

**CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY**

<b>Report Title</b>	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL ON MEMBER DEVELOPMENT		
<b>Key Decision</b>	NO		<b>Item No. 5</b>
<b>Ward</b>			
<b>Contributors</b>	HEAD OF LAW		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date: 10 APRIL2008</b>	

**1. Summary**

This document sets out the views of the Cross Party Steering Group on Member Development (CPSG) for consideration by the Constitution Working Party and recommends that a response be made to the IRP at its next meeting with a view to submitting a new proposal to Council thereafter.

**2. Policy Context**

The Council is committed to ensuring that its members are equipped to play the fullest role in their position as councillor and to the transparency of decision making to promote confidence in the good governance of the Authority

**3 Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Constitution Working Party considers the view of the CPSG and make representations to Council as set out in this report. (Paragraphs 4.4 and 4.5)

**4 Background**

- 4.1 The Council's Independent Remuneration Panel, chaired by Sir Ian Mills, met on 31<sup>st</sup> October to consider a report on member performance. As a result the Panel agreed to submit a number of recommendations to the Council. The report and the recommendations agreed by the Panel appear at Appendix 1.
- 4.2 On 23 January, the Council agreed to defer further consideration of the report until the CPSG and the Constitution Working Party (CWP) had examined the report and given their views.

4.3 On 11 February 2008, the CWP considered the IRP report and resolved that officer comments be sought on how accountability could be implemented and the report was referred to the Members Development Steering Group for their comments.

4.4 When it met on 1<sup>st</sup> April, the views of the CPSG were as follows:-

- a) The CPSG agree entirely with the principle that there should be an effective system of member development with personal development plans for all members drawn up by the members concerned with support from officers
- b) The CPSG agree that there should be formal descriptors of members' roles and responsibilities and that the competencies required to fulfil those roles should be identified. It was acknowledged that these had been put in place in accordance with the accreditation under the London Member Development Charter and that these should be used. This accords with the IRP's recommendations that the proposed descriptors should be amended if necessary to be consistent with the London Member Development Charter. The CPSG welcomed the IRP's support in this respect .
- c) In addition to the proposals of the IRP, it was noted that in association with the use of descriptors, competencies, and a personal development plan for members, that the Council intends to commission an independent organisation to pilot a 360 degree assessment of members with a view to them being able to identify strengths and areas for development.
- d) The CPSG was also supportive of the continuation of Executive Question Time at Overview and Scrutiny meetings with a view to the Mayor and Cabinet giving account to them. The Group was of the view that efforts should be made to enhance this as a tool for the Mayor and Cabinet to give account, if possible. However, they did not support the routine submission of an annual report , fearing that this may become a formulaic exercise, thereby detracting to the efficacy of giving account.
- e) There was support for the proposal that the Overview and Scrutiny bodies should report annually to Council on their activities throughout the year as proposed by the IRP.

4.5 All of the above comments accord with the recommendations of the IRP. However the CPSG did have some concerns about a few of the proposals of the IRP, which it does not believe would be appropriate or practical for the Council to adopt. They are as follows:-

- (a) The proposal for each member to prepare a single sheet resume of their activity during a year was felt not to be practical. There were concerns raised that it would not be possible for this to be an objective summary, if drafted by the individual member concerned and may not be fit for purpose. Members

felt it might be difficult for this to be other than political and promotional of individual members, and so was not recommended for adoption. For this reason, the CPSG thought that it was not appropriate for such a document to form part of any deliberation by the IRP in relation to remuneration.

- (b) There was concern that the IRP sought to have “performance assessments” before it when it considered reviewing and updating the scheme of members’ allowances, and that it should be able to modify and develop the “performance assessment” process in the light of experience. The CPSG felt that there was a risk that this should be interpreted as the IRP evaluating councillor performance, which the CPSG felt could only be done through the ballot box and/or by their political groups. This difficulty was acknowledged in the paper submitted to the IRP. The CPSG was of the view that this should not be interpreted as a means to performance related pay for members who are not employees of the Council.

4.6 For the reasons set out above it is recommended to the CWP that it support these comments and report them to the next meeting of the IRP for consideration. It is also recommended that the Council be made aware of the views of the CPSG if the IRP does not reflect these comments in its proposals to the Council when the matter comes up for consideration.

4.7 The CPSG were very keen to express their total support for member development as a tool to assist councillors to perform to maximum capacity. They also expressed their support for the giving of account and the requirement for transparency about the activities of councillors. Their endorsement of the majority of the proposals made by the IRP is evidence of that support. Where the CPSG had reservations, they relate only to the practicality of the proposals and their ability to achieve the desired result of enhanced transparency.

## **5 Conclusion**

Given the views of the CPSG, members of the CWP are asked to make similar representations to the Council and the IRP as set out in this report