

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Members' Allowances

Members receiving more than one special responsibility allowance

1. Legislative Background

- 1.1 The Allowances Regulations require allowances schemes to prohibit members from receiving allowances from more than one authority in respect of the same duties.
- 1.2 Schemes must also allow members, by written notice to the Proper Officer, to elect to forego their entitlement to part or the whole of their allowances.
- 1.3 The regulations do not, however, prohibit a member from receiving more than one special responsibility allowance ("SRA") from the same authority.

2. Councillors Commission

- 2.1 In its December 2007 report, the Commission indicated that Councils can and do pay more than one SRA to individuals who hold two or more posts; that the practice was common before 2000; but that the practice is diminishing, although it still exists.

3. Family Local Authorities' Statistics

- 3.1 As part of the research for the most recent Independent Remuneration Panel review, the details of allowances schemes of 14 "family" local authorities, including Stockton, were compared.
- 3.2 Of the 14, 3 stipulated that no member could receive more than one SRA (Gateshead, Middlesbrough and Tameside); 1 allowed more than one SRA if the additional SRA was from a joint body carrying its own SRA (Redcar and Cleveland); 3 others restricted members to one SRA at a time, and if a member was appointed to more than position attracting an SRA, the member would be entitled to the highest SRA (Barnsley, Halton and South Tyneside), and 1 authority restricted members with more than one SRA, to an entitlement of only 50% of any second and subsequent additional SRA (Medway).

4. Tees Valley Local Authorities

- 4.1 In addition to Middlesbrough and Redcar, as referred to in paragraph 3.2, Hartlepool and Darlington also restrict members to one SRA.

5. Independent Remuneration Panel

- 5.1 Stockton's Remuneration Panel, in its December 2011 report, recommended that no councillor should receive more than one SRA from the Council (with the exception of Mayoral/Deputy Mayoral allowances), and that in the event that any councillor occupied more than one position that attracted an SRA, then only the highest allowance should be paid to that councillor.

6. Cabinet/Council

- 6.1 On the 12 January 2012 Cabinet considered the Remuneration Panel's report and recommended (amongst other things) that no councillor should receive more than one SRA from the Council, with the exception of mayoral allowances; that where a councillor occupied two qualifying positions then only the higher allowance would be paid; but that this proposal relating to a councillor receiving no more than one SRA from the Council, would however be the subject of further consultation.
- 6.2 On the 18 January 2012 Council agreed with this recommendation (minute C180/11).

7. Next Steps

- 7.1 A decision from full Council will be required to change the current position regarding members receiving more than one SRA.
- 7.2 If there is no wish to change the current position, no further action will be required.
- 7.3 A proposal to adopt Cabinet/Council's previous proposals about restricting members to only one SRA from the Council (with the exception of mayoral allowances), would not require a further review and report from the Remuneration Panel.
- 7.4 Any other form of proposal to change the status quo in this respect might only be able to be implemented after a further review and report from the Remuneration Panel.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 If members had been restricted to only one SRA (save for mayoral allowances) and where they had more than one, could claim the higher of the SRAs, for 2012/13 a saving of £8,040 in members' allowances would have arisen.