



# **Epping Forest District Council**

## ***MEMBER REMUNERATION PANEL Wednesday, 25th January, 2012***

**Place:** Group Room, Room 1.19, First Floor, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Committee Secretary:** Graham Lunnun, The Office of the Chief Executive  
Email: [democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) Tel 01992 564244

**Members:**

D Jackman, Ms R Kelly and S A Lye

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**1. CHAIRMAN**

To elect a Chairman for the meeting.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**3. NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 8)**

Attached for consideration.

**4. MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENTS (Pages 9 - 32)**

The attached Member Role Accountability Statements have been adopted by the Council and are referred to the Panel to assist in making future recommendations regarding the amounts of allowances. The Panel has previously discussed the possibility of undertaking a form of job evaluation of the various roles.

**5. MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - REVIEW (Pages 33 - 58)**

To consider the attached report.

**6. TRAVEL EXPENSES - CAR TRAVEL**  
**(a) Approved Duties**

The current Members' Remuneration Scheme specifies approved duties for the purpose of the payment of travelling and subsistence expenses. The list of duties includes "attendance at any meeting or other official function at the request of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive or a Service Director including meetings between group representatives for a particular committee and officers."

**The Panel is asked to consider an addition to the list of approved duties as follows in order to reflect meetings attended by Portfolio Holders and others in receipt of Special Responsibility Allowances, not necessarily at the request of those officers specified above –**

**"Consultation and briefing meetings at the request of officers by members of the Cabinet or others members in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance."**

**If the Panel is minded to recommend this inclusion, consideration should also be given as to whether Assistant Portfolio Holders should be entitled to claim since they are being encouraged to shadow Portfolio Holders although they do not receive any Special Responsibility Allowance at present.**

**(b) Rates for travel by Car**

The Council's current Members' Remuneration Scheme provides that the normal rates for car travel are the same as the higher rates paid to officers classed as casual users. The officer rates are reviewed annually at national level by the Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Currently the rates are:

Use of a vehicle not exceeding 999cc – 46.9p per mile

Use of vehicle 1000cc – 1199cc – 52.2p per mile

Use of vehicle exceeding 1199cc – 65p per mile

Members receive a tax free approved amount when using their own vehicles. Currently the "Approved Mileage Allowance Payments" (tax free amounts) are 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles. Similar provisions apply to officers.

Tax is therefore payable in all three categories. One member who was entitled to 65p per mile has signed a written statement stating that she will restrict all of her claims to 45p per mile (or higher in line with any future increased tax free amounts) in order to avoid payment of tax on the expenses she receives for using her vehicle to Council meetings etc. Several authorities have adopted this rate for members and officers for all classes of vehicle.

**The Panel is asked if it wishes to pursue this approach in relation to all member claims. If it does there will need to be discussions with members about whether the members' rates should be different from officers or whether consultations should take place with staff representatives about applying the approved mileage allowance payments to staff as well.**

## **7. JOINT REMUNERATION PANEL**

To note that in September 2011, Tendring District Council sought the views of other Essex District/Borough Councils on the “sharing” of an Independent Remuneration Panel.

Informal views were sought from members of the Council and officers comprising the Council’s Corporate Governance Group and the consensus was that unless some demonstrable benefits can be identified in terms of savings/efficiency there is unlikely to be support for the idea having regard to :

- (a) the current benefits of local knowledge of Panel members in the way the Council operates; the need for Panel members to devote considerably more time to a joint Panel;
- (b) the logistics of arranging/holding meetings of a joint Panel;
- (c ) the limited costs currently associated with this Council's Panel;
- (d) the practicality of covering the requirements for the parish/town councils in the district which have or want a remuneration scheme.

Tendring were asked to keep us informed of developments but no further communication has been received.

## **8. BASIS OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES (Pages 59 - 60)**

To note that at its meeting on 1 November 2011 the Council resolved:

“That this Council calls on the Government, through the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to amend the rules on Councillors’ remuneration in order that:

- (a) potential candidates who are in receipt of state benefits are able to seek election without placing those state benefits at risk if elected; and
- (b) remuneration is based on a combination of attendance and basic allowance”.

A copy of the letter sent to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government is attached.

A response has been received thanking the Council for its views but stating that the suggestion will not be pursued.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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## EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Committee:** Member Remuneration Panel      **Date:** Thursday, 3 February 2011

**Place:** Group Room, Room 1.19, First Floor, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping      **Time:** 5.30 - 6.50 pm

**Members Present:** D Jackman, Ms R Kelly and S A Lye

**Other Councillors:**

**Apologies:**

**Officers Present:** I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive), G Lunnun (Assistant Director Democratic Services)

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### 1. CHAIRMAN

#### RESOLVED:

That Ms R Kelly be elected Chairman for the meeting.

### 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

#### RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2009 be taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### 3. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Panel noted that it had been established to advise on the payment of allowances and expenses to District Councillors.

### 4. MEMBER REMUNERATION SCHEME - REVIEW

The Panel considered a report:

- (a) summarising the Government's Guidance on Local Authority Allowances;
- (b) setting out details of the Council's existing Remuneration Scheme, details of its implementation and comparison with payments made by other shire/districts/boroughs in the same region; and
- (c) highlighting issues to be addressed.

The Panel discussed the existing allowances and options for changes.

**RESOLVED:**

**Basic Allowance**

(1) That, having regard to the difference between the current amount in the adopted scheme (£4,300 per annum) and (a) the average amount paid to similar Councils in the same region (£4,500); (b) the amount (£4,625) achieved by applying the current Minimum Adult Weekly Wage of £5.93 per hour to a 15 hour week; and (c) the lack of any increase in staff salaries since 2009/10, no change be made to the amount of basic allowance;

(2) That the Council again be encouraged to review its level of implementation of the Basic Allowance, currently £3,150 per annum, as it is clear that this is considerably less than the amount paid to Councillors in similar authorities in the same region and it is considered there is a danger of undervaluing the role which may make it more difficult to attract potential candidates to stand for election in the future;

(3) That at this time no steps be taken to introduce a supplement to the Basic Allowance to be paid to Councillors attending a specified number of meetings/training sessions in view of:

(a) the difficulty of drawing up a workable scheme which complies with statutory requirements and can be monitored efficiently; and

(b) the review being undertaken of member training including the possible introduction of e-learning;

**Special Responsibility Allowances**

(4) That no special responsibility allowance be paid to Deputy Portfolio Holders at the current time as they were only appointed in December 2010 and there has been little time to assess the roles being undertaken;

(5) That, based on consultations to date and attendance by members of the Panel at a Sub-Committee training session and as observers at two Sub-Committee meetings, it is considered there are grounds for granting a Special Responsibility Allowance for the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen and that an informal meeting be arranged between members of the Panel and the current Chairmen in order to discuss the size and distribution of any Special Responsibility Allowance:

(6) That, subject to further consideration of a Special Responsibility Allowance for Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen, no change be made to the amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances having regard to the similarities in amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances in the Council's current adopted scheme and those of similar authorities in the same region as the Council;

**Member Role Accountability Statements**

(7) That the steps being taken to revise Member Role Accountability Statements for the various member roles undertaken at the Council be noted;

**Co-optee Allowances**

(8) That, pending clarification of the timescale for the abolition of the current complaints regime and the future role, if any, agreed by the Council for a Standards Committee no further work be undertaken on a review of allowances to the independent members of the Standards Committee;

**Travelling Allowance**

(9) That the reference to first class rail return fare in the current scheme in relation to travel to meetings outside of the district or by members resident outside of the district be removed;

(10) That no change be made to the other aspects of travelling allowances.

**Subsistence Allowance**

(11) That in order to continue to mirror the rates paid to officers, subsistence payments be revised as follows:

Breakfast up to £3.00; lunch up to £5.00 (less the average meal cost of £3.50); evening meal – up to £11.77 (less the average meal cost of £3.50);

**Carers' and Childcare Allowances**

(12) That no change be made to the scheme in respect of carers' and childcare allowances;

**State Benefits**

(13) That the attention of Councillors be drawn to the availability of the booklet published by the Local Government Information Unit entitled "Councillors' Tax and Benefits".

**CHAIRMAN**

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## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title: Member of the Council</b>
<b>Responsible to: The Council</b>
<b>Contact with: Residents, Members, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community</b>
<b>Ward Roles</b>  (a) Lead and champion the interests of the local community and ward constituents and be accountable to them.  (b) Meet and liaise regularly with local community including individuals and groups and involving and consulting them on Council matters.  (c) Support and promote good citizenship locally and encourage community participation in the work of the Council.  (d) Act as advocate for constituents' concerns so as to assist in resolving their concerns where possible.  (e) Communicate with local people and answer enquiries on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• decisions that affect them</li><li>• opportunities arising in the community</li><li>• the rights of constituents within the ward</li><li>• reasons for Council decisions</li></ul> (f) Contribute as a Councillor in promoting good governance of the District.  <b>Representative Role</b>  (g) Participate in debates and decision-making at full Council meetings on District-wide and local issues as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Formulation of the Council's budget, strategies and policies for service delivery requiring the approval of the Council.</li></ul>

- (h) Scrutiny of decision-making and review of policies/services through Overview & Scrutiny
- (i) To participate in the work and decision-making in non-executive Boards, Panels, Committees and Sub-Committees as appointed by the Council.
- (j) To represent the Council on outside bodies to which the member is appointed by the Council or by Leader of the Council.

#### **Political Role**

- (k) To participate in the activities of any political group of which they are members.

#### **Other Roles**

- (l) To fulfil the obligations under the Members' Code of Conduct and the law of local government and to maintain high standards of behaviour and ethics as applies to the public office of Councillor.
- (m) To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

#### **Skill Development Requirements**

- knowledge of local government processes, decision-making and responsibilities

#### **Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness**

- develop skills for the management of casework relating to the role of Councillor
- develop skills to organise diary and other commitments as a Councillor.
- develop ways of keeping informed about Council activities

#### **Team Working & Relationship Building**

- develop effective working relationships with key Council officers, other Councillors and representatives from partner agencies and all sections of the community.

#### **Communication Skills**

- develop skills in communication appropriate to a range of audiences, including formal meetings and other settings,.
- develop listening and questioning skills.
- learn effective presentation and public speaking skills.

#### **Other Skills and Abilities**

- ability to use IT to access agendas, minutes, reports, etc.
- familiarity with Council budgets.

#### **Training**

- to utilise training in order to enhance skills development for any role taken.

## **Knowledge**

- Keep informed about national policies and their impact on the District.
- Keep informed about issues within the ward and the wider locality.
- Keep informed and enhance understanding of how the Council works.
- Seek information of the Council structures, key contact officers, services procedures and eligibility criteria in relation to schemes and services administered by the Council when necessary.
- Achieve an understanding of the political decision-making structures of the Council.
- Be aware of the Members' Code of Conduct in relation to ethics and standards and apply the knowledge gained.
- Keep informed of the strategic priorities and key policies of the Council.
- Achieve an understanding of the legislation and Council policies to which Councillors must adhere.
- Gain a basic understanding of local government finance and what the audit process entails.
- Gain awareness of the Council's standards of customer care and complaints procedure.
- Knowledge of other agencies in the context of the ward.

**Date:**

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

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## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title: Member of the Executive (Portfolio Holder)</b>	
<b>Responsible to: Leader of Council, Cabinet and Council</b>	
<b>Contact with: Residents, Members, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community, other Councillors.</b>	
<b>Executive Roles:</b>	
(a)	To contribute to the development of strategic policy for the Council as a member of the Cabinet.
(b)	To be responsible for the allocated portfolio and its services including policy initiatives affecting those activities.
(c)	To consult with Service Directors on matters of policy and service delivery within the allocated portfolio and the purpose of keeping informed about current issues.
(d)	To attend Cabinet meetings and share collective responsibility for decisions taken by Cabinet.
(e)	To be personally responsible and accountable for any decisions taken as portfolio holder and to share with the appropriate Directors responsibility for the performance of services within their portfolio.
(f)	To respond to or deal with any issues arising at Council meetings relating to their portfolio including reports on progress made against portfolio priorities.
(g)	To act as spokesperson or advocate within and outside the authority on those services and functions within their portfolio for collective decisions made by the Cabinet.
(h)	To provide regular reports on progress with relevant executive decisions when and where requested and to undertake consultation on proposed decisions when desirable.
(i)	To attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and Scrutiny Panel meetings when necessary to share priorities, discuss decisions taken, and provide information, views and explanations on portfolio holder issues.
(j)	To assist partnership working with other agencies and contribute to delivering a partnership objectives.
(k)	To represent the Council on outside bodies, as appointed by the Leader or the Council and report back on matters of relevance or interest to the Council.
(l)	As part of the Cabinet, to be involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• leading the community planning process for the Council;</li> <li>• the consultation on, and drawing up of, the revenue and capital budgets, and monitoring budget under/over spends.</li> <li>• leading the search for continuous improvement;</li> <li>• taking decisions on resources and priorities to deliver the strategies and budget approved by Full Council;</li> <li>• promoting and participating in Councillor Development.</li> </ul>
(m)	To serve on non-executive Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels, Boards and Working Groups as appointed.
(n)	To be responsible for personal development and undergo appropriate development and continuous improvement for any role undertaken.

<p><b>Skills Required</b></p> <p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of leadership skills appropriate for a portfolio</li> <li>• Ability to challenge the status quo and deal with complex strategic issues and problems.</li> <li>• Development of skills necessary to represent the Cabinet both within and outside the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chairing Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve chairing skills relating to their portfolio and any external Council activities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team Working &amp; Relationship Building Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop good working relationships with other Cabinet colleagues, senior officers, Overview and Scrutiny, Partners etc.</li> <li>• Ability to work as part of a team to drive forward the continuous improvement of the Council.</li> </ul> <p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the key areas relating to their Cabinet portfolio and its relationship with other portfolios within the Cabinet.</li> <li>• A detailed understanding of the strategic role of Cabinet within the Council.</li> <li>• Understanding of executive functions and the difference between these and non-executive roles.</li> <li>• Understanding of the role of a portfolio holder as part of the executive team.</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of Council strategy, policies and operations for the allocated Portfolio.</li> <li>• Understanding of the roles of certain statutory officers namely the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.</li> <li>• Awareness of the national policy framework for the Local Government and its impact on the Council.</li> <li>• Knowledge of community needs and their priorities for action.</li> <li>• Understanding of the statutory role of Overview and Scrutiny within the Council</li> <li>• Knowledge of the role of local partners and the services they deliver, relevant to the allocated portfolio</li> <li>• Understanding of the Council's Constitution, Code of Conduct, budget and audit processes and key internal policies.</li> <li>• Understanding of the principles and importance of making evidenced-based decisions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced communication skills to be able to work constructively with officers, councillors and partners.</li> <li>• High level skills in listening, questioning and negotiation.</li> <li>• High level presentation and public speaking skills suitable for a variety of settings.</li> <li>• Skills in working with the media and developing awareness of ways of ensuring that the Council is positively represented.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisational Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to manage a portfolio workload, against deadlines and pressure on time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Skills and Abilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop research skills to aid policy development.</li> <li>• Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title:</b> Leader
<b>Responsible to:</b> The Council
<b>Contact with:</b> Residents, Members, Officers, the Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny members, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community, other Councillors.
<p><b>Roles:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) To undertake the role of 'community leader', building a vision for the area and leading the Council and its partners towards that vision.</li> <li>(b) To represent the Council and provide leadership of the Local Strategic Partnership and other key local partnerships.</li> <li>(c) To chair the Cabinet meetings and to take overall responsibility for its performance, individually and collectively.</li> <li>(d) To represent the authority and be accountable for discussions and negotiations with the community and with regional, national and international organisations where appropriate.</li> <li>(e) To propose to the Council the overall strategy, budget, policy arrangements and performance for executive and council functions and to be accountable for their delivery.</li> <li>(f) To provide the principal point of contact to all forms of media on areas of Cabinet activity, as well as the wider Council, to ensure appropriate information is provided.</li> <li>(g) To provide the principal link between the Cabinet and the Chief Executive, the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.</li> <li>(h) To facilitate good communication so that Cabinet members, Councillors and others who are outside the authority are all able to contribute constructively to the decision-making processes of the Council.</li> <li>(i) To ensure the work of the Cabinet is conducted in accordance with the Council's Constitution and with due regard for any statutory provisions in legislation.</li> <li>(j) To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny on behalf of the Cabinet.</li> <li>(k) To work with the Deputy Leader on matters affecting Cabinet portfolio management.</li> <li>(l) To exercise powers in relation to the allocated portfolio of Cabinet functions.</li> <li>(m) To serve on non-executive Committees, Sub-Committees, Panels, Boards and Working Groups as appointed by the Council.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to develop a vision for the District and drive the Council and its partners towards achieving that vision.</li> <li>• Ability to represent the Council at the sub-regional, regional and national level.</li> <li>• Ability to lead the Council towards continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Ability to lead Cabinet members in the pursuit of Council objectives</li> </ul> <p><b>Political Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to provide political leadership for the political group.</li> <li>• Ability, when necessary, to resolve differences within and between members of their political Group.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to plan and prioritise the business of Council, Cabinet and its Committees (having regard to the terms of reference and the key challenges facing the Council).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Team Working &amp; Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tact and diplomacy to be able to work across the full range of Council services, partners and political groups and directorates, to the benefit of the community.</li> <li>• Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, and other political Groups.</li> <li>• Political sensitivity to enable difficult issues to be addressed across all Groups.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A detailed understanding of the strategic role and powers of the Leader of the Council.</li> <li>• Detailed understanding of the legally defined role of the Chief Executive and other senior officers.</li> <li>• Understanding of the wider, national issues facing Councillors and the practical implications for all Councillors.</li> </ul>	
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**



## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title:</b> Deputy Leader
<b>Responsible to:</b> Leader of Council, Cabinet and the Council
<b>Contact with:</b> Residents, Members, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community, other Councillors.
<b>Principal Accountabilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) To assist the Leader of the Council in the formal processes and matters of leadership of the authority (specifically set out in the Role Profile of the Leader of the Council).</li> <li>(b) To work with the Leader of the Council on the portfolio activities across the Cabinet, budget and policy development.</li> <li>(c) To deputise in the role of the Leader when necessary, including duties set out in the latter's Role statement .</li> </ul>

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills to assume the Leadership skills required of Leader of the Council when required.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chairing Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None additional.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to assist the Leader to plan and prioritise the business of Council, Cabinet and its committees and maintaining the knowledge required to deputise where necessary.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <p>None additional.</p> <p><b>Team Working &amp; Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability and awareness to deputise for the Leader of the Council and secure team working and relationship building.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A detailed understanding of the strategic role of the Leader of the Council.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<p><b>Role Title: Member of Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p>
<p><b>Responsible to: The Council</b></p>
<p><b>Contact with: Residents, Members, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community.</b></p>
<p><b>Principal Accountabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) To support the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure effective Overview and Scrutiny within the Council.</li> <li>(b) To assist in publicising and communicating the role of Overview and Scrutiny both within and outside the Council.</li> <li>(c) To help manage and co-ordinate the Overview and Scrutiny work programme and forward plan including the work of Scrutiny Panels</li> <li>(d) To contribute to the continuing development of both the organisation and the enhancement of overview and scrutiny from the experience both in this District and elsewhere.</li> <li>(e) To encourage the involvement of all interested parties and stakeholders, individuals, voluntary and community groups in Overview and Scrutiny matters.</li> <li>(f) To review the quality of the outcomes from reviews by the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee or its Panels in considering proposals to be recommended to the Council or the Cabinet.</li> <li>(g) To participate in the call in the call in of Cabinet and Portfolio Holder on a non party political basis.</li> </ul>

## Leadership Skills

## Team Working & Relationship Building

**Ability to contribute to building effective working relationships within the Committee - with senior officers, Panel Chairmen, the Cabinet and partner agencies and public bodies.**

Ability to call those individuals and bodies to account through the Overview & Scrutiny process.

## Communication Skills

- Development of listening and questioning skills, in an Overview and Scrutiny context.
- Effective public speaking, in a Committee context.

## Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness

- Ability to monitor and prioritise scrutiny work taking account of available resources.

### Other Skills and Abilities

- Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information weighing up evidence and making decisions and recommendations based on that evidence.
- Ability to deal with strategic issues, needs and problems within the Council through the Overview & Scrutiny activity.

## Knowledge

- An awareness of the strategic importance of the Overview and Scrutiny function within the Council.
- Awareness of the Epping Forest DC approach to Overview and Scrutiny and its relationship with the the Council's decision-making structures, including the Cabinet.
- An awareness of changes facing local government and an understanding of how these might impact on the Council's scrutiny function.
- An awareness of project management principles applicable to the work of Overview and Scrutiny.
- Understanding of the legal status and operational arrangements for the “call in” process in respect of Cabinet and Portfolio holder decisions.

**Date:**

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<p><b>Role Title: Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p>
<p><b>Responsible to: The Council</b></p>
<p><b>Contact with: Residents, Members, the Cabinet, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community.</b></p>
<p><b>Principal Accountabilities:</b></p> <p><b>Leading and Promoting the Overview and Scrutiny Function</b></p> <p>(a) To be responsible for maintaining effective liaison with the Leader of the Council, Portfolio Holders, the Chief Executive and Directors to ensure that overview and scrutiny contributes to effective decision-making.</p> <p>(b) To represent Overview &amp; Scrutiny at Council meetings and be accountable to Council for its activities.</p> <p>(c) To represent the Council at regional and national forums concerned with Overview and Scrutiny.</p> <p>(d) To be responsible for the constitutional arrangements relating to the waiving of call-in where decisions are urgent and/or not on the forward plan.</p> <p><b>Managing and Co-ordinating the Overview and Scrutiny Function</b></p> <p>(e) To Chair the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>(f) To be responsible for the proper co-ordination of scrutiny work including an overview of the work of all the panels in order to ensure progress of all work.</p> <p>(g) To monitor progress of all scrutiny reviews and ensure that they are completed in reasonable time.</p> <p>(h) To support and advise the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.</p> <p>(i) To ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews all requests for scrutiny and ensure initial scoping so as to assess proposals.</p> <p>(j) To make arrangements for the use of 'call-in' procedures to advise on whether the procedure is being used appropriately.</p> <p><b>Development of Overview and Scrutiny</b></p> <p>(k) To maintain an overview of scrutiny and to learn from practice elsewhere.</p> <p>(l) To ensure the continuing development of overview and scrutiny through improving both practice and how it is organised.</p> <p>(m) To encourage the involvement of all interested parties and stakeholders, individuals, voluntary and community groups in overview and scrutiny matters.</p>

**Leadership Skills**

- Ability to lead the scrutiny function within and outside the Council.
- Ambassadorial skills through the representation and championing of the scrutiny function inside and outside the authority.
- Objective setting and progressing those objectives on behalf of the scrutiny function.

**Chairing Skills**

- Developed chairing skills which can deliver clear Overview and Scrutiny decisions.
- Developed understanding of the principles of effective scrutiny.

**Team Working & Relationship Building**

- Skills in developing productive working relationships with the Cabinet, the Leader and Portfolio holders, recognising their statutory role within the Council.

**Knowledge**

- The statutory role and strategic importance of the Overview & Scrutiny function within the Council.
- Detailed awareness of the constitutional arrangements relating to the scrutiny function and those of the Chairman of the Committee.
- Detailed knowledge of the statutory relationship between the Cabinet and executive functions and the Overview & Scrutiny role.
- An awareness of changes facing local government and an understanding of how these might impact on the Council's scrutiny function.

**Communication Skills**

- Developed listening skills and questioning skills.
- Developed communication skills with officers, councillors, co-optees, partners, external bodies and members of the public.
- Developed Presentation Public speaking skills.

**Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness**

- Ability to lead in planning and co-ordinating the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its agenda, including its Standing and Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels.

**Other Skills and Abilities**

- Ability to deal with complex strategic issues and problems on behalf of the Committee and the scrutiny function as a whole.
- Ability to seek a consensus from situations where there are conflicting opinions.

**Date:**

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title:</b> Chairman of the Council
<b>Responsible to:</b> The Council
<b>Contact with:</b> Residents, Members (including Leader of the Council and Cabinet and Group Leaders), Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and the community.
<b>Purpose of role:</b> To provide civic representation on behalf of the Council at internal and external functions. To chair the Council. To promote the Council and its work. To provide information to the Council and the Cabinet on the views of the community.
<b>Principal Accountabilities:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Represent the Council on a non-political basis and fulfil role as the Epping Forest District's first citizen to maintain the civic standing of the Authority and to represent and promote the Council within the community.</li> <li>2. Attendance at appropriate civic functions as well as community events to fulfil the role of first citizen.</li> <li>3. Act as non-political chair of meetings of the Council to ensure that order is preserved and that matters are considered effectively.</li> <li>4. Maintain, develop and build upon good relationships between political and managerial processes to maximise the benefit gained by the community.</li> <li>5. Provide a point of contact with the community on civic matters to ensure appropriate information is provided on Council activity.</li> <li>6. To provide the principal link between the Council's civic functions and the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, the Cabinet, the Leader of the Council, with particular emphasis on the feedback of views of the community as raised through the conduct of civic functions.</li> </ol>

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None specific.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chairing Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of a working knowledge of procedures for debates at Council meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team Working and Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to inspire confidence of all groups in the impartiality of the Chairman.</li> </ul>  <p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The rules for debate at Council meetings.</li> <li>2. Protocols regarding the Chairman as first citizen of the District, precedence and the non-political nature of the position.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed public speaking skills.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisation Skills</b></p> <p>Personal Effectiveness.</p> <p>Developed skills in managing debates in Council meetings to allow all opinions to be expressed and to deliver decisions.</p> <p><b>Other Skills and Abilities</b></p> <p>None specific.</p>
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	



## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title:</b> Vice-Chairman of the Council
<b>Responsible to:</b> The Council
<b>Contact with:</b> Residents, Members (including the Leader of Council, the Cabinet and Group Leaders), Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and the community.
<b>Purpose of role:</b> To deputise for the Chairman of the Council. In conjunction with the Chairman of the Council, to promote the Council and its work.
<p><b>Principal Accountabilities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Represent the Council as Vice-Chairman of the Council on a non-political basis and assist the Chairman of the Council in the role as the Epping Forest District's first citizen to maintain the civic standing of the Authority and to represent and promote the Council within the community.</li> <li>2. Attendance at appropriate civic functions as well as community events to fulfil the role of Vice-Chairman.</li> <li>3. Act as non-political chair of meetings of the Council (in the absence of the Chairman) to ensure that order is preserved and that matters are considered effectively.</li> <li>4. Maintain, develop and build upon good relationships between political and managerial processes to maximise the benefit gained by the community.</li> <li>5. Provide a point of contact with the community (in the absence of the Chairman) on civic matters to ensure appropriate information is provided on Council activity.</li> <li>6. To support and deputise for the Chairman of the Council in providing a link between the Council's civic functions and the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, the Cabinet and the Leader of the Council with particular emphasis on the feedback of views of the community as raised through the conduct of civic functions.</li> </ol>

**Note:** This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None specific.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chairing Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of a working knowledge of procedures for debates at Council meetings.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team Working and Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to inspire confidence of all groups in the impartiality of the Chairman.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed public speaking skills.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisation Skills</b></p> <p>Personal Effectiveness.</p> <p>Developed skills in managing debates in Council meetings to allow all opinions to be expressed and to deliver decisions.</p> <p><b>Other Skills and Abilities</b></p> <p>None specific.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The rules for debate at Council meetings.</li> <li>2. Protocols regarding the Chairman as first citizen of the District, precedence and the non-political nature of the position.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

**Role Title: Chairman of Area Plans Sub-Committee and District Development Control Committee and other non executive Panels and Working Groups.**

**Responsible to: The Council**

**Contact with: Residents, Members, Officers, media, external organisations and representatives, Members of Parliament and community.**

**Principal Accountabilities:**

- (a) To chair meetings in accordance with their terms of reference.
- (b) To ensure that contributions by the public to meetings are facilitated and controlled in accordance with the agreed procedure and normal courtesy.
- (c) To ensure that the decisions required at meetings are properly summarised before votes are taken.
- (d) To represent the Council in all dealings with the public, media and other bodies in respect of the work of the body concerned.

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to explain the role of Committees etc to the community.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team Working &amp; Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relationship building particularly with senior officers involved in the Planning function.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organisational Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Plans Sub-Committee, having regard to its terms of reference and key challenges facing the Planning function.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced chairing in relation to members of the council and in particular where there is involvement by the public in meetings.</li> <li>• Communication skills - particularly with Councillors, officers and the public</li> <li>• Developed public speaking ability.</li> </ul> <p><b>Chairing Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed chairing skills, including the ability to manage conflict and contributions by the public to meetings.</li> <li>• Impartiality and objectivity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-depth understanding of council policies and procedures relevant to the body concerned including planning processes, the Planning Protocol and how planning decisions are to be reached.</li> <li>• Understanding of the role of ward councillors and how to handle conflicts of interest.</li> </ul> <p>Understanding of the role of officers including the roles of professional planning staff at Area plans Sub and District Development Control Committee meetings.</p> <p>Knowledge of the Council's procedures for dealing with permitted contributions by members of the public at meetings of the body concerned.</p>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

<b>Role Title: Group Leaders</b>
<b>Responsible to: Political Group</b>
<b>Contact with: Other Group Leaders, Political group members, officers, Members of Parliament</b>
<p><b>Principal Accountabilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) To facilitate and represent the views of the Group on issues of policy service delivery and priorities, within the Council.</li> <li>(b) To lead the Political Group within the Council.</li> <li>(c) To manage the work of Councillors within the Group and the business of the Group.</li> <li>(d) To act as the principal spokesperson for an Opposition Group of which he/she is leader and as a representative of the authority to external bodies and organisations as appropriate.</li> <li>(e) To comment on, challenge and review the Council's administration performance in the co-ordination and implementation of its policies and procedures.</li> <li>(f) To champion and participate in Councillor Development to ensure the smooth running of the Group and the personal development of its councillors.</li> <li>(g) To maintain effective liaison with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Leadership Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to provide political leadership of their Group and manage the political demands and expectations of the Group, and the needs of the Council.</li> <li>• Ability to discipline members of their political Group, when necessary.</li> <li>• Political sensitivity to be able to address difficult issues with other Groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Team Working &amp; Relationship Building</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to build effective relationships with other parts of the political management structure e.g. full Council, Overview and Scrutiny, and other political Groups.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication Skills</b></p> <p>Developed communication skills which enable internal cohesion of the political group.</p> <p><b>Organisational Skills and Personal Effectiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to plan and prioritise the business of the Group.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other Skills and Abilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to assimilate and analyse complex information.</li> <li>• Research skills and policy development.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the role of the Leader of the Council and the Leader of Political Groups within the Council, and where these roles differ from the role of the Council itself</li> <li>• Understanding of the relationship between national politics and local political leadership.</li> <li>• Understanding of the wider, national issues facing councillors and the practical implications for the councillors in their Group.</li> <li>• Working knowledge of the operation of the Council's constitution.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Date:</b></p>	

**Note: This Role Accountability Statement is issued as a guide to the duties of this position. It may be varied from time to time to meet new working requirements.**

## **MEMBER ROLE ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT – PORTFOLIO HOLDER ASSISTANTS**

### **Purpose**

To assist and work with the designated Cabinet Member with their responsibility for allocated portfolios.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

1. To assist the designated Cabinet Member in shaping and developing the strategic priorities of the Council as it relates to the allocated portfolio.
2. To assist the designated Cabinet Member in monitoring performance in specified areas relating to the allocated portfolio.
3. Where appropriate and where permissible under the Council's Constitution to represent the designated Cabinet Member at meetings or visits.

### **Skills Required**

#### **Basic**

1. To show good communication and interpersonal skills.
2. To show the ability to analyse and grasp complex issues.

#### **Developmental**

3. To develop a good understanding of how local and national government operates.
4. To develop a clear understanding of the operation of the Council and ability to contribute to the work of the Cabinet generally.
5. To develop skills in chairing meetings and facilitating open discussion.

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## ***Report to the Independent Remuneration Panel***



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

***Date of meeting: 25 January 2012***

**Subject: Members' Allowances Scheme - Review**

**Officer contact for further information: Graham Lunnun (01992 – 564244)**

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1. Attached is the last Report of the Panel to the Council and an extract from the minutes of the Council meeting on 28 June 2011 at which the Panel's report was considered.

2. Following that Council meeting, the Constitution and Members' Services Scrutiny Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Remuneration Panel's report and recommended adoption of the Panel's proposal regarding removal of first class rail return fare from the scheme. The Council adopted this recommendation at its meeting on 1 November 2011.

3. The Scrutiny Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also resolved that the Panel be asked to consider the following aspects during their next review of the Members' Remuneration Scheme:

- (a) the SRA payable to the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the light of proposed changes to reporting at Council meetings;
- (b) the IT Connectivity Allowance; eligibility and payment levels; and
- (c) review of the wording in respect of an assessment of hours worked by councillors as a basis for calculating the Basic Allowance by reference to the National Minimum Wage.

### **(a) SRA – Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

4. The SRA for this position has traditionally been the same as the basic allowance (£4300 per annum in the approved scheme with implementation currently being an amount of £3150 per annum). This compares with the SRA for a Portfolio Holder of £6450 in the approved scheme with implementation currently being £6300 per annum.

5. The SRA for the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was queried at the Constitution and Members' Services Panel. This was in the context of recent changes to the Council's Constitution providing for Scrutiny Panel Chairmen, rather than the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, to present the reports from their Panels at full Council meetings. The report considered by the Council on 13 December 2011 which led to this change in the Constitution is attached.

6. If this SRA is reduced it will imply a reduction in the status/responsibilities/time commitment of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairman. The SRA for the Chairmen of Standing Scrutiny Panels is £2150 in the approved scheme and this is the amount currently being implemented. Chairmen of Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels do not receive a SRA.

**The Panel is asked to review the SRA for the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**(b) IT Connectivity Allowance**

7. The current IT Connectivity Allowance provisions are attached.

Members queried why the Council should continue to pay this sum. Members felt that the amounts concerned (£500 in the first year for a new member, £250 per annum thereafter) were arbitrary. The link between these payments and initial training courses was also queried.

8. It should be mentioned that Members are expressing an interest in electronic (rather than paper) agenda despatch linked to handheld mobile computers (tablets) for meetings. The capital investment required may be linked to the need to redirect the IT Allowance to other kinds of provision.

**The Panel may wish to defer consideration of this issue pending the outcome possible electronic agenda despatch.**

**(c) Basic Allowance**

9. The basis for calculating of the Basic Allowance was queried by some members of the Constitution and Members' Services Scrutiny Panel. When the Remuneration Panel first considered the Members' Remuneration Scheme several years ago there was a lack of data available on which to base recommendations. As a result one of the indicators taken into account was the hourly National Minimum Wage multiplied by an average number of hours worked per week (15 per councillor). The 15 hours per week reflected the nationally held view that time spend by members on Council business should be "discounted" by between 25% and 50% in recognition of the public service element.

10. Members of the Scrutiny Panel expressed concern about the average number of hours used for the calculation and how this assessment would compare with those of other councils. The use of the National Minimum Wage itself was also questioned as an elected member is not an employee.

**The Panel may wish to re-visit its calculation for the Basic Allowance although it must be said that the Panel's figure (£4300 per annum in the adopted scheme) now takes account of comparative data available from other councils. The average amount paid by similar councils in the region is £4500 per annum which compares with (a) this Council's Basic allowance of £4300 per annum with implementation currently £3150 per annum) and (b) a figure of £4742 achieved by applying the current National Minimum Wage of £6.08 per hour to a 15 hour week.**

**In 2010, members of all local authorities were invited to complete a census questionnaire which included a question – how many hours do you spend on Council business each week. Twenty four of this Council's 58 members completed the national questionnaire and the average number of hours for those members in relation to that question was 16.3 per week.**

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT  
REMUNERATION PANEL  
SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

## **Introduction**

This is the sixth annual report of the District Remuneration Panel for the Epping Forest District. The report summarises the Panel's work during the year 2010/11 and indicates further matters for review in the future.

## **Legal Background**

We were established under the Local Government Act 2000, which requires the Council to establish a Remuneration Panel to advise on payment of allowances and expenses to District Councillors.

Remuneration schemes agreed under these arrangements are subject to public notification and copies of Remuneration schemes once agreed must be made available to the public for scrutiny as must the payments actually made at the end of each financial year.

## **Membership**

The Panel currently comprises three independent members, namely:

David Jackman  
Rosemary Kelly  
Stephen Lye

## **2010/11 Review**

Details of our review undertaken and our recommendations for implementation follow.

### **Recommendations:**

#### **Basic Allowance**

(1) That, having regard to the difference between the current amount in the adopted scheme (£4,300 per annum); and

(a) the average amount paid to similar Councils in the same region (£4,500);

(b) the amount (£4,625) achieved by applying the current Minimum Adult Wage of £5.53 per hour to a 15 hour week; and

(c) the lack of any increase in staff salaries since 2009/10;

no change be made to the amount of basic allowance;

(2) That the Council again be encouraged to review its level of implementation of the Basic Allowance, currently £3,150 per annum, as it is clear that this is considerably less than the amounts paid to Councillors in similar authorities in the same region and it is considered there is a danger of undervaluing the role which may make it more difficult to attract potential candidates to stand for election in the future;

(3) That at this time no steps be taken to introduce a supplement to the Basic Allowance to be paid to Councillors attending a specified number of meetings/training sessions in view of:

(a) the difficulty of drawing up a workable scheme which complies with statutory requirements and can be monitored efficiently; and

(b) the review being undertaken by the Council of member training including the possible introduction of e-learning;

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

(4) That no Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to Deputy Portfolio Holders at the current time as they were only appointed in December 2010 and there has been little time to assess the roles being undertaken;

(5) That, based on consultations with the current six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen and attendance by members of the Panel at a Sub-Committee training session and as observers at two Sub-Committee meetings, it is considered there are grounds for granting a Special Responsibility Allowance for the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen;

(6) That, as it is considered the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen is similar to the role undertaken by Area Plans Sub-Committee Chairmen, a Special Responsibility Allowance be paid totalling £3,225 per annum to be divided equally between the six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen;

(7) That the Council determine the level of implementation of the allowance for the Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee taking account of the current implementation level of £2,362 per annum for Chairmen of Area Plans Sub-Committees;

(8) That no further change be made to the amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances, having regard to the similarities in amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances in the Council's current adopted scheme and those of similar authorities in the same region as the Council;

### **Member Role Accountability Statements**

(9) That the steps being taken to revise Member Role Accountability Statements of the various member roles undertaken at the Council be noted;

### **Co-optee Allowances**

(10) That, pending clarification of the timescale for the abolition of the current complaints regime and the future role, if any, agreed by the Council for a Standards Committee, further work on a review of allowances to the independent members of the Standards Committee be deferred;

### **Travelling Allowances**

(11) That the reference to first class rail return fare in the current scheme in relation to travel to meetings outside of the District or by members resident outside of the District be removed from the scheme;

(12) That no change be made to the other aspects of travelling allowances;

## **Subsistence Allowance**

(13) That in order to continue to mirror the rates paid to officers, subsistence payments be revised as follows:

Breakfast up to £3;

Lunch up to £5 (less the average meal cost of £3.50);

Evening meal up to £11.77 (less the average meal cost of £3.50);

## **Carers' and Childcare Allowances**

(14) That no change be made to the scheme in respect of Carers' and Childcare Allowances;

## **State Benefits**

(15) That the attention of Councillors be drawn to the availability of the booklet published by the Local Government Information Unit entitled "Councillors' Tax and Benefits".

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## **Report:**

### **Background:**

1. The present legislative framework for Members' Allowances Schemes is contained in the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003. Councils are required to establish and have regard to the recommendations of local Remuneration Panels in setting and reviewing their Allowance Schemes. There are no national limits set. However, whilst acknowledging the value of local flexibility and independence provided by Remuneration Panels, the Government feel that it is important that Panel decisions are informed by good practice elsewhere.

2. The Government's "Guidance on Consolidated Regulations on Local Authority Allowances" outlines the main statutory provisions and gives non-statutory advice. A summary is given below:

#### **(a) Basic Allowance:**

Each local authority must make provision for a basic, flat rate allowance payable to all members; the allowance must be the same for each councillor and can be paid as a lump sum or in instalments;

#### **(b) Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs):**

Each authority may make provision for the payment of Special Responsibility Allowances for those councillors who have significant responsibilities; the Panel recommends the responsibilities and the levels of allowances;

#### **(c) Co-optees' Allowance:**

Each authority may make provision for the payment of an allowance to co-optees for attending meetings, conferences and seminars;

**(d) Childcare and Dependant Carers' Allowances:**

Local authorities may make provision for the payment for an allowance to those councillors who incur expenditure on the care of children or dependant relatives whilst undertaking particular duties;

**(e) Travel and Subsistence:**

Each authority may determine the levels of travel and subsistence allowances and the duties to which they should apply;

**(f) Pensions:**

Each local authority may specify which councillors, if any, should be eligible for inclusion in the Local Government Pension Scheme and which allowances (Basic and/or Special Responsibility) should be pensionable;

**(g) Indexation:**

Each local authority may determine its allowances should be increased in accordance with the specified index and can identify the index and set the number of years (not exceeding four) for which it should apply;

**(h) Backdating:**

Each local authority may determine that, where amendments are made to an Allowances Scheme, the allowances as amended may be backdated.

3. The Epping Forest District Council's Members' Allowances Scheme was initially approved by the Council in December 2002 following consideration of a report from this Panel. The scheme has since been reviewed several times by the Panel with recommendations being considered by the Council.

4. Since 2002, the Council, for budget reasons, has not paid the full amounts of allowances recommended by the Panel as set out in the Council's adopted scheme. At its meeting in May 2008, the Council decided to implement a Basic Allowance at a figure of £3,150 per annum (approximately 73%) of the amount of Basic Allowance set out in the scheme - £4,300 per annum.

5. Similarly the Council implemented Special Responsibility Allowances at amounts less than those included in the approved scheme.

**Benchmarking**

6. In undertaking this review we have taken account of a survey conducted in the Spring/Summer 2008 on behalf of the Local Government Association and the Improvement and Development Agency. A total of 324 (83.9%) of 386 authorities responded to the survey which collected information on Basic Allowance, Special Responsibility Allowances and other allowances paid to members. This is the latest national survey undertaken.

**Current Scheme**

7. The Council's current scheme includes all of the key elements which the regulations allow, including admission of councillors to the Local Government Pension Scheme, child and carers' allowances, travel and subsistence expenses.

## **Basic Allowance**

8. Basic Allowance is payable to all members to reflect the time and effort required to attend meetings, site visits and to deal with constituent problems and queries. It should also cover any incidental costs, e.g. telephone calls, paper, envelopes. It should also be borne in mind that the allowance recognises that there is a voluntary element to the work undertaken by members and that it does not set out to fully compensate all work undertaken. It is generally considered that the time spent on Council and political business should be “discounted” by between 25-50% in recognition of the public service element. Anything beyond 50% and councillors could be seen to be giving most of their time as public service, i.e. unremunerated, or anything less than 25% could give the impression that councillors are reluctant to recognise the public service element.

9. As advised earlier, this Council's adopted scheme provides for a Basic Allowance of £4,300 per annum with current implementation being £3,150 per annum. In addition members signing an agreement under the Member Connectivity Scheme receive £500 per annum in their first year of office and £250 in subsequent years.

10. The survey undertaken in 2008 although a little outdated now, showed that the average payment made by other shire districts/boroughs in the same region was £4,505 per annum.

11. The current minimum adult wage of £5.93 per hour applied to a 15 hour week results in an allowance of approximately £4,625.

12. We have noted that there has been no increase in Council staff salaries recently and the option of increasing Basic Allowance in line with a staff increase is not therefore open to us.

13. Having regard to the current amount in the adopted scheme, the average amount paid to similar Councils in the same region, the amount achieved by applying the current minimum adult wage to a 15 hour week and the lack of any increase in staff salaries since 2009/10 we are recommending that no change be made to the amount of Basic Allowance.

## **Supplement to Basic Allowance – Attendance at Meetings/Training Sessions**

14. The Council requested the Panel as part of this review to consider inclusion in the Remuneration Scheme of a supplement to the Basic Allowance to be paid to members attending a specified number of meetings/training sessions. This followed the decision not to introduce voluntary claw back where a member is considered to have failed to fulfil their role.

15. We have concluded that there are difficulties in drawing up a workable scheme and we note that the Council has yet to agree a member training programme for 2011/12. We understand that it is possible that future member training will contain an element of “e-learning” which could be undertaken in members’ homes at a time to suit them.

16. We have been unable to find any other authority which makes provision for a supplement for attending meetings/training sessions. Some authorities have tackled poor attendance at training sessions by introducing personal development plans for individual members which are monitored by Group Leaders or a Member Panel.



17. In view of the difficulty of drawing up a workable scheme which complies with statutory requirements which could be monitored efficiently we are recommending that at this time no steps be taken to introduce a supplement to the Basic Allowance, in relation to attendance.

### **Implementation**

18. We have again discussed the Council's level of implementation of the Basic Allowance, currently £3,150 per annum and we are again recommending that this be reviewed by the Council as this sum is considerably less than the amounts paid to councillors in similar authorities in the same region. Whilst we appreciate the need for restraint in setting the Council's budget and the need to make savings in the current economic climate, we are of the opinion that by paying a Basic Allowance considerably less than similar authorities, there is a danger of undervaluing the role and that this could make it more difficult to attract potential candidates to stand for election in future. Accordingly, we are again inviting the Council to review the level of implementation.

### **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)**

19. The Council's scheme identifies SRAs in common with other authorities, e.g. for the Leader, Cabinet Portfolio Holders, Chairmen of Committees, Panels. The amounts recommended by us in 2008 resulted from multipliers being applied to the recommended amount of the Basic Allowance.

#### **(a) Deputy Portfolio Holders**

20. The Council on 2 November 2010 when approving the creation of Deputy Portfolio Holders resolved that the application of SRAs for those positions should be deferred until 2011/12 to allow time for these new positions to be assessed in their initial period of operation.

21. Although the Council made its decision on 2 November 2010 we have noted that councillors were only appointed to the positions on 14 December 2010 and there has been little time therefore to assess the roles being undertaken. We have noted the model job description agreed with the Council for these positions. We are proposing that no Special Responsibility Allowance be paid to Deputy Portfolio Holders at present and that the position be reviewed again in the future when the role being undertaken can be assessed.

#### **(b) Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen**

22. As part of our last review, we resolved that having regard to the increased number of meetings of Licensing Sub-Committees and the nature of business undertaken at those meetings, the Council be asked to give further consideration to the way in which the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees were elected to enable consideration to be given to the payment of a Special Responsibility Allowance.

23. In response the Council decided to appoint a Panel of six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen from among members of the Licensing Committee to preside over Sub-Committee meetings by rota.

24. We have been informed that since the appointment of six members at the Annual Council meeting in May 2010 there have been nine meetings of Licensing Sub-Committees and five of the six members have presided over meetings. One member has presided over three meetings, two members have each presided over two meetings and two members have each presided over one meeting. At the time of preparing our report one

member had yet to preside over a meeting but was due to undertake the role at the next scheduled meeting.

25. We have attended meetings of Sub-Committees during recent months to witness the role of Chairmen at these meetings. One Member of the Panel has also attended a training session for members and officers on Licensing law etc.

26. We initially met Councillor Richard Morgan, an experienced Magistrate to discuss the former role of JPs and the current role of councillors in relation to licensing issues.

27. We came to the conclusion that there were grounds for granting a Special Responsibility Allowance for this role. However, we remained undecided about the size and distribution of any SRA and decided to consult the six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen to seek their views on the role of being undertaken and the manner in which any SRA might be allocated.

28. The average payment to the Chairmen of Licensing Sub-Committees in the same region is £3,820. Amounts paid by other Essex authorities vary between £1,579 and £8,226. Some of the authorities have Sub-Committees which are not reflected in the 2008 survey and in some authorities the Chairman of the Licensing Committee is also the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.

29. We have concluded that the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen is similar to the role of an Area Plans Sub-Committee Chairman. Accordingly, we are recommending a total SRA of £3,225 per annum. Taking account of the views of the current six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen we are further recommending that the amount be allocated equally between the six members appointed as Chairmen.

30. If the Council adopt our recommendation for the payment of an SRA it will be necessary to decide the level of implementation having regard to the fact that Area Plans Sub-Committee Chairmen currently receive £2,362 per annum.

### **Special Responsibility Allowances**

31. Apart from recommending a Special Responsibility Allowance for Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen we are proposing that no change be made to the amounts of other Special Responsibility Allowances having regard to the similarities and amounts of Special Responsibility Allowances in the Council's current adopted scheme and those of similar authorities in the same region as the Council.

### **Member Role Accountability Statements**

32. We have been informed that the Council's Constitution and Members' Services Scrutiny Panel at a meeting on 9 November 2010 considered revised draft Member Role Accountability Statements for the various member roles undertaken at the Council.

33. We understand that the Scrutiny Panel agreed that statements based on models produced by the Improvement and Development Agency should be adopted and that the statements which were submitted to the meeting on 9 November 2010 should be revised for consideration at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Panel. We have noted that once the statements have been adopted by the Council they will be referred to us to assist in making recommendations in relation to future allowances.

## **Co-optee Allowances**

34. The Council on 20 April 2010 adopted our recommendation that the allowance paid to the Chairman of the Standards Committee and other independent members of that Committee who chair Sub-Committees should be reviewed in order to recognise the new local assessment regime and the increased workload arising therefrom.

35. However, shortly after the General Election, the Coalition Government announced that it would abolish Standards for England (the national body). At that time it was assumed the announcement related to the central body only but it is now clear that the proposal is to abolish the whole standards regime applicable to councillors in England including the Members' Code of Conduct, Standards Committees in their current guise, Standards for England and the First Tier Tribunal (Local Government Standards for England).

36. The timescale is uncertain as the proposal requires legislation which is included in the Localism Bill currently before Parliament. If and when the proposals are enacted, the determination of all outstanding cases at whatever level at that time will be the responsibility of Standards Committees. Once those cases have been determined the current standards regime will cease. We understand that the Council will be able to continue with the Standards Committee if it wishes but that the role of that Committee will be significantly different as there will be no requirement to include any independent members on the Committee.

37. Pending clarification of the timescale for the abolition of the current complaints regime and the future role, if any, agreed by the Council for a Standards Committee we have deferred undertaking any further work in relation to reviewing the allowances paid to independent members of the Standards Committee.

## **Travelling Allowances**

38. The Council's current scheme applies the same rates as those paid to officers, in common with many other authorities. These are reviewed nationally on an annual basis. At present the rates are 46.9p per mile for use of a vehicle not exceeding 999cc; 52.2p per mile for use of a vehicle not exceeding 1199cc; and 65p per mile for use of a vehicle exceeding 1199cc. The Council's scheme also provides for the payment of some extra pence per mile for carrying passengers. The scheme makes provision for a bicycle allowance of 65p per mile.

39. Travelling allowances are payable in respect of "approved" duties which are defined in the scheme.

40. The current scheme provides that in relation to travel to meetings outside of the District or by members' resident outside the District, claims irrespective of the mode of travel shall not exceed the lower of:

- (a) first class return fare plus underground and other fares from station to destination; or
- (b) the appropriate car mileage.

41. We have been informed that following a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, a local resident has suggested that reference to first class rail travel is inappropriate in the current economic climate. He continued that Council taxpayers should be confident that they do not have to fund unnecessary costs or extravagance at the present time.

42. We agree with the views of the local resident and are recommending that reference to first class rail return fare should be removed from the Council's scheme.

### **Subsistence Allowance**

43. The Council's current rates mirror the rates paid to officers which are: not exceeding £6.72 for breakfast; not exceeding £9.28 for lunch; not exceeding £3.67 for tea; not exceeding £11.49 for evening meal. These officer rates have previously been reviewed annually and changes have been reflected in the Council's scheme.

44. We were advised that following a review of the rates of subsistence paid to officers new rates are to apply as follows:

Breakfast up to £3;

Lunch up to £5 (less the average meal cost of £3.50);

Evening meal up to £11.77 (less the average meal cost of £3.50).

45. We are recommending that the subsistence payments to councillors should continue to mirror the officers' rates and are recommending accordingly.

### **Carers' and Childcare Allowances**

46. The Council's scheme provides for a childcare/dependant carers' allowance payable at a rate of £8.39 per hour with a maximum of four hours imposed on any one claim.

Allowances are not payable in respect of carers who are members of the councillor's immediate and close family, i.e. parents, children, spouses, co-habitees or members of the same household as the councillor.

47. We have been informed that to date no member of the Council has received this allowance and we see no need to review the amount provided in the scheme.

### **State Benefits**

48. The Council asked us to consider and report on the effect of Member Allowances on State Benefits.

49. The Local Government Information Unit publish a booklet entitled "Councillors' Tax and Benefits". This clearly states the law which is that 'The Basic Allowance and any SRA, co-optees/childcare/dependant carers' allowance' received by a councillor count as earnings for benefit purposes and taxable income for income tax purposes.

50. We wish to draw the attention of councillors to this publication, a copy of which has been placed in the Members' Room.

### **35. EPPING FOREST MEMBERS' REMUNERATION PANEL – SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

In the absence of Rosemary Kelly, member of the Panel who was to have presented the report but was not at the meeting as she had been involved in a road traffic accident the previous week, the Chairman invited Mr I Willett to present the report.

Mr Willett submitted the Annual Report 2010/11 of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

**Motion moved by Councillor Stallan and seconded by Councillor Knapman.**

“That the following recommendation of the Panel be adopted:

“(6) That, as it is considered the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen is similar to the role undertaken by Area Plans Sub-Committee Chairmen, a Special Responsibility Allowance be paid totalling £3225 per annum to be divided equally between the six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen”.

**Carried**

**Second motion moved by Councillor Philip and seconded by Councillor Wagland.**

“That the level of implementation of the allowance for the Chairman of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairman be set at £2362 per annum.”

**Carried**

**Third motion moved by Councillor Wagland and seconded by Councillor Philip**

“That the remaining recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted”

**Carried**

**Report as amended ADOPTED**

#### **RESOLVED:**

(1) That, as it is considered the role of Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen is similar to the role undertaken by Area Plans Sub-Committee Chairmen, a Special Responsibility Allowance be paid totalling £3225 per annum to be divided equally between the six Licensing Sub-Committee Chairmen;

(2) That the level of implementation of the allowance for the Chairmen of the Licensing Sub-Committee be set at £2362 per annum; and

(3) That the remaining recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be noted.

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## ***Report to Council***

***Date of meeting: 13 December 2011***

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Chairman:** Councillor R Bassett



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### **1. Reporting by Scrutiny Panel Chairmen at Council Meetings**

**Recommending:**

**(1) that the principle of Scrutiny Panel Chairmen presenting reports at Council and other Council bodies be approved;**

**(2) that Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 12(3)(h) (Standing Scrutiny Panels) and 13(3)(h) (Task and Finish Scrutiny panels) be amended to read as follows:**

**“be able, after consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to report to the Council, the Cabinet, a Cabinet Committee, a Portfolio Holder or any other Council body”;**

**(3) that Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 12(4) and 13(3) be further amended by the addition of the following sub paragraphs:**

**“(i) in the circumstances set out in (h), the report shall be submitted in the name of the Panel and presented by its Chairman, unless the work of more than one Scrutiny Panel is involved, in which case any report to another Council body will be in the name of the Overview & Scrutiny and presented by its Chairman**

**(j) in the event that the submission of a Panel report to another Council body is required such that it cannot be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in accordance with paragraph (h) above, the Panel report may proceed for consideration subject to prior consultation with the Chairman of that Committee as to the reasons for urgency;**

**(4) That, at Council meetings, the written report of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be dealt with prior to the reports by the Committee or any of its Panels and grouped under a single item relating to Overview and Scrutiny business; and**

**(5) That the Assistant to the Chief Executive be authorised to make any other consequential amendments to the Constitution arising from the above changes.**

## **Introduction**

1. Our Constitution and Member Services Scrutiny Standing Panel has reviewed the presentation of Overview and Scrutiny reports at Council meetings.

## **Current Procedure**

2. Standing and Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels have the status of sub-committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in that they are appointed by the Committee and report on their work programmes and the progress they are making. As such, Panels would not normally report to the Council unless specifically authorised to do so by the Committee.

3. The current arrangements are set out in Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules 12 (Standing Scrutiny Panels) and 13 (Task and Finish Scrutiny Panels). The requirements for both types of Panel are the same:

"Panels will be able, with the prior approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to report direct to the Cabinet, a Cabinet Committee, a Portfolio Holder, another Committee or to the Council with recommendations".

In practice, this procedure is only being exercised in one or two cases of urgency.

## **General Considerations**

4. Most work is carried out by Overview and Scrutiny is conducted through the Standing and Task and Finish Panels. The Constitution envisages that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will effectively manage the work of those Panels, agreeing their work programme receiving progress reports against deadlines set. Although the Committee itself undertakes some Scrutiny work particularly in questioning representatives from other public bodies about service changes, etc. which might affect the District, most detailed work is nevertheless, conducted through those Panels.

5. Bearing in mind the work undertaken by Panels, it can be argued that it should be the Panel Chairmen, rather than the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, who should present reports as they have detailed knowledge of the matter concerned. Such reports when submitted to the Council might involve changes to Council policies and practices where detailed knowledge of the Panel Chairman is desirable in order to answer questions at Council meetings.

6. On the other hand, the Overview and Scrutiny is constitutionally the counterbalance to the Cabinet. Overview and Scrutiny is required to monitor the work of the Cabinet, if necessary calling in decisions for further review and also to undertake policy work on behalf of the Council whether requested by the Cabinet or otherwise, in a way which is unencumbered by the executive responsibilities of executive members.

7. Because of this, we consider it is important that the role and status of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not undermined to such an extent that the position is seen to be less significant than the Panel Chairmen and the Cabinet. In conducting the review and framing our recommendations, we have tried to balance this against what we see as a desirable charge whereby Panels would submit reports at for example Council meetings.

8. Panel reports should in our view still be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee unless there is a need to deal with a Panel report more quickly. In such cases we are recommending that there should be a prior consultation with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee so as to agree the degree of urgency.



## **Key Changes**

9. We are recommending in (2) and (3) above, changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Rules to allow this new reporting procedure to be introduced.

The key features of these changes are as follows:

- (a) reports presented to the Council will be in the name of the Scrutiny Panel;
- (b) the same rules will apply to Standing Scrutiny Panels and Task and Finish Panels;
- (c) all Panel reports will continue to be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the first instance unless the report is urgent in which case the chairman; and
- (d) the procedure will apply to Scrutiny Panel reports which are presented to other Council bodies such as the Cabinet.

## **Consultation**

10. Our Panel consulted all Scrutiny Panel Chairmen together with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their views. The closing date of 9 September 2011 was set and any Panel Chairmen or the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were also invited to attend our last meeting if they so wished in order to express their views directly. No adverse comments were received.

## **Council Agenda**

11. We are keen not to give the impression of downgrading the status of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by allowing Panel Chairmen to present their reports. We re-affirm that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman still has the key role under the Constitution. To emphasise this, we recommend that the written report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman which is already submitted to each Council meeting about recent developments should be transferred from its present position on the agenda alongside Portfolio Holder reports to a new Overview and Scrutiny agenda item which would also cover any Panel reports.

12. We recommend as set out at the commencement of this report.

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# Member Remuneration Scheme

## Members Connectivity Scheme – Agreement between Epping Forest District Council and Members of the Council

Basic Allowances paid to Councillor by Epping Forest District Council ("the Council") are made in accordance with Section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 as amended by Section 99 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Relevant regulations applied in formulating this agreement are The Local Authorities (Members Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003.

Grants in respect of the Member Connectivity Scheme have been considered and agreed by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel on 12 October 2005, as being a supplement to the Basic Allowance.

### Terms and Conditions of Agreement

1. In signing this agreement the Councillor undertakes to:
  - (i) provide IT equipment to enable them to view agenda and minutes documents, forward plan and such other documents that may be put on the Council's extranet or internet site;
  - (ii) abide by the Connectivity Scheme (Annex 1) and Standards Committee Guidance on the use of ICT (Annex 2); the Council's other adopted ICT related policies including the security of any data and remote working policies; and the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding the transmission of Exempt Business as defined in Schedule 12A (or other exemption categories that may be enacted) outside of the Council and any internal meeting, all of which should be considered confidential until published for public consumption;
  - (iii) treat any contact information relating to officers and members that does not appear on the Council's public website as confidential;
  - (iv) cease to receive paper copies of minutes and agenda for those Committees, Sub-committees and Panels **of which he/she is not a member.**
2. The Council undertakes to provide:
  - (i) An 'extranet' (a private intranet) connection to the Council's IT network using a 'token' scheme to control access and a user name and password for each member;
  - (ii) Training on the use of the system;
  - (iii) ICT support relating to 2(i) above and advice from Democratic Services (DS) on 2(ii) above;
  - (iv) A paper copy of the agenda to members of Council, each Committee, Sub-committee or Panel (unless the member indicates in writing otherwise);
  - (v) Email notification of publication of agenda and minutes to all members;

- (vi) Headed paper and envelopes for use by members for Councillor correspondence.

### **Payment of Allowances**

3. The addition to the Basic Allowance will be paid to each Councillor entering into this agreement quarterly in arrears (currently £500 per annum for the first year in office and £250 per annum for subsequent years).

4. The Council may review the payment of such allowances from time to time as necessary and may change or cease payment upon resolution at Full Council.

### **Acceptance**

I confirm that I have read and accepted the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Signed by Councillor:	Dated:
Name (Please print):	
Signed on behalf of the Council:	Dated:
Ian Willett Assistant to the Chief Executive	

## Member Connectivity Scheme

This document provides information on the Member Connectivity Scheme.

### Introduction

The Connectivity Scheme has been introduced to enable members to receive electronic notification of and Internet access to papers for Council meetings and associated information. The scheme has been made possible following the introduction of the Committee Management System (CoMS) which publishes our publicly available agenda to the Internet via the Council's website. The Connectivity Scheme will, however, provide members with access to a wider range of information including agenda planning, up-to-date notification of publication, call-in and portfolio holder decision-making.

### The Agreed Scheme

The Connectivity Scheme provides members with an additional allowance (payable as part of the existing Scheme of Members Allowances) towards acquiring computer equipment and to use this equipment to access information on the Council's Agendas and Minutes via the Internet.

Members would be expected to use this system to access all agenda and minutes information **and** cease to receive hard copy agenda (except for those of which they are a member or required to attend by virtue of a position).

Under the scheme you will receive £500 per annum (payable normally quarterly in arrears) in your first year of service as a Councillor from which members will be expected to assist with the cost of a Personal Computer (PC) (if necessary); Internet connection and any consumables. This sum will be subject to tax and National Insurance. After the first year, the payment will be £250 per annum as it is designed to assist you with the cost of consumable items for your personal computer.

### Equipment Specification

The minimum specification required for PC equipment is:

- (i) A PC that can access the Internet;
- (ii) A broadband connection to your home;
- (iii) A valid email account;
- (iv) Internet Browser software; and
- (v) A printer capable of printing A4 pages.

## **Data and Equipment Security and Use Guidance**

The equipment is the individual member's property and can be used for non-council activities. Members must adhere to:

- (i) The User Policy Statement for the CoMS system;
- (ii) Issued Standards Committee Guidance on the Use of IT by Members;
- (iii) The Council's other adopted ICT related policies including the security of any data and remote working policies;
- (iv) The provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding the transmission of Exempt Business as defined in Schedule 12A outside of the Council.

### **What the Council will provide:**

The Council will:

- (i) Provide an 'extranet' (a private intranet) connection using a 'token' scheme to control access and a user name and password for each member;
- (ii) Training on the use of the system;
- (iii) ICT support relating to (i) above and advice from DS on (ii) above;
- (iv) A paper copy of the agenda to members of each Committee (unless the member indicates in writing otherwise);
- (v) Email notification of publication of agenda and minutes to all members;
- (vi) Headed paper and envelopes for use by members for Councillor correspondence.

### **What the Council will not provide:**

The Council will **not**:

- (i) Provide ICT support for PC's or any peripherals purchased by members under the scheme;
- (ii) Advise on purchase of equipment or choice of ISP.
- (iii) Provide a paper copy of agenda for other Committees if you are not a member. Paper copies of Agenda will be available at the meeting in small quantities.
- (iv) Plain paper and print cartridge consumables.

## **Glossary of Terms used in this document**

**Broadband** – a system of connecting to the Internet that allows voice, data, and video to be broadcast over the same medium at the same time. They may also allow multiple data channels to be broadcast simultaneously. It is much faster than traditional dial-up methods of connection.

**Browser** – Software that allows a computer user to find and view information on the Internet.

**Committee Management System** – A computer system used by EFDC to publish and archive all Agenda and Minutes of Council meetings and publish these to the Internet and Intranet.

**Email account** – An account provided by your ISP by which you can receive email. Your current or chosen ISP will be able to provide details of how you can set an account up.

**Extranet** - An extension of the Council's Intranet giving authorised people controlled access to the Intranet from outside of the Council's network.

**Exempt Business** – Items of business on an agenda that are confidential to the Council and should not be disclosed to third parties.

**Internet** – A network that links computer networks all over the world by satellite and telephone, connecting users with service networks such as e-mail and the World Wide Web.

**Internet Browser** – See Browser.

**ISP** - Internet service provider. A company that provides Internet connection services

**IT helpdesk** – The Council provides a helpdesk to support its applications. Its contact number is 01992 564321

**Password** – In this case means a word that when entered on the password screen allows access to the extranet

**Peripherals** – A piece of computer hardware such as a printer or a disk drive that is external to but controlled by a computer's central processing unit.

**Personal Computer (PC)** – A computer with its own operating system and a wide selection of software, intended to be used by one person.

**Portfolio holder decision-making** – Means an executive decision made by a member of the Cabinet

**DS** – Democratic Services at EFDC.

**Remote working** – Is another way of describing someone accessing the Council's network from outside of the building i.e. remotely.

**Token** – A piece of equipment that provides a secondary form of identification when accessing the Council's extranet.

**User name** – In this instance means your name on the system. Normally a combination of your initials and your surname.

Extract from the protocol on use of Council Facilities by members:

## **Guidance on the Use of IT by Councillors**

### **1. Purpose of Guidance**

- 1.1 The Council provides Councillors with an allowance towards the costs of providing and maintaining equipment, software or other consumables necessary to allow them to access the Committee Management System. This protocol gives advice on use of computer equipment in order to minimise risks to both the Council and to individual Councillors.

### **2. Security**

- 2.1 Under the terms of the Connectivity Scheme, Councillors are responsible for:
- (i) ensuring that their password and secondary authentication equipment remain accessible only by themselves;
  - (ii) abiding by the Council's published ICT policies and standards relating to security of systems and data and remote working;
  - (iii) meeting the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and any subsequent Act in relation to exempt and confidential information; and
  - (iv) adhering to specific user policies for systems they are given access to.

### **3. Use of Equipment**

- 3.1 Councillors should be mindful of the onus placed upon them under 2 above. They should ensure that any material down-loaded via the Intranet is kept securely at any remote location. Councillors should ensure that if the computer is shared, proper arrangements are made to limit access to materials stored by the member, that fall into exempt and confidential categories. Such material will be routinely endorsed "Restricted".
- 3.2 Councillors should not store or download any material which:
- (i) causes the Council to be brought in to disrepute;
  - (ii) contravenes the Access to Information or Data Protection Acts or similar legislation;
  - (iii) is illegal or inconsistent with the high standards expected of those in public office;
  - (iv) is defamatory; or
  - (v) breaches the Council's Code of Conduct (including confidentiality).



- 3.3 If a Councillor uses their computer for the preparation of any material of a personal or political nature, he/she must make it clear that such material is published in a private capacity and not by or on behalf of the Council, and that no costs have been incurred by the Council as a consequence of its publication. Similarly, a Councillor should not express views on any matter relating to the Council without expressly indicating that the views are personal and not those of the Authority.
- 3.4 Councillors should be aware that the internet is a completely unregulated medium and they are not protected in any way from viruses etc.
- 3.5 The Council accepts no responsibility for Councillors' use of IT equipment.

For more information see the Member Connectivity Scheme and related ICT Policies.

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Date: 16 November 2011

Our ref: PU/IW/CL

Your ref:

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP  
Secretary of State for Communities and  
Local Government  
Department for Communities and  
Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

Ian Willett 01992 564243  
Email: [iwillett@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:iwillett@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)

Dear Secretary of State

## **Councillors' Remuneration**

The Epping Forest District Council passed the following resolutions at its meeting on 1 November 2011:

"That this Council calls on the Government, through the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to amend the rules on Councillors remuneration in order that:

- (a) Potential candidates who are in receipt of State Benefits are able to seek election without placing those State Benefits at risk if elected; and
- (b) Remuneration is based on a combination of attendance and basic allowance."

This motion attracted cross-party support within the Council and some of the points made in debate are outlined below:

## **Benefits Entitlement**

Councillors from different political parties made reference to past experience in relation to identifying suitable candidates for elections who subsequently had to withdraw because the effect of the allowances they would receive when in office and which would adversely affect their entitlement to benefit payments.

Members commented on the increasing difficulty of finding suitable candidates for elections and the number of uncontested elections which is already common among Parish Councils and could happen at District Council level also. Many members expressed the view that it is important that there are no financial barriers for someone who is otherwise well suited to being a candidate which prevents them from standing for election.

Members also commented that if financial considerations began to influence the candidates who stand for election, democracy will be the poorer.

## **Remuneration Schemes**

Currently, the Council Remuneration Schemes may not include provision for payments to Councillors based on attendance at meetings. The debate drew attention to the fact that this had not always been the case and was a system which had been disbanded in the year 2000.

The debate emphasised that many members feel that the basic allowance is a useful means of recognising the time and effort members put into their constituency and other duties outside the context of formal meetings. Members were of the opinion that there is a clear expectation by local residents that the duties of a Councillor include those in the Council Chamber where decisions are actually made. The Council's view is that this role is better recognised through an attendance based system.

The motion is suggesting that there should be greater freedom for local authorities to include a combination of basic and attendance allowances in their remuneration schemes. The Council will continue to be advised by its local Remuneration Panel about how such a scheme should operate but Councillors were strongly of the view that many members attend meetings over and above those which they strictly have to attend and this commitment and contribution must be recognised.

To summarise therefore, the Council is seeking consideration to be given by the Government to the issue of benefit payments in respect of successful candidates for election and to more freedom for local authorities to introduce attendance allowances if this is the local preference.

The Council hopes that you can use your good offices to facilitate consideration of these issues.

Yours sincerely



**Ian Willett**  
**Assistant to the Chief Executive**