



meeting ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

date 30 JANUARY 2008

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE JOINT ACTING HEADS OF MEMBERS' SERVICES

POLISH COMMEMORATION CEREMONY OF REGAINING NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE – POZNAN: NOVEMBER 2007

1. Purpose of the Report

To report back on issues raised at the last meeting in connection with costs of the visit to Poznan undertaken in November 2007.

2. Information and Advice

2.1 At the last meeting Members were advised of the urgent approvals made in accordance with the Travel and Accommodation Policy. One of these concerned arrangements to attend the Polish Commemoration Ceremony of Regaining National Independence held in Poznan where it was indicated in the previous report that total costs amounted to £496.31.

2.2 On further investigation it is clear that this figure was based on the initial estimate prepared for the urgent decision based on the maximum amount of both un-receipted and receipted allowances that could have been claimed by Members for the five days of the visit. Information concerning the actual costs incurred is now available and can be summarised as under:-

Chairman of the County Council (flight and insurance) -	£ 77.80
Councillor Haynes (flight, insurance and subsistence) -	<u>£136.96</u>
Total	£214.76

2.3 Both the Chairman of the County Council and Councillor Haynes were accompanied by their wives and re-imbursed the County Council their costs of £62.80 and £71.31 respectively.

2.4 At the last meeting Committee also sought clarification on the position of the Chairman's escort on such visits abroad. The Members' Allowances Scheme makes no reference to this situation. The Committee may, however, determine such matters. The last time that it

did was in October 2004 when the Committee approved the payment of costs for the then Chairman and her escort to travel to Greece on official civic business. If the Committee wished to consider such matters in the future then it is suggested that it receive a report setting out the civic business case for attendance at any of the events abroad and that the merits of each particular case be considered at that time.

- 2.5 On the occasion of the Poznan visit the invitation was made to the Chairman and his escort on the basis that this was an important event in Polish history and culture. In the light of the County Council's long established links with Poznan it is felt that this is an appropriate civic case and the Committee is, therefore, asked to consider this aspect.

3. Statutory and Policy Implications

- 3.1 Agreed procedures for matters of this kind are set out in the Members' Allowances Scheme and the Council's Travel and Accommodation Policy. Where there are other such implications these are set out in the body of the report above.

Recommendation

1. That the report be noted.
2. That, where considered appropriate, the Committee determine on an individual basis whether the Council should pay the costs for the Chairman's escort to accompany the Chairman on civic duty abroad.
3. That, in the light of the issues set out in the report, consideration be given to the re-imburement of costs of £62.80 in connection with the Chairman's escort accompanying the Chairman to Poznan in November 2007.

Paul Robinson Chris Holmes
Joint Acting Head of Members' Services

Legal Services Comments (KK 14.1.08)

The proposals in this report are within the remit of this Committee.

Strategic Director (Resources) Financial Comments (MB 03/01/08)

The cost can be met from the 2007/08 Members Allowances Budget.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

None.

Electoral Divisions Affected

All.