

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	AUTHORITY (ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING)		
DATE:	13 JUNE 2024	REPORT NO:	CFO/41/24
PRESENTING OFFICER	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	MONITORING OFFICER, RIA GROVES	REPORT AUTHOR:	RIA GROVES/ SHAUNA HEALEY
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	SCHEME OF MEMBERS ALLOWANCE 2024/25		
APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A: SCHEME OF ALLOWANCE		

Purpose of Report

1. To request that the Authority reviews the current Scheme of Members' Allowances and makes recommendations on any changes it wishes to make.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members;
 - a) approve continuation with its current Members' Allowance Scheme, or;
 - b) identify any variations to the Scheme they may wish to implement, in line with the structure of the Authority (which is being considered as a separate report on this agenda) and the approved budget;
 - c) note that any inflationary increase to the Authority's Scheme of Members' Allowances is normally aligned to the previous year's Firefighters' pay and subsistence allowances by the previous year's March CPI;
 - d) approve a pay increase to the Scheme of Members allowances in line with the Firefighters Pay Award for 2023/24 which would apply to the 2024/25 allowances;
 - e) approve the current roles of Co-opted Member and the Independent Person to be combined; and
 - i. to be appointed to both the Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee, as a non-voting member (subject to approval of the structure);

- ii. to continue to consider any complaints against Members alleged to have breached the Members' Code of Conduct and Relevant Officers under the Relevant Officers Disciplinary Procedure on the Independent Panel as the "Independent Person"; and
- iii. to be paid for conducting such roles following submission and verification of invoices at a daily attendance rate of £60 (as and when required) as is the current case.

Introduction and Background

- 3. The Authority's draft Scheme of Members' Allowances for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix A.
- 4. The Authority have previously agreed that Members entitled to a Special Responsibility Allowance ('SRA'), would only be entitled to receive one SRA payment, even if Members had more than one additional responsibility which would attract a SRA.
- 5. It is recommended the SRA payment for Opposition Spokesperson continues to only be paid to one Opposition Member at any given time.
- 6. Mr Anthony Boyle has been undertaking the roles of Independent Person and Co-opted Member on the Audit and Scrutiny Committees as a non-voting Member. Recruitment of a second Independent Person is in progress to consider any complaints in respect of elected Members and Statutory Officers as an appointment of an additional Independent Person would provide further resilience and greater independence for the Authority.
- 7. The full breakdown of the proposed Scheme of Allowances is contained in Appendix A of this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

- 8. All Members are entitled to the same basic allowance and SRAs are paid to Members for performing approved special responsibilities by reference to proportions of basic allowance.

Staff Implications

- 9. This report relates to Members' allowances and as such, there are no staff implications to consider.
- 10.

Legal Implications

- 11. The Local Government Act 1972 and the Members Allowances (England) Regulations 2003, provide that a Scheme of Allowances is required and reviewed every year.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

12. The costs for the scheme of Members Allowances can be met within existing budgets.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

13. There are no risk management, health and safety or environmental implications arising directly from this report.

Environmental Implications

13. There are no environmental implications arising directly from this report.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

14. Payment of allowances at reasonable rates will ensure that Members are able to effectively perform their functions in leading and settling the Vision, policies and objectives for the Authority to achieve.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS
