

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

18<sup>th</sup> January 2007

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**BRIGADIER RW HALL - REPORT ON SCRUTINY ALLOWANCE**

**Background**

1. The Independent Panel that examined Members' Allowances early in 2006 was made aware of a difficulty that exists in sometimes finding members for scrutiny committees and task groups. To encourage members to volunteer to serve on these committees and groups, the Panel recommended that a Scrutiny Allowance be given. In response, Full Council has allocated the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee £5,000 in 2006/07 and £10,000 in 2007/08 for allocation to his members.

**Aim**

2. The aim of this paper is to propose an equitable way to distribute the Allowance.

**Earlier Proposal**

3. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Chairman of the Management Committee, submitted a paper to the last meeting recommending that the money be given to the vice-chairmen of the main scrutiny committees, chairmen of the task groups and certain members who, sat alone, representing scrutiny on miscellaneous project boards. This proposal was rejected by the Committee because it distributed the Allowance to established committee members and did little to attract new and continuing members to the scrutiny function.

**Current Position**

4. The Chairmen of the three main scrutiny committees all receive Special Responsibility Allowances (see Appendix 1 to Part 14 of the Constitution) and are therefore not considered further in this paper. Political Group Leaders have funds available which could be used in the area of overview and scrutiny but they are also not considered further in this paper.

**New Proposal**

5. In an attempt to encourage members to serve on scrutiny committees and task groups it is suggested that the available Allowance is distributed with Members Allowances in the last month's payment of the financial year to reflect their service on scrutiny activities. Service on each of these would be reflected as a share of the Chairman's allocation of funds. The allocation would be divided by the number of shares and that allocation distributed to

members who had served. By distributing the Allowance at the end of the financial year in a lump sum, this would avoid the potential for overspend.

### **Possible Outcome**

6. Because the number of Task Groups varies year by year it cannot be certain what the share mentioned above will be but an example, using figures from 2005/06, is set out below. It should be noted that a Member will receive one share for each committee, task group and project board on which they serve (subject to a minimum of 50% attendance at available meetings). Should the work of a non-standing task group span more than one financial year then only one share would be allocated.

### **Proposal applied to FY2005/06**

7. Strength of membership (less Chairmen of main committees due to SRAs and substitute members):

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee	11 Members
Children's' Services Committee	12 Members
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	7 Members
Pathways for Change Task Group	4 Members
Budget Process Scrutiny Task Group	6 Members
Customer First (E Government) Scrutiny Task Group	6 Members
Performance Scrutiny Task Group	2 Members
Cycle Lanes Scrutiny Task Group	5 Members
Corporate Recovery Plan Task Group	5 Members
Croft Road/Hay Lane Link Task Group	5 Members
School Catering Scrutiny Task Group	4Members
Contracted Out Placements Task Group	5Members
Mainstreaming Mental Health Task Group	Nil Members
Project Procurement Board representatives	5 Members
Total	<u>77 Members</u>

8. In the first year a share would be £64, doubled in the second year. So if a member, as an example, served on 2 of the main committees and 2 task groups then this would attract an allowance of £256 in the first year and £512 in the second.

### **Recommendation**

9. It is recommended that the Committee invite the Chairman to adopt the proposal at Paragraph 5 above as an appropriate overview and scrutiny allowances scheme.

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Brigadier Robert Hall  
Management Committee Member