



Policy and Resources Committee – 3 December 2018

Transfer from Member Allowances Scheme budget to Members Empowerment Fund

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to allow this Committee to consider if the principle of transferring budget from the Member Allowances budget to the Member Empowerment Fund is acceptable following a request from a councillor.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Member Empowerment Fund (MEF) was initially introduced in 2011 to allow ward councillors to support small local community projects and activities taking place in their wards. The MEF was increased from £500 per councillor in its first year to £1,000 per councillor per annum in 2012/13, following approval by this Committee to apportion some of this Council's New Homes Bonus receipts to community projects. Provision was also made to enable carrying over an individual member's unspent funds from one financial year to the next over the 4-year term of office. The scheme was reviewed and confirmed for the current term of office (2015-19).
- 1.2. As councillors will recall, at the full Council meeting in October 2018, it was agreed to increase the level of the basic Members Allowance from £4807 to £5185 following the recommendations of the Independent Members Remuneration Panel. It was also agreed that this increase should be back-dated to May 2018.
- 1.2 Following the meeting, a councillor has indicated that they would like to forgo payment of the increase for the remainder of this term of office if it is possible for the increase of £378 to be added to their Member Empowerment Fund entitlement instead. This report is brought to this Committee for consideration as it would vary the amount available to the councillor via the MEF and is thus felt to be outside of the virement provisions.

2. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 2.1 There are no additional equality and diversity implications arising from this report. Any additional spend if agreed would be required to be made within the existing conditions for the use of the MEF

3. Privacy Implications

- 3.1 There are no new privacy implications arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report. It is possible for a councillor to choose to receive less than the agreed level of member allowance but not for the Council to withhold payment of an allowance that has been agreed without agreement.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This is a risk that other councillors may also wish to follow this route if it is agreed. The second recommendation provides for a route to manage these transfers in a transparent manner.

6. Resource and Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report as the councillor has indicated that if the allowance increase is not transferable to their MEF they will take the increase and make personal donations to local causes. They will have to pay any tax on the increase before it is distributed in this way.

7. Constitutional Implications

- 7.1 This report does not require any amendment to the Council's constitution.

8. Implications for our Customers

- 8.1 There are no implications for our customers arising directly from this report.

9. Corporate Outcomes



- 9.1 Preparation of this report contributes to the Corporate Outcome of Effective Management by providing transparency of decisions.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 The Committee is recommended to consider:

- a) if it wishes to agree the principal of the transfer of £378 from the Members Allowances budget to the Member Empowerment Fund budget as requested.
- b) if it does agree the above recommendation to give delegated authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the appropriate Group Leader, to make any such transfer if requested whilst the MEF exists.

(Reason – to provide transparency of process)

Legal	Power: Local Government Act 1972 and Localism Act 2011				
	Other considerations:				
Background Papers:					
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CFO 22/11/18		MO 22/11/18		CX 22/11/18	