

Wiltshire Council

Council

20 July 2021

Notice of Motion No.1 – Members' Allowances Scheme

Councillors Philip Whitehead and Cllr Graham Wright

Background

Members with special responsibility, e.g. Cabinet members, Chair of Committees etc, receive an annual allowance, the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA). This allowance is paid monthly and if a member with a special responsibility leaves during the year, payments are made pro-rata on the time spent in the post.

During an election year there is an anomaly because of the way the Member's Allowances Scheme is currently drafted, that results in members not being paid their full year's SRA, even though they have completed the full year's work. (For clarity this does not affect the standard allowance that all councillors receive)

Fundamentally this is because Democratic Services inform payroll immediately after an election is held that the Special Responsibility holder is no longer in post, because of the way the Member's Allowances Scheme is currently drafted. As a result, members do not receive their annual allowance, even though they have done the full year's work. An example of this is best given by looking at some of the SRA holders who have stayed in post, for example, Pauline Church, Ian Blair-Pilling and Graham Wright. All have completed their full year's work, but they have not received the full year's allowance because effectively Democratic services ended the year prematurely and payroll reflected this.

This anomaly would be easily solved if the Member's Allowances Scheme was amended and all SRA holders were paid their allowance until the Full Council when SR members are appointed for the next year. (Clearly if a councillor is not re-elected their allowance would cease from the election date as is the current case.)

Finally, this was first raised 4 years ago with the Leader, executive Director and Finance Director, following the last election, and assurance was received that this anomaly had been resolved. Had this not been received this motion would have been proposed 4 years ago. Therefore, the request is that this is corrected retrospectively.

This Council resolves that:

The Members' Allowances Scheme be amended to include provision that in an election year, the SRAs for all SRA holders continue until the new SRA holders are appointed by the Full Council. This to apply from 7 May 2021 onwards, providing the member was re-elected.

