

Council Assembly Annual Meeting

Wednesday 19 May 2010
7.00 pm
Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

Late Reports

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Date: Wednesday 19 May 2010

Item No. 6A	Classification: Open	Date: 19 May 2010	Meeting Name: Council Assembly (Annual Meeting)
Report title:		Introduction of a Petitions Scheme - Addendum Report	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the council assembly consider the addendum in conjunction with the main report and approve the revised threshold for petitions to be debated at council assembly (see paragraph 4 below).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 ["the Act"] imposes a new statutory petition scheme duty on local authorities to have a scheme for handling petitions which must be approved by full council and published on the council's website.
3. The constitutional steering panel considered the main report on 18 May 2010 and recommended the scheme and constitutional changes with one change to the threshold for the number of signatories required for a petition to request a debate by council assembly.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4. The constitutional steering panel recommended that the threshold for the number of signatories required for a petition to request a debate by council assembly on a particular matter be amended from a threshold of 3,000 to 2,500.
5. In appendix 2 the constitutional change to council assembly procedure note 2.4 (1) would read as follows:

2.4 PETITIONS TO COUNCIL ASSEMBLY

This rule cannot be suspended.

Which meetings consider petitions?

1. Members of the public or councillors ~~Members of the council~~ will be entitled to present petitions with 2,500 or more signatures to the Mayor at each council assembly meeting except the annual meeting or the council tax setting meeting.
6. A consequential change would be made to the petition scheme in Appendix 1.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

7. The provisions relating to petition schemes come into force on 15 June 2010. The scheme must be approved by council assembly by virtue of section 11 (2) of the Act. There is no other meeting before the prescribed date.

REASONS FOR LATENESS

8. The proposals in the report contain proposed changes to the constitution to implement the petitions scheme. The constitution states that any changes to the constitution which can only be approved by council assembly will require the prior consideration of the proposal by the constitutional steering panel, which met on 18 May 2010. The statutory guidance was published on 30 March 2010 and there was no constitutional steering panel held between this date and the election.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Southwark's Constitution.	Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	Lesley John 020 7525 7228
Petitions Guidance.	Southwark Council, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2TZ	Norman Coombe 020 7525 7678

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director of Communities, law & Governance	
Report Authors	Andrew Weir, Constitutional Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	19 May 2010	
Key Decision?	No	
Consultation with other officers / directorates / executive member		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Incorporated in report
Finance Director	No	No
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	19 May 2010	

Item No. 7.	Classification: Open	Date: 19 May 2010	Meeting Name: Council Assembly (Annual Meeting)
Report title:		Revisions to Special Responsibility Allowances	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the revised list of special responsibility allowances as set out in paragraph 9 of the report be approved as part of the council's members' allowances scheme.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The constitution contains the council's members' allowances scheme which contains the existing special responsibility allowances. Any changes to the scheme must be considered by the constitutional steering panel which will make any recommendations to council assembly. The constitutional steering panel met on 18 May 2010 to consider the report and agreed to recommend the revisions in this report. The scheme must be agreed by council assembly; this is set out in Article 1.5(b) of the constitution.
3. In coming to a decision members must take into account government guidance and the advice of the independent panel. London Councils is the body which acts as the independent panel and their recommendations have just been released ahead of ratification by their Leader's Committee.
4. The key recommendations in relation to special responsibility allowances (SRAs) are as follows:

Band 1	£2,368 to £8,852
Band 2	£15,333 to £28,298
Band 3	£34,780 to £41,262
Band 4	£54,227

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

5. The existing members' allowance scheme was agreed by council assembly on 23 May 2007 for a four year period from 2007-2010. It was subsequently amended on 27 June 2007 and 21 November 2007. During this time a new special responsibility allowance responsibility was approved for the chair of the audit and governance committee.
6. This report recommends no change to the basic allowance which will remain index linked. The current figure is £10,599.

7. The following changes to special responsibility allowances (SRAs) are proposed:

	SRAs at 31 March 2010	Proposed SRAs
Band 1a	£2,849	£2,771
Band 1b	£8,593	£8,357
Band 2a	£14,860	£14,451
Band 2b	£23,271	£22,631
Band 3	£34,554	£33,604
Band 4	£51,481	£50,065

8. This represents a general 2.75% reduction before rounding on all SRAs. In addition the following changes are proposed:

- Chair of Disciplinary Appeals Committee (DAC) moved from band 1b to band 1a
- Vice-chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee moved from band 1b to band 1a
- Chairs of scrutiny sub-committees moved from band 2a to band 1b
- Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee moved from band 3 to band 2b

9. The full proposed scheme for SRAs is:

Band	Number	SRA
Band 1a		
Chair Audit	1	£2,771
Deputy Leader Majority Opposition	1	£2,771
Leader Minority Opposition	1	£2,771
Opposition Whip	1	£2,771
Independent Chair Standards	1	£2,771
Chair DAC	1	£2,771
Vice-chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1	£2,771
Band 1b		
Deputy Mayor	1	£8,357
Chair Community Council	8	£8,357
Scrutiny Sub-committee Chair	5	£8,357
Band 2a		
Chair Planning	1	£14,451
Chair Licensing	1	£14,451
Chief Whip	1	£14,451
Leader Majority Opposition	1	£14,451
Band 2b		
Mayor	1	£22,631
Chair Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1	£22,631
Band 3		
Cabinet	8	£33,604
Deputy Leader	1	£33,604
Band 4		
Leader	1	£50,065

10. The proposed SRAs will replace those already in the scheme.

Community impact statement

11. There is no impact on the community arising from these changes. The total allowances payable to individual members is published annually in the local press and on the council's website.

Resources implications

12. A reduction in special responsibility allowances of 2.75% represents an estimated full year saving of about £71,000 on the members' allowance budget.

Legal implications

13. Any changes to the special responsibility allowances which form part of the members' allowance scheme must be approved by the council assembly, following consideration by the constitutional steering panel.

REASONS FOR URGENCY

14. The reason for urgency is that the special responsibility allowances, which will apply to the leader, executive members and committee chairs, will take effect immediately for appointments being made at this meeting.

REASONS FOR LATENESS

14. The reason for lateness is that the constitutional steering panel had to consider the revisions to special responsibility allowances on 18 May 2010 before making recommendations to council assembly.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Members' Allowance Scheme, Southwark's Constitution	160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2TZ	Ian Millichap 020 7525 7225

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	
Report Author	Graham Love, Head of Democratic Services Ian Millichap, Constitutional Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	19 May 2010	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / EXECUTIVE MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	Yes	Incorporated in report
Executive Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	19 May 2010	