

Overview and Scrutiny (OS) Councillor Remuneration Fund:

Reviewing the Method of Allocation

Purpose

1. To propose a new system for allocating the £15,000 Overview and Scrutiny (OS) fund currently included in the council's [Member Remuneration Scheme](#).

Background

2. A fund for remunerating non-executive councillors participating in overview and scrutiny activities has been in place since 2009. Originally it was used to remunerate all councillors taking part in OS task groups or rapid scrutiny exercises. It was subsequently amended to remunerate only those occupying the leading scrutiny positions i.e. those chairing task groups/rapid scrutiny exercises, vice-chairing select committees that do not attract a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) and councillors acting as OS representatives on programme boards. The rationale for this change was that the leading positions often require significantly more responsibility and time commitment than acting as a regular scrutiny member.
3. The current Wiltshire Council Member Remuneration Scheme was adopted by Full Council in 2017. This followed a review by the Independent Remuneration Panel, which included discussion with leading OS councillors. The Scheme retained the £15,000 OS fund and defined its purpose as, "To remunerate councillors to recognise significant additional responsibilities undertaken as part of overview and scrutiny activities. A scheme on how to allocate the fund will be prepared and approved annually by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee."
4. It is important that the OS Fund is allocated in a way that
 - Reflects its purpose as defined in the council's Member Allowance Scheme
 - Is fair given the demands of various OS activities
 - Would not be perceived as encouraging OS activities that are lengthier than necessary.

Current allocation method

5. For the past few years the OS Fund has been allocated by OS Management Committee as follows:
 - a) The following activities are eligible for remuneration:
 - Chairing active task groups (including standing task groups)
 - Leading rapid scrutiny exercises
 - Vice-chairing select committees that do not attract an SRA
 - Representation on active project boards
 - b) The OS Fund of £15,000 is divided by the number of qualifying activities, with a fixed payment (1/10th) to be allocated to 4 key positions, and the balance divided equally among the others. The 4 key positions are:
 - Vice-chair of Children's Select Committee
 - Vice-chair of Environment Select Committee
 - Vice-chair of Health Select Committee
 - Chairman of Financial Planning Task Group
 - c) No more than 2 x fund shares be awarded to any one councillor.

Main considerations

6. The method above was applied for the 2017/18 municipal year (approved by Committee in June 2018) and the resultant amounts are shown under Option A in Appendix 1 below. Appendix 1 illustrates that Option A leads to qualifying councillors (excepting those in the defined 'key positions') all receiving the same share of the fund, regardless of the time demands of the activity. For example, a councillor who chaired a task group or rapid scrutiny exercise that required only 1 meeting (or acted as OS representative on a programme board that only met once) receives the same share as one chairing a task group or rapid scrutiny exercise that requires 10 meetings.
7. A number of alternative allocation systems are therefore presented in which the allocation is more reflective of the time demands of different activities. To demonstrate their affect, the methods have been applied to scrutiny activity in the 2017-18 municipal year by way of illustration. The four options presented are:

Option A: Retain current system

Considerations: This remunerates all members equally despite large discrepancies in the time demands of different OS activities.

Option B: Retain current system, but with a 2-meeting minimum i.e. 2 meetings must be led to qualify for a share

Considerations: This excludes only those leading activities involving 1 meeting e.g. many rapid scrutiny exercises. Those leading activities involving 2+ meetings would still all receive an equal share.

Option C: Shares allocated by number of meetings led

Considerations: This leads to fairly large sums being awarded to those who have led activities requiring a large number of meetings. For example, in 2017-18 the largest sum awarded under this system would have been £2,291.

Option D: Shares allocated by number of meetings led, capped at a total share of £1,500

Considerations: To a degree this system reflects the varying time demands of different activities, but prevents any one member from receiving more than the £1,500 allocated to the four defined key positions.

8. For Options where the sums awarded are determined by the number of meetings held it will be important to define what constitutes a qualifying meeting. It is proposed that this be defined as a formal meeting of the relevant OS activity to which all activity members are invited, thereby excluding chairman's briefings etc.

Proposal

9. To adopt Option D (see Appendix A) from the 2018-19 municipal years onwards as the method of allocating the £15,000 Overview and Scrutiny (OS) fund to better reflect the varying demands of leading different OS activities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Illustration of four options using 2017-18 meeting data – OS Remuneration fund

Appendix 1: OS Remuneration fund allocation systems – Illustration of four options using 2017-18 OS activity

		Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
	No. of meetings	Share under current system	Share under current system, with 2 meeting minimum	Payment by meeting (no cap)	Payment by meeting, capped at £1,500
South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Task Group	3	£600	£692	£491	£563
Children and Adolescents Mental Health (CAHMS) Task Group	4	£600	£692	£655	£751
Planning Committee System Task Group	9	£600	£692	£1,473	£1,500
Digital Strategy & Implementation Task Group	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) School Provision Task Group	14	£600	£692	£2,291	£1,500
Rapid Scrutiny Traded Services for Schools	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Traded Services for Schools Task Group	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Rapid Scrutiny Service Devolution & Asset Transfer	1	£600	£0	£164	£188
Third Party Advertising Task Group	5	£600	£692	£818	£938
Military and Civilian Integration Task Group	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Rapid Scrutiny Child Care Leavers	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Waste Contracts Task Group	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
Wilts Online Project Board	1	£600	£0	£164	£188
Adult Social Care Transformation Board (1)	4	£600	£692	£655	£751
Adult Social Care Transformation Board (2)	2	£600	£692	£327	£375
<i>Key positions receive flat share of 10% (£1,500):</i>					
Vice-chair Children's Select Committee	-	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500

Vice-chair Environment Select Committee	-	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500
Vice-chair Health Select Committee	-	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500
Financial Planning Task Group	-	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500

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