

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE (SCOTLAND) ACT 2004
(REMUNERATION) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2013
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 12 FEBRUARY 2014
Author: CHIEF GOVERNANCE OFFICER

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to bring to the attention of Council changes to the remuneration levels for members brought about by the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2013 and to seek a decision on those payments where the level lies within the discretion of Council.

2. REMUNERATION

- 2.1 As members are well aware, there has been no increase in the levels of remuneration prescribed by the relevant regulations for four years. This has now been addressed by the 2013 Regulations referred to above which were passed in the Scottish Parliament on 7 January 2014 and which come into effect on 18 February 2014.

Councillors and Council Leader

- 2.2 The Regulations provide for a 1% increase in the prescribed remuneration levels for the year ending 31 March 2014 and an additional 1% with effect from 1 April 2014. This applies to payments made to councillors and to the Council Leader and means that, with effect from 18 February 2014:

- the basic remuneration to councillors will increase to £16,396p.a. backdated to 1 April 2013 and will further increase to £16,560p.a. from 1 April 2014;
- remuneration to the Council Leader will increase to £32,795p.a. backdated to 1 April 2013 and will further increase to £33,123p.a. from 1 April 2014.

Civic Head

- 2.3 The level of remuneration to the Council's civic head (in our case, the Provost) and senior councillors lies within the discretion of Council within certain parameters. The current maximum payment available for the civic head role is £24,353p.a., however Council agreed a payment of £23,179p.a. in 2007 and has not applied any increase since then. Under the Regulations, the maximum that could be awarded to 31 March 2014 is £24,596p.a. and from 1 April 2014 is £24,842p.a. A 1% increase applied to the current payment would amount to £23,411 and a further 1% would increase that figure to £23,644.

Senior Councillors

- 2.4 For senior councillors, the decision on remuneration levels rests with Council provided no councillor is paid more than 75% of the Leader's salary and provided also that the total amount to be paid to all senior councillors does not exceed a set figure calculated by reference to a formula set out in the Regulations. Falkirk Council is authorised to appoint up to 14 senior councillors. Maximum remuneration levels under the Regulations are shown below:

Senior Councillor Remuneration Levels			
	Current maximum level	Maximum to 31.03.14	Maximum from 1.04.14
	£24,353	£24,596	£24,842
Total maximum	£284,106	£286,945	£289,815

- 2.5 At its meeting on 24 April 2013, Council determined its current remuneration framework for senior councillors, appointing 13 at two payment levels: £21,803 and £18,280 as follows:

Senior Councillor (Level 1)	Senior Councillor (Level 2)
£21,803	£18,280
Depute Provost	Leader of the main Opposition Group
Economic Development Portfolio Holder	Convener of the Joint Consultative Committee
Education Portfolio Holder	
Environment Portfolio Holder	
Housing Portfolio Holder	
Culture, Leisure & Tourism Portfolio Holder	
Public Protection Portfolio Holder	
Resources Portfolio Holder	
Convener of the Planning Committee	
Convener of the Appeals Committee	
Depute Leader	

- 2.6 While it is for Council to determine the level of remuneration for senior councillors within the limits set out above, if the same approach is applied to these payments as to the others referred to in this report, i.e. a 1 % increase to 31 March 2014 and a further 1% from 1 April, the payments would increase as follows:

	Currently	To 31.03.14	From 1.04.14
Level 1	£21,803	£22,021	£22,242
Level 2	£18,280	£18,462	£18,646

- 2.7 Payments at these levels would amount to £279,155 in the year to 31 March 2014 and £281,954 in the following year, which is well within the allowable total.
- 2.8 Allowance has been made for the increases referred to in this report in the revenue budget to be considered at this meeting.

Joint Boards

- 2.9 For information, Council is advised that the Regulations also provide for increases in the level of remuneration paid to conveners and vice conveners of joint boards. In practice, this now only applies, in our area, to the Valuation Board. Payment to the convener will increase from £20,294 to £20,497 for the period to 31 March 2014 and to £20,702 from 1 April 2014 while for vice conveners the current payment of £19,279 will increase to £19,472 and then to £19,667.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Council:

- (i) notes the terms of the Local Governance (Scotland) Act 2004 (Remuneration) Amendment Regulations 2013;
- (ii) notes the increase in the level of remuneration that will be paid to councillors and to the Council leader in accordance with the said Regulations;
- (iii) determines the level of remuneration to be paid to the civic head and to the senior councillors;
- (iv) notes that the changes in remuneration will come into effect on 18 February 2014 and will be backdated to 1 April 2013.

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Chief Governance Officer

Date: 31 January 2014

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

None