

**AGENDA ITEM:**

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY ANNUAL MEETING</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>16<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2011</b>
<b>REPORT NO.</b>	<b>CFO/064/11</b>
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	<b>CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>HELEN PEEK, MEMBER LIAISON AND SUPPORT MANAGER, EXTN 4112</b>
<b>OFFICERS CONSULTED:</b>	
<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES 2011/12</b>

<b>APPENDIX A</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>MERSEYSIDE FIRE &amp; RESCUE AUTHORITY SCHEME OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES – AGREED JUNE 2009</b>
<b>APPENDIX B</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>MEMBERS ALLOWANCE PAY RATE IN LINE WITH FIREFIGHTERS PAY AWARD JULY 2009 INCLUDING INCREMENT FROM APRIL 2010</b>

**ATTACHED HARD COPY**

**\*There is a Glossary of Terms at the end of this report for your information**

Purpose of Report

1. To request the Authority to consider the current Members' Allowances Scheme.

Recommendation

2. That Members:
  - (a) Note that they have already agreed to maintaining the 2010/11 allowances for 2011/12 in line with the public sector pay freeze in their budget decision;
  - (b) continue with the current Members' Allowances Scheme or;
  - (c) identify any variations to the Scheme it may wish to be implemented, in line with the structure of the Authority.

## Introduction & Background

3. The Authority's current Scheme for Members' Allowances is attached as Appendix A. The Scheme was adopted by the Authority on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2004 was approved to take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 and subsequently confirmed at the Annual Meeting in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008.
4. In 2009 the Authority agreed an amendment to the Scheme of Allowances to include a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA), for Members appointed as Deputy Group Leaders, should their group wish to appoint a Member to the position Deputy Leader and, with the provision that such allowance would not be payable where an SRA is also payable for performing the role of Vice Chair of the Authority.
5. The rate of the Deputy Group Leader SRA is 50% of the Basic Allowance, and currently matches that allowance for the Chair of a Committee.
6. The Authority also agreed that Members entitled to Special Responsibility Allowances for the role of a 'Chair' or additional responsibilities such as a Member Sponsor would only be entitled to each type of SRA once. Therefore if a Member holds the position of Chair of more than one Committee, they will only receive the SRA for one role as opposed to two. This rule also applies to those appointed with additional responsibilities such as a Sponsor.
7. However, the Authority agreed that this would only apply to Chairs of Committees-not Panels. Consequently, the Chair of any Scrutiny Panel may receive payment for both roles.
8. The scheme provides for payment of a basic allowance to all Councillors calculated at £8,070 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 (in line with Firefighters Pay Award of previous July) and Special Responsibility Allowances in respect of specified roles, which are linked to proportions of the basic allowance, as set out in the scheme.
9. Members are aware that there is a ministerial aspiration for a pay freeze across the public sector which has been assured in grant settlements. No staff have received any pay offer as a result of this (and the National Employers do not intend to offer any increase for 2011/12). Consequently this means that, under the current scheme, Members will not receive any increase on the 2010/11 allowances in 2011/12. The Authority confirmed its expectation of this in their budget decision for 2011/12.
10. Should the Authority wish to consider amending the Members' Allowances Scheme it may also wish to refer the proposals to the Standards Committee for it to consider making recommendations to the Authority.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

11. All Members are entitled to the same basic allowance, and Special Responsibility Allowances are paid to Members for performing approved special responsibilities by reference to proportions of basic allowances.

### Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. Budgetary provision has been made for Members' allowances. The overall cost which is approximately £250K.

### Health & Safety and Environmental Implications

13. None arising out of this report.

### Contribution to Achieving Our Purpose:

“To Make Merseyside a Safer, Stronger, Healthier Community”

14. Payment of allowances at reasonable rates will ensure that Members are able to perform their functions in leading and setting the vision, policy and objectives for the Authority to achieve.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Scheme of Members' Allowances

### **\*Glossary of Terms**

CLG = Communities & Local Government  
SRA = Special Responsibility Allowance