

Report of the Head of Democratic Services

Annual Meeting of Council – 8 May 2014

COUNCILLORS HANDBOOK

Summary

Purpose:	To update the Councillors Handbook following its review by the Democratic Services Committee.
Policy Framework:	None.
Reason for Decision:	To update the Councillors Handbook and to implement the recommendations of the Democratic Services Committee.
Consultation:	Finance, Legal and Democratic Services Committee.
Recommendation(s):	The Democratic Services Committee recommended that: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The telephone element (currently £10) of the Broadband and Telephone Allowance (currently £25) be paid to each City and County of Swansea Councillor within the household;2) The Approved Duties list be amended so that Councillors can also claim mileage allowance for meetings with Officers below the rank of Chief Executive / Directors / Chief Operating Officers / Head of Service providing it is not relating to a Political, Private or Personal matter;3) The ability to claim for one alcoholic drink with dinner will no longer be allowed;4) Should any changes to salary, allowances etc. be determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales then the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make the amendments to the Handbook without the need to report back to Council; however an e-mail must be sent to all Councillors advising them of the change.
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Finance Author:	Carl Billingsley
Legal Officer:	Patrick Arran

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In line with a resolution of the Annual Meeting of Council on 9 May 2013, the Democratic Services Committee undertook a review of the Councillors Handbook.

2. Proposed Amendments

- 2.1 Attached as **Appendix 1** to this report is an Extract from the Councillors Handbook.
- 2.2 For ease the paragraphs below refer to the actual paragraph within the Councillor Handbook.
- 2.3 **Paragraph 4.1.5 “Broadband and Telephone Allowance”**. The Democratic Services Committee recommended that this restriction be removed and the telephone element be allowed for each Councillor within a household.
- 2.4 **Paragraph 6.3.1 “Approved Duties”**. This paragraph has been amended to reflect the fact that Councillors often meet with Officers below the rank of Chief Executive / Director / Chief Operating Officer / Head of Service.
 - 2.4.1 In addition any qualifying meeting may now be convened at the request of the Councillor rather than payment previously only being allowed if requested by the Officer.
- 2.5 **Paragraph 15.1.2 Subsistence**. The Democratic Services Committee recommends no alcoholic drink with dinner can be reclaimable.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 The amendments outlined in this report will have little impact on the overall expenditure for Councillors allowances which will consequently remain fully funded from within existing resources.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 The amendments outlined in this report comply with the determinations of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW).

Background Papers: As referred to within report

Appendices: Extract from Councillors Handbook.