scheme for 200/2001, prior to full Council determination.

2. **SUMMARY**

- 2.1. The Members Allowances Scheme for 2000/2001 was produced to cover both the old style Committee structure until August 2000, and, thereafter, the new political management structures.
- 2.2. The Council, at its meeting on 22 June 2000, resolved that Special Responsibility Allowances within the new political structures would accrue to Cabinet Members, Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Regulatory Committee. In addition, allowances would be payable to the Opposition Group Leaders and to the Chief Whip of each Group.
- 2.3. The changes to the political management structure have now started to bed down, as a result of which several anomalies have been identified in relation to the Members' Allowances Scheme. These are as follows:-
- 2.4. Scrutiny Triumvirate Members

The duly approved Members' Allowances Scheme stipulates that the Chair of a Scrutiny Committee receives a Special Responsibility Allowance equivalent to that of a Cabinet Member. There is no Vice-Chair for each Scrutiny Committee, but instead there are two party spokespersons (of the other two political parties to the Scrutiny Chair). These Scrutiny Spokespersons obviously attend the Scrutiny Committee Meetings and also attend the regular officer briefings, along

with the Scrutiny Chairs, at which a political steer is obtained on many issues dealt with formally under Directors' delegated powers. The role of Spokesperson does, therefore, have a significant time commitment and additional responsibility over ordinary Scrutiny Committee Members. Currently, however, in line with the June 2000 Council resolution, there is no financial recognition within the Members' Allowances Scheme. It is suggested that Council may wish to address this anomaly.

2.5. Expenses for Co-optees and Standing Invitees

Co-opted Members and other Standing Invitees to Scrutiny Committees do not receive an attendance allowance. They are however, entitled to claim travel, subsistence and loss of earnings.

This entitlement has not, however, to date been included within the approved Members' Allowances Scheme – instead being dealt with separately on an ad hoc basis. To ensure consistency of approach it is recommended that these elements be incorporated into the Members' Allowances Scheme, and include Co-optees and Standing Invitees to Scrutiny Committees and Standing Invitees to other formally constituted meetings within the Council's structures (currently the Older Persons Forum and Conservation Advisory Panel). The travel and subsistence rates are identical to those applied for Elected Members. Loss of earnings allowance is payable at a maximum rate of £27.65 for up to 4 hours and £55.31 for more than 4 hours.

2.6. Chair of Regulatory Committee

It will be recalled that, at the June 2000 Council Meeting, it was resolved that the Regulatory Committee would be chaired by the Chair of the Licensing Sub-Committee when dealing with objections from the Development Control Sub-Committee and vice versa. The resolution also indicated that the Vice-Chair of the Development Control Sub-Committee would also be the Chair of the Licensing Sub-Committee. The implementation of the Human Rights Act has, however, caused difficulties with this arrangement in that the designated Chair of the Regulatory Committee would also be the Vice-Chair of Development Control Sub-Committee or Licensing Sub-Committee and would, therefore, in all probability have both formed and expressed a view at the original Sub-Committee meeting. As a consequence, the issue has been addressed (at the single meeting held to date) by a combination of substitution and election of Chair from the floor. In view of the infrequent occurrence of the Regulatory Committee, it is suggested that no further action be taken until the next Annual Meeting, when the matter can be reconsidered for the new municipal year.

2.7. These matters have all been discussed by the Whips of the three political groups, with unanimous support for the above proposals.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet is asked to consider the above modifications prior to consideration and determination at full Council (matters relating to the Members' Allowances Scheme being reserved to Council).

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The above proposals, if approved, can be funded from within the 2000/2001 approved budget for Members' and Co-opted Member Allowances.

5. **REPORT AUTHOR**

Charles Poole,
Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate Services)
extn. 7015.