

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
Board of Directors – 24 September 2008

Notes of Finance and Audit Committee
Held on 18 July 2007 at the Regional Partnership Centre

Present:

Dr Sarindar Singh Sahota – Chair
Elizabeth Newman
Cllr Paul Tilsley
Cllr Rex Roberts

The meeting was confirmed as being quorum.

In attendance

Dr Declan Hall (Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel)
Olwen Dutton (Chief Executive)
Sharon Phillips (Head of Financial and Business Services)
Sian Clark (Head of Partnership Support)

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

Apologies had been received by:
Cllr Jo Jones, Valerie Broom

Both the Chair and Cllr Roberts declared an interest as individuals who held positions which could directly benefit from the outcome of agenda item 3.

2. Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting held on 27 June 2007

The notes of the Finance and Audit Committee meeting held on 27 had been **agreed** via electronic process prior to the meeting and were **reconfirmed** as a true record.

3. A Review of Members Allowances for WMRA

The Committee was presented with a proposal from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) on a Members Allowances Scheme for the Regional Assembly.

Dr Declan Hall of the University of Birmingham and Chair of the IRP, provided the Committee with a background to the establishment of the Panel and advised them of the methodology by which information was sought. In addition he provided an outline of and rationale behind the recommendations within the Panel's report.

It was emphasised that the remuneration recommended by the IRP solely reflected and acknowledged responsibilities, and did not seek to formally reflect time spent on roles.

The Chief Executive advised the Committee that she supported the principle of an allowances scheme for leading members and endorsed the need to address barriers to wider involvement. She also highlighted some of the financial issues resulting from the implementation of such a scheme and cautioned that due consideration would be required as to how to meet the cost of the scheme.

The Committee agreed to **propose the following recommendations to the Board**, in addition to those noted in the content of the report.

- a) The existence of WMLGA Allowances Scheme was a key driver for efficiency savings in the proposed Assembly Scheme and therefore any savings should be shared equally between the two funding bodies (as is currently operated in respect of the Chairman's Allowance).
- b) That a cover report to the Board be drafted to provide details of the actual cost of the scheme in 2007/08 financial year (from the AGM in July 2007 to April 2008) and the cost of a full year of operation.
- c) If the Board elected to implement a scheme the 2007/08 costs would have to be met from existing budgets (and may require re-prioritisation of expenditure) and costs for 2008/09 would need to be built into the business planning and budget setting process.
- d) Whilst the FAC did not wish to make any changes to the IRP report, they did consider that the Board may wish to give some consideration to the issue of the number of meetings attended by those in roles leading statutory functions compared to that of non statutory and the correlation between this and the two proposed levels of allowance for these roles.

Members thanked Dr Hall for his report and confirmed that the proposal would now be further considered by the WMRA Board of Directors at their meeting on 24 September 2007.

4. Date of Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on 16 November 2007 at the RPC starting at

11am.

A date for a February meeting is yet to be set.