

PROPOSED PARISH REMUNERATION SCHEME – BUCKHURST HILL PARISH COUNCIL

Recommendations:

(1) To consider the proposal of Buckhurst Hill Parish Council to introduce a remuneration scheme with effect from 1 April 2013 to be paid in arrears, comprising:

(a) a flat rate allowance of £35 per year to allow Members to register with the Information Commissioner as Data Controllers as necessary;

(b) reimbursement of travel expenses and/or mileage incurred in the course of Council business up to a maximum total value of £200 per Councillor in any one year;

(c) travel expenses to be reimbursed on production of receipts or tickets; and

(d) mileage claims to be paid at HMRC approved rates, currently £0.45 per mile for private cars; and

(2) That the Assistant to the Chief Executive advise the Parish Council of the Panel's view and supply a draft public notice and a scheme document for placing on public deposit

1. (Assistant to the Chief Executive) Buckhurst Hill Parish Council has asked the Panel to review its proposed remuneration scheme, details of which are set out in recommendation 1 of this agenda item.

2. The Panel has given guidance to Parish and Town Councils that the percentage of the District Council's budget allocated to member remuneration should be applied as a maximum for spending on their schemes and that no individual payment should exceed the rate for a District Councillor.

3. In the current year (2013/14), the total budget for the District Council for member remuneration represented 3.4% of its total spending. Thus proposals for Parish/Town Councils are to be assessed on the basis that the total cost of their scheme should not exceed than 3.4 % of their budgets.

4. Buckhurst Hill Parish Council's precept for 2013/14 is £367,142 and proposed expenditure on allowances is £2585.00. Applying 3.4% to the precept the guideline expenditure for remuneration is £12,482. Dividing the proposed expenditure by the number of Parish Councillors (11) gives a sum of £ 235 per parish councillor per annum.

5. The payment of £35 per councillor is equivalent to a Parish Basic Allowance. It is designed to allow parish councillors to meet the cost of registration with the Information Commissioner as data controllers under the Data Protection Acts.

6. The sum of £200 per parish councillor is the maximum figure applicable to any one year. For car mileage, this will be paid at the HMRC approved rate, namely 45 pence per mile on presentation of receipts or tickets in the case of public transport etc. For 2013/14, these allowances will be paid retrospectively once agreed by the Panel.

7. As the Parish Council's proposal is for a remuneration scheme which is within the Panel's guidelines, it is recommended that the request be approved.