



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Budget and Transformation Panel
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Allowances for Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and High Sheriff</b>
<b>Date:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> June, 2011
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	The Strategic Policy & Resources Committee, at its meeting on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June, considered a report on a review of the allowances paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff (copy attached at Appendix 1).
1.2	The Committee referred consideration of the matter to the Budget and Transformation Panel in the first instance and agreed that a decision would be taken at the Committee meeting on 17 <sup>th</sup> June.

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	The Committee referred the matter to the Panel in order for it to examine if it was appropriate, in the current financial environment, to recommend an increase in the allowances for 2011/12 in line with the Consumer Price Index as at 1 <sup>st</sup> May, which was 4.5%. The Panel was also asked to discuss if the level of entertainments allowance made available to the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff should be increased above the proposed level.
2.2	Up until 1999 no entertainments allowances were paid to the Deputy Lord Mayor or to the High Sheriff. The former Policy & Resources Committee, at its meeting on 18 <sup>th</sup> June, 1999, agreed that a small entertainments allowance of up to £500 should be made available to both office holders to cover expenses incurred in the undertaking the duties of the offices, subject to such expenditure meeting the criteria for small scale hospitality and being on the basis of vouched expenditure. This amount has been increased annually to take account of inflation resulting in

	the amount made available for the 2010/11 year being £735.																																				
2.3	It should be pointed out that the primary role of the Deputy Lord Mayor is to deputise for the Lord Mayor. In terms of the application of strict protocol, the Deputy Lord Mayor enjoys no civic precedence other than in deputising for the Lord Mayor. When the Deputy Lord Mayor or the High Sheriff is acting on behalf of the Lord Mayor and where this Civic duty involves the provision of hospitality, then the cost of this is borne by the Lord Mayor's entertainments budget and not the Deputy Lord Mayor's or the High Sheriff's budget. Therefore, it has been accepted since 1999 that the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff require only a small entertainments allowance to cover those occasions when they are hosting events for which they personally have been responsible for.																																				
2.4	Since the entertainments allowances for the Deputy Lord Mayor was introduced in 1999 the expenditure has been as follows:																																				
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2.5	The entertainments allowances for both the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff for the 2010/11 year were £735. If they were to be increased by the Consumer Price Index for the current year then this would provide £768 for each post holder. The personal allowance which is paid to the two office holders is a direct salary payable monthly in arrears and compensates them for their time commitment in undertaking the duties of the posts. The entertainments allowances, by contrast, are not paid to the two office holders. Rather, they are budgets which are provided for and which are managed by the staff in the Lord Mayor's office. The Council can set these budgets at whatever level it determines to be appropriate.																																				

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>												
3.1	<p>If the recommendations to increase the allowances by the Consumer Price Index as at 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2011 is approved then the allowances for 2011/12 would be as follows:</p> <table> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lord Mayor Personal Allowance</td> <td>£36,366</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lord Mayor Entertainments Allowance</td> <td>£27,065</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Lord Mayor Personal Allowance</td> <td>£ 6,531</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Lord Mayor Entertainments Allowance</td> <td>£ 768</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Sheriff Personal Allowance</td> <td>£ 6,531</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High Sheriff Entertainments Allowance</td> <td>£ 768</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Lord Mayor Personal Allowance	£36,366	Lord Mayor Entertainments Allowance	£27,065	Deputy Lord Mayor Personal Allowance	£ 6,531	Deputy Lord Mayor Entertainments Allowance	£ 768	High Sheriff Personal Allowance	£ 6,531	High Sheriff Entertainments Allowance	£ 768
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3.2	Provision for the increase in the allowances has been made in the 2011/12 budgets.
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<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
	None.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	<p>The Panel is requested to consider the information and to decide which of the following options it should recommend to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on the allowances to be paid to the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff for the 2011/12 year:</p> <p><u>Option 1</u></p> <p>No increase in the Civic Allowances for the 2011/12 year.</p> <p><u>Option 2</u></p> <p>Increase the Allowances by 4.5%, in line with the Consumer Price Index as at 1<sup>st</sup> May, as recommended in the report of 3<sup>rd</sup> June.</p> <p><u>Option 3</u></p> <p>Increase the Allowances in line with the Rate increase for the 2011/12 year at 2.95%.</p>
5.2	The panel is also requested to consider, as a separate matter, whether it would be appropriate to increase the level of Entertainments Allowance payable to the Deputy Lord Mayor and the High Sheriff.

<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
	<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>5<sup>th</sup> July, 2011</p>

<b>7</b>	<b>Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – Report to Strategic Policy and Resources Committee on 3 <sup>rd</sup> June