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BRECKLAND COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

COUNCIL

Held on Thursday, 16 December 2010 at 10.30 am in the
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham

PRESENT

Mr S. Askew	Mr R.G. Kybird
Mr G.P. Balaam	Mr T.J. Lamb
Mrs J. Ball	Mr K. Martin
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Councillor Claire Bowes	Mrs K. Millbank
Mr A.J. Byrne	Mr I.A.C. Monson
Mrs M.P. Chapman-Allen	Mrs L.H. Monument (Chairman)
Mr P.D. Claussen	Mr D.G. Mortimer
Mr J.P. Cowen	Mr D.S. Myers
Mr R.W. Duffield	Mr J.W. Nunn
Mr P.J. Duigan	Mrs P. Quadling
Lady Fisher	Mr J.D. Rogers
Mr P.S. Francis	Mr S. J. F. Rogers
Mr R.F. Goreham	Mr F.J. Sharpe
Councillor E. Gould	Mr I. Sherwood
Mr J.R. Gretton	Mr W.H.C. Smith
Mr M.J. Griffin	Mrs P.A. Spencer
Mr A.P. Joel	Mrs A.L. Steward
Mr C.R. Jordan	Mrs L.S. Turner
Mr R. Kemp	Mr N.C. Wilkin (Vice-Chairman)
Mr M.A. Kiddle-Morris	

In Attendance

Mark Finch	- Head of Finance
Alison Chubbock	- Accountancy Manager
Mark Stokes	- Deputy Chief Executive
Stephen McGrath	- Member Services Manager
Phil Daines	- Development Services Manager (Capita Symonds for Breckland Council)
John Chinnery	- Solicitor & Standards Consultant
Tracy Miller	- PA to the Director of Corporate Resources
Robert Walker	- Director - Community Services
Chris Brooks	- Governance and Performance Accountant
Maxine O'Mahony	- Director of Corporate Resources
Andrew Egerton-Smith	-
Kathryn Ralphs	- Human Resources Adviser
Richard Wills	- Breckland Pride Coordinator
Dominic Chessum	- Marketing & Communications Officer
Roger Wilkin	- Interim Environmental Services Manager
Terry Huggins	- Chief Executive
Julie Britton	- Senior Committee Officer
Jane Osborne	- Committee Officer
Jordan Bailey	- Youth Councillor
Stuart Green	- Youth Councillor
Alistair Wright	- Youth Councillor

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The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2010 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

152/10 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

Apologies for absence were received by Mesdames T Hewett and D Irving and Messrs W Borrett, S Chapman-Allen, R Childerhouse, M Fanthorpe, K Gilbert, P Hewett, J Labouchere, B Rose, M Spencer, A Stasiak and D Williams.

153/10 DECLARATION OF INTEREST (AGENDA ITEM 3)

The following declarations were made:

- Lady K Fisher – personal and prejudicial interests in reference to the Stone Curlew report (Cabinet Minute No. 127/10), and Agenda item 14 (Moving Thetford Forward Board).
- Mr P Cowen – personal interest in the Cabinet meeting held on 30 November 2010 (see Minute No. 118/10), and Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 6 December 2010 (see Minute No. 117/10). He also declared a personal interest in Development Control Committee Minute No. 204/10(e).
- Mr R Kybird – personal interest – see Overview & Scrutiny Commission Minute No. 117/10.

154/10 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

At the commencement of the meeting, Members were made aware of the passing of Peter Pearce, former Deputy Town Clerk with Thetford Borough Council and District Administrator at Breckland Council, who had sadly passed away in May this year aged 78, after a sudden and brief illness. After retiring from Breckland, Peter and his wife, Renee moved to Cornwall. Understandably, during that sad time, Renee had overlooked to let anyone at the Council know of her husband's passing.

The Chairman had been privileged to attend the Elizabeth Cross Medal and Scroll Presentations, the first ever event of this kind held in Norfolk. The Elizabeth Cross was presented to families of service and men and women killed in operations since 1948 (one family from the Breckland area had been presented with a medal and scroll). In total, ten medals had been awarded.

The Chairman felt sorry that she had missed the opportunity at the previous Council meeting, which the Vice-Chairman had chaired in her absence, to announce the passing of Mrs Peggy Duigan, former County Council Member, Mayor of Dereham and long standing Member of Breckland Council who had sadly passed away in October. Members stood for a minutes silence and paid their respects.

The final announcement was in relation to the Council agenda itself. It had been found that the page numbering in some of the agendas issued was incorrect.

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Engagements List – Chairman
4th November, 2010 to 15th December, 2010

Date	Event	Host
14 Nov	Remembrance Sunday Parade and Wreath Laying Ceremony	Royal British Legion
26 Nov	Medal Presentations	RAF Marham
2 Dec	Reception	Mayor of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Councillor Mrs. Zipha Christopher
10 Dec	Holiday Reception	Colonel Chad T. Manske, Commander 100 th Air Refuelling Wing, RAF Mildenhall and Colonel John T. Quintas, Commander 48 th Fighter Wing
13 Dec	Elizabeth Cross Medal and Scroll Presentations – Elizabeth Cross is presented to families of service and men and women killed in operations since 1948 (one family from the Breckland area will be presented with a medal and scroll)	Chairman of Norfolk County Council, Councillor Tony Tomkinson
13 Dec	Civic Carol Service	His Worship the Mayor of Great Yarmouth, Councillor M. Jeal, and the High Sheriff of Norfolk, Charles Barratt

Engagements List – Vice-Chairman
4th November, 2010 – 15th December, 2010

Date	Event	Host
11 Nov	Drinks	Lieutenant Colonel A. G. C. Fair DCO* and The Light Dragoons
14 Nov	Annual Service of Remembrance	Mayor of Thetford, Councillor Pauline Quadling

24 Nov	Thanksgiving Service	RAF Mildenhall and RAF Lakenheath Chapel Communities
2 Dec	Reception	Mayor of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Councillor Mrs. Zipha Christopher
10 Dec	Christmas Dinner	The County Towns Initiative

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155/10 CABINET MINUTES - 30 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 5)

a) New Executive Arrangements (Minute No. 120/10)

The Member Services Manager read the following statement from Section 25(4) of the Local Government Act 2000, on behalf of the Solicitor and Standards Consultant, the author of the report: "In drawing up proposals for the new Executive arrangements a local authority must consider the extent to which the proposals were likely to assist in securing continuous improvement in the way in which the authority's functions were exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness".

A Member said that he had never been enraptured with the position of Leader and therefore welcomed this opportunity to propose the Mayor/Cabinet model.

No-one seconded the Member's proposal and he accordingly voted against the recommendation.

RESOLVED that the Strong Leader and Cabinet option for Executive Arrangements from May 2011 be adopted.

John Chinnery

b) Active Land Management – Tranche 2 (Minute No. 123/10)

Thetford – Land at Ramsey Close

A Member felt that the Cabinet had been ill-advised by the Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio by making the point that the land at Ramsey Close in Thetford was not suitable for allotments; whereas, Thetford Town Council had agreed that it was the best piece of land for that purpose. He reminded Members about the covenant on the land which restricted development and which had been designated to remain as open space. He therefore queried the Cabinet's resolution of selling the land on the open market and finding alternative open space for allotments if the land was sold. It was pointed out that Thetford Town Council had secured funding from another source to assist with turning the land into allotments. He hoped that the Council would refer it back to Cabinet.

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The Leader of the Opposition felt it was very important that the principles of active land management were embraced and applauded the Council for looking at every parcel of council-owned land. Most land could be fully supported but occasionally there were some that caused concern. He pointed out that he and a number of other Members had received emails from a certain Town Councillor who was not at all happy with being confronted with finding alternative open space in Thetford that was suitable for allotments, as there was none.

The Leader reassured Members that the funding from Thetford Healthy Towns would not be lost. He pointed out that in these difficult financial times Breckland Council had to get best value, not just for an individual community, but for all the communities it served. The Council had to do what was considered best for its assets, and in terms of value, this particular piece of land, compared to agricultural land, which could be used for such a purpose, had been valued at £240k. He reminded Members of the £500k that the Council had recently given for improvements to Swaine Close in Thetford.

A Member remembered this particular site during his tenure as Leader and reminded the Council that its former use was a play area but due to its position near to a railway line and being very much on its own the play area had been closed as it had encouraged vandalism, and had lain dormant since. He questioned whether this was a suitable area for allotments.

A Thetford Member did not dispute anything that had been said but was very much aware that allotment land was in short supply as most had been swallowed up by development. He urged Members to gift the land to the Town.

The Executive Member for the Corporate Development & Performance Portfolio agreed with the Leader's aforementioned comments and reminded Members that the Cabinet had agreed to make a contribution to top up the secured funding so that suitable alternative land could be found.

The Chief Executive highlighted the fact that the decision had already been resolved by Cabinet and was not a recommendation to Council.

In response to the comment made about open space being swallowed up by developers, the Leader knew that there was a great deal of development going on in and around Thetford but reminded Members that developers had a duty to provide open space; therefore, it would be up to the Town Council to ask for allotment land to be provided.

The Executive Member for the Economic & Commercial Portfolio entirely endorsed the Leader's comments and thanked the Leader of the Opposition for his. He reported that this particular piece of land had been owned by Breckland Council since 1974 and there was a S106 agreement on it which this Council could easily remove; therefore, there were no constraints. If sold the

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<p>matter would then be brought back to Cabinet where the possibilities for alternative land would be sought.</p> <p>It was proposed and seconded that the matter be referred back to Cabinet but the vote was lost and the original decision of Cabinet remained.</p>	
<p>c) <u>Attleborough Transport Study (Minute No. 125/10)</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that:</p> <p>i) the development and completion of a Transport Study be approved; and</p> <p>ii) funding up to the value of £100,000 be released from the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant to complete the work.</p>	<p>Mark Finch, David Spencer</p>
<p>d) <u>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) (Minute No. 126/10)</u></p> <p>The Opposition Leader had been surprised to learn that the sum required to cover the cost of implementing the CIL in stages had been released from the Organisational Development Review Reserve and asked why it was coming out of this particular pot. The Head of Finance explained that this was the most appropriate reserve for this type of expenditure. The reserve had sufficient funds to also cover the shared management recommendation later in the agenda and remained robust.</p>	
<p>e) <u>Impact of Housing Development and Roads on Stone Curlew – The Way Forward (Minute No. 127/10)</u></p> <p>The Executive Member for the Environmental Wellbeing & Communications Portfolio left the room whilst this item was being discussed.</p> <p>A Member had concerns in relation to the resolution and asked if it was to question the extent of the meterage. The Development Services Manager explained that the intention of the report was to provide greater clarity on the effect of development on the species. There had been a number of alternatives put to Cabinet and this approach was seen to be the most appropriate and cost effective; it was not an attempt to get the figure lowered.</p>	
<p>f) <u>Adoption</u></p> <p>RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 30 November 2010 be adopted.</p>	<p>Julie Britton, Helen McAleer</p>
<p>156/10 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 18 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 6)</p>	
<p>a) <u>Executive Member Portfolio Update – Strategic Housing (Minute No. 105/10)</u></p>	

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The Opposition Leader made Members aware of the questions that he had raised at the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting particularly with regard to the response received relating to the Council's statutory obligations to homelessness. He wished the response to be used as a plea to those preparing the budget to try and keep the housing and homelessness pot as topped up as possible so that these vulnerable people could be protected.

The Leader agreed that this type of grant should be supported.

b) Adoption

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 18 November 2010 be adopted.

157/10 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 6 DECEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 7)

The Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman stated that the special meeting held to discuss the Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP) had been very constructive and he endorsed the Minutes.

A Member made a general point about the effort to expand Thetford and pleaded with Officers to ensure that the infrastructure was in place before the people moved in. In response, Members were reminded that the TAAP was a comprehensive document and the development would be phased.

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Special Overview & Scrutiny Commission meeting held on 6 December 2010 be adopted.

158/10 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 1 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 8)

RESOLVED that the confirmed Minutes of the Development Control Committee meeting held on 1 November 2010 be adopted.

159/10 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE - 22 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 9)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Development Control Committee meeting held on 22 November 2010 be adopted.

160/10 SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AND OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION - 6 DECEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 10)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special Joint meeting of the General Purposes Committee and the Overview & Scrutiny Commission held on 6 December 2010 be adopted.

161/10 APPEALS COMMITTEE - 20 OCTOBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 11)

RESOLVED that the unconfirmed Minutes of the Appeals Committee

meeting held on 20 October 2010 be adopted.

162/10 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE - 5 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 12)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special Audit Committee meeting held on 5 November 2010 be adopted.

163/10 SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE - 19 NOVEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 13)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Special Audit Committee meeting held on 19 November 2010 be adopted.

164/10 MOVING THETFORD FORWARD BOARD - 17 SEPTEMBER 2010 (AGENDA ITEM 14)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Moving Thetford Forward Board meeting held on 17 September 2010 be adopted.

165/10 BRECKLAND AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE - 1 OCTOBER 2010 (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 15)

The Minutes of the Breckland Area Museums Committee meeting held on 1 October 2010 were noted.

166/10 YOUTH COUNCIL MINUTES (FOR INFORMATION) (AGENDA ITEM 16)

a) Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 October 2010

The Minutes of the Youth Council meeting held on 20 October 2010 were noted.

b) Minutes of the Campaign Meeting held on 8 November 2010 (for information)

Jordan Bailey, Alistair Wright and Stuart Green were in attendance to seek Members' support for the YESS campaign. The Youth Council was trying to raise its profile and a number of ideas had been put forward and an action plan had been agreed. One of the ideas included taking photographs of local areas highlighting issues that could cause problems to both the young and the elderly. An article would be included in Breckland Voice and a questionnaire would follow. The Youth Council would also be holding a Question Time event as well as a Media Amnesty. The latter would include asking the media to publish more articles that promoted the good that young people did in their area.

Members were impressed with what the Youth Council was trying to achieve and wished them well in their campaign.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Campaign meeting held on 8 November 2010 be noted.

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- c) Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on 15 November 2010 (for information)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Youth Council Cabinet meeting held on 15 November 2010 be noted.

167/10 PROPOSAL FOR JOINT MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS (AGENDA ITEM 17)

William Smith and Paul Claussen left the room at this point as they had another meeting to attend.

The Member Services Manager reminded the meeting that any person who was at risk under the shared management structure would not be permitted to remain in the meeting during discussion of this item.

Paragraph 8.3 of the Officer Code of Conduct in the Constitution stated: "that those officers would need to declare a personal and prejudicial interest in the item and withdraw from the meeting".

The Officers that were at risk left the room whilst this item was being discussed.

The Chief Executive presented the proposal for joint management arrangements between South Holland District Council and Breckland Council.

Members had been constantly updated on this matter, therefore, a quick overview of the report was provided.

One key point related to the two papers that had been circulated following the agenda issue which included the comments of the Deputy Monitoring Officer from South Holland District Council and Appendix M, which highlighted the financial implications of the proposal prepared again by South Holland District Council.

Members were informed that South Holland District Council at its Full Council meeting held the day before on 15th December 2010 had approved the implementation of the shared management structure subject to two joint committees being formed. The membership of the Joint Appointments Committee and the Joint Appointment Appeals Committee would be eight, four Members from each Council and the quorum would be four (two members from each authority) and not three as stated in appendix F of the report.

The structure had been designed and based upon three core functions which both Councils had considered earlier in the process. All issues and concerns had been taken into consideration. Part of the staff consultation was on the implementation procedure. This required agreement on a joint process to be used with all affected staff regardless of which of the two Councils they were presently employed by. The process as documented within the consultation had been independently reviewed and amended by an independent recruitment consultancy Attenti. Members were asked to note an amendment to this part of the report (page 6, last but one sentence),

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to read: "in order to ensure that this process does *not* place either council at risk".

Job descriptions and examples of person specifications had been attached at Appendix J of the report. If Members were mindful to approve the new structure the said documents would be finalised and competencies would be added as appropriate.

As part of the consultation process all staff had been invited to indicate their future wishes if their job application was unsuccessful in regard to voluntary redundancy or early retirement. It was recommended that in these circumstances the Chief Executive be authorised to approve these subject to consultation with both Leaders.

Where jobs were offered to staff which represented suitable alternative employment but carried a lesser salary than their existing job, under pay protection this eventuality was already covered at Breckland Council by an approved policy and required no further consideration. At South Holland, however, custom and practice had been to offer two years pay protection although this had not been enshrined in a formal policy agreement.

A simple memorandum of agreement between the two authorities had been devised which had been designed to be a 'light touch' agreement based around trust.

Appendix K provided details of the financial data that underpinned the annual costs and set up costs. Based upon present salaries the costs indicated a potential gross annual saving in excess of one million pounds which may be reduced in the early years through pay protection. These savings did not include the saving which had already been made on the joint Chief Executive. The various set up costs would be shared and it had been recommended that each Council transferred monies from their respective Organisational Development Reserves into the Transformation budget.

Systems issues, for example, integrated IT and communications for emails, calendars etc, had not been resolved and as a first step, the Local Government Group network group of joint Chief Executive Officers would be approached to resolve this issue; national monies may be applied for.

Referring to the comments of the Deputy Monitoring Officer for Breckland Council in relation to the awaited and requested legal assessment from Attenti, the Chief Executive reported that the legal advice, although quite limited, had come forward which had been shared with the said Officer. He explained that the advice received pointed to a couple of areas that both Councils would need to be mindful of - redundancy tactics, not to fall into discrimination issues and the consultation process.

The Leader of the Opposition raised concern as he thought that appropriate consultation had been carried out.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer referred to the lack of a full business case and pointed out that the legal advice obtained so far did not

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cover the whole process relating to the shared management proposals. The Council was therefore relying on advice from Attenti. He said he would have preferred to see advice covering, for example, the consultation process. There was a risk that the Council might receive unfair dismissal claims. The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Commission said that he was completely happy that the consultation process had been carried out correctly, and Members generally indicated that no further legal advice was necessary. The Leader of the Opposition was satisfied with the response.

A Member queried the pay scales and asked how these levels had been arrived at, and if they were comparable to others. The Chief Executive explained that these figures were not actual salaries as they included PAYE and NI contributions. The grades were indicative at this moment in time and had been based on Breckland Council's pay scales.

From a Project Board perspective, the Leader asked for it to be noted that all comments had been taken on board prior to this paper coming forward to Council. The main driver of the shared management structure was to ensure that savings could be made at the top without cutting services at the bottom.

A number of amendments to the report were required which included:

- Implementation (page 6 of the report) - "in order to ensure that this process does not place either council at risk".
- Appendix C (e) – Final Interviews – "the applicants for the Director roles would be interviewed by the *Joint Appointments Panel* and not the project board.
- Appendix F – the quorum for the Joint Appointments Committee and the Joint Appointments Appeals Committee would be four, two members from each Council, and not three.
- Appendix L – the joint costs are estimated in appendix *K* and not appendix *J*

Subject to the above amendments, Members were asked to consider the recommendations contained within the report and each was explained, and accordingly, it was:

RESOLVED that:

- a) the joint management structure as at Appendix A of the report be approved;
- b) the current posts that fell within the scope of the shared management proposals, as set out in Appendix B, be approved;
- c) the structure be implemented using the process as described in Appendix C;
- d) the core competencies as described in Appendix D be incorporated as requirements for all jobs in the new structure;
- e) the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) be authorised to approve voluntary redundancies/early retirements subject to consultation with the two Leaders;

**Terry Huggins,
Roger Wilkin
Natalie King
Stephen
McGrath,
Councillor
William Nunn
Mark Finch**

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- f) South Holland Council states its intention to follow its practice of two years pay protection (subject to caveats) where a person is assimilated into suitable alternative employment but where the grade is less than their present salary and that HR be asked to follow due process to introduce a written policy;
- g) a Joint Appointments Committee be established in accordance with Appendix E, subject to the quorum being four, two from each Council;
- h) a Joint Appointments Appeals Committee be established in accordance with Appendix F, subject to the quorum being four, two from each Council;
- i) the Memorandum of Agreement in Appendix G covering the way in which the two Councils intend working with each other be approved (subject to minor amendments to be approved by the Chief Executive);
- j) each Council pays from its reserves the sum of £400,000 into a Transformation Budget to be controlled by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leaders of the Councils; and
- k) the Breckland membership of the Joint Appointments Committee and the Joint Appointments Appeals Committee be the members nominated by the Leader.

168/10 MEMBERS' SCHEME OF ALLOWANCES (AGENDA ITEM 18)

The Member Services Manager presented the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel had been appointed to consider and recommend a scheme of allowances that complied with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2000 and associated regulations.

The Panel had met on two occasions and had taken account of considerable evidence and correspondence. It was familiar with the culture of Breckland and had previously made it clear what was expected in terms of performance in recognition of the levels of allowance recommended. In reaching its conclusions, the Panel had taken note of the key developments during the past year.

The Leader had been interviewed on 17th November 2010 and the Panel had been grateful for his attendance and for the information that he had provided.

It was noted that the Panel had remained of the same view as far as pensions were concerned and was recommending that Members not be given access to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Given these financial uncertainties and the intention of Breckland to create a joint management structure with South Holland Council, the Panel had recommended a one year scheme for the period 1st January to 31 December 2011.

The current basic allowance would remain the same as would the Special Responsibility Allowance with the exception of the Deputy Leader's role, the Task & Finish Group Chairmen and the Licensing

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Committee Chairman. It had been agreed that an additional amount should be paid to the Deputy Leader, and rates for Task & Finish Group Chairmen should be increased from £58 to £115 per meeting chaired. It had also been agreed that the Licensing Chairman should also get paid per meeting chaired instead of the annual allowance. Members were informed that the Licensing Committee had only met on a limited number of occasions during the past two years whilst the Licensing Sub-Committee had still met regularly and the Chairmen of these meetings were being paid an additional allowance.

Allowances for co-opted Members and for child-care would remain the same and the travel and subsistence, as they were in-line with National Rates, would be unchanged.

Requests for allowances for Town and Parish Councils would be referred to the Panel on receipt and would be considered on an individual basis.

The Panel had been disappointed with the attendance levels from some Members at Committee meetings and therefore had requested that a letter be sent to the Department of Communities and Local Government to highlight this concern and the fact that the basic allowance could not be reduced in the event of poor attendance levels (if felt appropriate).

The recommendations had been set out at section 13 of the report and Members were asked to put their views forward and suggest any changes.

A Member queried the travel rate for training which, in her opinion, at 15.1p per mile, was disgraceful and felt that it needed further consideration as most of what Members did involved training.

The Chairman pointed out that these were national rates that had been set and could not be changed.

A Member complimented the Remuneration Panel but had concerns with regard to the proposed change to the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) for the Chairman of the Licensing Committee. He was aware that there had been a reduction in work but reminded Members of the work that this particular role covered which included being in control of the Licensing Sub-Committee Hearings. For these reasons, he believed that this particular role had a greater commitment to the Council and should have a SRA to reflect this work and be paid the same as the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee. It was proposed and seconded that the SRA be retained at £5200 per annum.

Mr A Egerton-Smith, Chairman of the Independent Remuneration Panel, was in attendance. He pointed out that when the Panel interviewed the Chairman of the Licensing Committee a number of years ago, it was quite clear that the workload and meeting schedule was quite considerable. It was since felt that the SRA could only be based on the number of meetings that had taken place over the last 24 months and reminded Members that over the past year, the Licensing Committee had only met on three occasions. However, he

apologised on behalf of the Panel if it had failed to take the due diligence into this role and asked Members to highlight any further aspects that had been ignored that should be taken into account.

As the Chairman of the Licensing Committee, the said Chair highlighted the two aspects that the role covered (which included being the Chairman of the Licensing Committee and the Licensing Sub-Committee) and reported that, when taking both roles into consideration, 14 meetings had actually taken place over the stated period. He did point out, however, that he had not been able to Chair all the aforementioned meetings due to Ward issues. A Member agreed with the recommendations as proposed by the Panel and did not think it to be a good idea to increase allowances in these difficult financial times.

A vote was taken on the new proposal and the vote was won – one Member voted against the proposal.

The Leader informed the Council of the Deputy Leader's workload and he was pleased that this had been recognised by an increase in the allowance. However, Members were asked to note that the Deputy Leader would not be taking the additional allowance at this present time.

A Member felt that in these financially difficult times, and whilst the Council was considering shared management and reducing the amount of Officers, the number of Councillors should also be reduced. In response, the Leader stated that if the number of Councillors were reduced, the democratic representation of the people the Council served would also be reduced. He pointed out that Members did have the option to cut back on the amount they claimed but did not have the option to cut back on the service to their communities.

RESOLVED that, subject to the Licensing Committee Chairman being paid the Special Responsibility Allowance of £5,200, the scheme of allowances for the year commencing 1 January to 31 December 2011 be adopted as recommended.

Action By

**Stephen
McGrath,
Carol Wade**

The meeting closed at 12.35 pm

CHAIRMAN