

# **ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCES AND PREPARATION TIME**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

At its last meeting the Committee agreed that the rates for partners should remain at their present levels for the future and it was confirmed that no allowances for preparation time should be paid. It noted that it was for Council to look at the feasibility of changing rates for Council members in due course.

At its meeting in October the Council noted that members who had concerns about this issue should write to the Chief Executive. A paper outlining these concerns would be presented to the Finance and Resources Committee.

Two memoranda have been received which are attached. The Committee is asked to consider them. The executive recommends no change to the Committee's September decision.

### **DECISION**

The Committee is asked to agree the following:

**That having considered to the two submissions from Council members concerning Attendance Allowances and the payment of Preparation Time, it agrees no change to its former decision that that the rates for partners should remain at their present levels for the future and that no allowances for preparation time should be paid.**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

None

### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

None

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

See attached submissions from Diane Waller and Morag MacKellar.

### **APPENDICES**

None

## **ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCES AND PREPARATION TIME**

### **COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**From: Diane Waller**

To place in a context, in the CPSM days, everyone did everything voluntarily (which is why the fee could remain so low) and we all had to fit it in with our jobs. Clearly that couldn't continue as employers were increasingly reluctant to release senior staff for growing amounts of time. As someone who had to organise around 23 visits and take part in a lot of them between 1998-2001, I know it is a huge amount of work and the responsibility is considerable.

With the HPC, it is very good that Council members and Partners are paid (or at least their employers in many cases). I think there is a problem with the Visits because even with the new Approvals system, there is more work than 1 day (are we talking about 7-8 hours) for each visit. Reading documents with necessary care, travel to and fro, staying overnight sometimes, starting early and finishing late make the concept of day rather strange. Then preparation and checking of Report takes additional time. We need very senior and responsible people for these visits. At senior or principle lecturer (or higher) level in a university, £130 is inadequate for a day, probably also for NHS. For self-employed people they could lose up to 2 days pay. Lay members, likewise.

There is another issue: travel – when Officers accompany Visitors and they travel first class and the Visitors must go second, it creates a rather uncomfortable situation. I think this issue needs attention. I think it is not good enough to say 'people are not complaining and are pleased to be helping HPC' because we are no longer a 'voluntary body'. Coming from professions (art, music, dramatherapy) where we all worked and still work 'voluntarily', there is huge goodwill but I believe that we as HPC should be seen to value our Partners' time more than at present by paying a proportion of preparation time, so that when people go on visits which may involve up to 14-16 hours they do not feel exploited.

My feeling is that there are ways we can save money in HPC to enable us to put the visitors' fee up to say £160. After all, this is such important work and we could not do it without the Partners.

I've talked about this issue with quite a few Partners and there is a strong desire to contribute to the work but also a desire for the reality of the task and the time taken to be acknowledged - and in the 'new order' this means cash!

**From: Morag MacKellar**

I personally do not have any concerns, nor have I had any communicated to me. In my experience of serving on a vast number of different bodies, I have never been paid for preparation time. However I do include this as part of my costs/charges when working freelance on a commercial basis – is there a message here?

**From: Keith Ross**

I think we should develop a policy for Council members and Partners fees.

The Council members' fee has stayed the same for four years and I think it should be reviewed.

Other fees should be expressed as a percentage of Council members' fees e.g.

- Council Members Full Rate
- Partners 50%
- Registrant Assessors 25%
- Professional Assessors(Medical/Legal) 200%

This will give a basis for any future reviews.

We should also consider other categories for the future e.g. Partners who will chair panels in future should get a higher rate than the rest of the panel to recognise the greater responsibility and input. I also think that the President and Vice President should get enhanced rates to reflect the increased responsibility attached to the role. Currently they get the same rate.

Finally these rates should be reviewed annually (probably by the Remuneration Committee). I do not think we should revisit decisions on the basis of a very small number of comments or complaints.