

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP ADVISORY GROUP

2 March 2010 at 6.30 pm

MEMBERS: Councillor Ruth Dombey (Vice-Chair) (In the Chair) and Councillors Paul Scully, Sue Stears and Roger Thistle.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Sean Brennan and Stuart Gordon-Bullock.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2010

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Vice Chair.

3. MEMBERS ALLOWANCES 2010/11

Members considered a report concerning Members Allowances for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

It was reported that the Independent Remuneration Panel for London, established by London Council's had met. Local authorities were required by law to take into account the Panel's recommendations on the amount of allowances paid, when considering their Member's Allowances Scheme. However, the Panel's report had not yet been approved by London Council's Executive Committee. It was therefore proposed that the existing members Allowances Scheme be confirmed and further consideration be given to Members Allowances later in the year when the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel would be available.

Resolved: (i) That The Executive be recommended to confirm the existing Member's Allowances Scheme for the 2010/11 municipal year;

(ii) That further consideration be given to the Member's Allowances Scheme later in the year when the recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel have been published.

4. MEMBERS TRAINING FOLLOWING THE LOCAL ELECTIONS

The Advisory Group considered a report which set out a proposed training programme for Councillors following the local elections on 6 May 2010. The programme had been based on proposals previously put forward by the Members Development Working Group and what had been provided in previous years.

The report had been considered by the Corporate Management Team who thought that the training should be more strategic. The Advisory Group disagreed with this view and thought that the initial training should cover the basics of a Councillor's role and where they could access information. It was noted that there was space in one session that could be used to briefly cover this topic. More detailed training would be provided in the Autumn 2010.

It was considered important that members who sat on Licensing and Appeals Committees received training in the remit of those bodies before they considered any cases. Training was also required for members of the Development Control Committee which previously had been provided in short training sessions before

meetings of that Committee. It was hoped to include Safeguarding Training in the session being arranged for 27 May 2010.

Partner organisations, including the voluntary sector, must also be involved.

Resolved: That the Member Induction Programme set out in the report be approved, subject to the comments outlined above.

5. MEMBERS INDEMNITY

The Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported on the availability of insurance cover for members who were the subject of a complaint under the Council's Code of Conduct.

The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 enabled the Council to grant an indemnity or take out insurance to cover the potential liability of its Members in a range of circumstances, including legal costs incurred by Members in defending alleged breaches of the Council's Code of Conduct. However, the Order stated that if the complaint against the member was upheld or they admitted that they had breached the Code, then the costs of defending the action had to be reimbursed to the authority concerned. In practice, insurance companies did not pursue this reimbursement.

Enquiries had revealed that at least one insurance company would provide this insurance at a cost of £31.75 per member. All members of the Authority would be required to be covered if it was agreed that Indemnities should be provided. Further efforts would be made to see if any other insurance companies would provide such cover.

Resolved: That a further report on obtaining Indemnities for members be submitted to this Group in due course.

6. CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

The following urgent item was brought forward with the agreement of the Vice Chair so that the matter could be dealt with promptly and in good time before the next Council meeting on 29 March 2010.

The Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services reported that just before the Council meeting on 1 March 2010, a Councillor had put forward a number of concerns about the proposed changes to the Council's Constitution and the new Executive Arrangements. As a result, consideration of that item had been deferred to the next Council Meeting.

These concerns had been investigated. Some were covered in the relevant legislation, others ought to be reflected within the Constitution.

Proposed alterations to the changes that had already been put forward by The Executive would be drafted and circulated to Advisory Group Members for agreement before being submitted to Council on 29 March 2010.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.35 pm

Chair:

Date: