



Epping Forest District Council

PARISH REMUNERATION PANEL

Monday, 9th November, 2009

Place: Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

Room: Group Room, Room 1.19, First Floor

Time: 6.30 pm or at conclusion of Remuneration Panel meeting

Democratic Services Officer G Lunnun, Office of the Chief Executive
Email: glunnun@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564244

Members:

D Jackman, S A Lye

1. CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 3 - 6)

To approve as correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2008.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) The Panel is established to advise on the payment of allowances and expenses to Parish/Town Councillors.

5. REMUNERATION SCHEMES 2009/10

Recommendation:

(1) To note responses from Parish and Town Councils in respect of their remuneration schemes for 2009/10; and

(2) To confirm the action agreed informally by the Panel to agree a Parish Basic of £105 for all members of the Loughton Town Council.

1. (Assistant to the Chief Executive) In November 2008, a letter was sent to all Parish and Town Councils inviting proposals for consideration by the Panel in respect of their remuneration schemes. Only one proposal emerged from Loughton Town Council.
2. The Town Council proposed to pay £108 per annum for 2009/10 as a Parish Basic Allowance, for those Town Councillors wishing to claim.
3. The Panel has given guidance to Parish and Town Councils that payments of Parish Basic Allowance should not exceed in total the percentage of the District Council's budget paid in allowances. Thus, parish councils were asked to ensure that the percentage of their precepts did not exceed that of the District Council. In 2009/10 the figure for the District Council is 3.53%, compared with 0.38% for Loughton Town Council.
4. The Panel is therefore asked to confirm its informal approval.

6. MEMBERSHIP OF THE PANEL

(Assistant to the Chief Executive) To consider what further steps can be taken to fill the vacancy on the Panel.

A member of the Panel cannot also be a member of any of the Parish/Town Councils in the District or a member of a committee or sub-committee of any such Council. In addition a member of the Panel must not be disqualified from being or becoming a member of an authority.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To agree a date for another meeting, if required.

EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

Committee: Parish Remuneration Panel **Date:** Monday, 11 February 2008

Place: Group Room, Room 1.19, First Floor, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping **Time:** 8.15 - 8.30 pm

Members Present: D Jackman and S A Lye

Other Councillors:

Apologies:

Officers Present: G Lunnun (Democratic Services Manager) and I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive)

1. CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That S Lye be elected Chairman of the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

D Jackman reported a personal interest in agenda items 4 (Review of Current Parish Remuneration Schemes) and 5 (Parish and Town Council Proposals) by virtue of his mother being a member of the Ongar Town Council. He determined that his interest was prejudicial and that he would not take part in any discussion or decision in relation to the Ongar Town Council Scheme.

RESOLVED:

(1) That, as the Panel would not be quorate for consideration of the proposals of Ongar Town Council, the Assistant to the Chief Executive be authorised to advise that Council on the basis of the Panel's current policy on Parish Basic Allowance; and

(2) That the Assistant to the Chief Executive consult with the Chairman of this meeting on the written advice to be given to the Ongar Town Council.

3. REVIEW OF CURRENT PARISH REMUNERATION SCHEMES

The Panel reviewed the advice which it had given to Parish and Town Councils in 2004. At that time Parish and Town Councils had been advised that the percentage of the District Council's precept allocated to Member Remuneration should be applied at a maximum for spending on their schemes and that no individual payment should exceed the rate for a District Councillor. In 2003/04 the percentage advised had been 4.68% but this had subsequently been found to be incorrect with the true figure being 2.04%. However, none of the Parish or Town Councils was spending at or near that level. The relevant percentage for 2007/08 was 3.09%.

In relation to Parish Travelling and Subsistence Allowance, local councils had been advised to set the District Council's rates as the maximum level for their schemes. Some Parish Councils had stated that they had been following the guidance issued by the Essex Association of Local Councils but, these rates were the same as those applied by the District Council.

Parish and Town Councils had previously been advised that schemes should run for four years before further review unless significant changes were sought in the meantime.

Attention was drawn to the Panel's previous discussions about the Civic Allowances paid to the Chairman of Waltham Abbey Town Council. This has been deemed to be a payment of Parish Basic Allowance but the Hospitality Allowance had been deemed to be outside of the scope of the Remuneration Scheme. The same issue regarding Civic Hospitality had arisen with Epping Town and Buckhurst Hill Parish Councils where Local Government Act 1972 Act powers had been quoted for the Civic Hospitality payments.

RESOLVED:

That no change be made to the policy on (a) the maximum level for Parish Basic Allowance; and (b) Travel and Subsistence.

4. PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL PROPOSALS

The Assistant to the Chief Executive reported that only three Town and Parish Councils had submitted proposals in response to his invitation to all local councils to submit proposals for changes to their schemes.

The Panel noted that the Epping Town Council Scheme currently provided for the payment of travel and subsistence outside of the Parish only as a representative of the Council. The Town Council now wished to amend its scheme to reimburse for journeys inside the Parish. Also the Town Council's current scheme provided for travel and subsistence at Town Council meetings (including Committees or Working Groups) if agreed by resolution of the Council according to the personal circumstances of the councillor concerned. The Town Council now proposed to change this provision by discontinuing the requirement for specific resolution with all attendances qualifying.

Members were informed that the Loughton Town Council proposed to increase its basic allowance from £100.00 per annum per member to £104.00 per annum per member.

The Assistant to the Chief Executive advised that the Ongar Town Council proposed to introduce a Parish Basic Allowance for all Councillors at a rate of £300.00 per member per annum.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the proposals from Epping, Loughton and Ongar Town Councils be agreed;

(2) That in accordance with minute 3 above, the Assistant to the Chief Executive consult with the Chairman of this meeting and give advice to Ongar Town Council about its proposals; and

- (3) That the Assistant to the Chief Executive be authorised to compile and issue a report on the Parish Councils' proposals including the approvals and guidance agreed at this meeting.

CHAIRMAN

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