

REIMBURSEMENT OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES SCHEME

Executive Summary

1. The Corporate Body is invited to consider the transitional arrangements in respect of Members' employment of close family members.

Issues and Options

2. In December 2009, the McIntosh examination of the expenses scheme recommended that, with effect from 1 April 2010, Members would not be able to claim for the reimbursement of staff salary costs for employing family members. The existing arrangements for any family member of staff employed would continue until the date of the next Scottish Parliamentary election¹ and 3 months thereafter.
3. The Parliament unanimously agreed this change to the Expenses Scheme and set the date as 31 July 2015. The SPCB will be aware that, since this change was made, the date of the next Scottish parliamentary election has been moved to May 2016. In the light of this date change, we consider that a change should be made to the Expenses Scheme to reflect this to maintain the principle behind the motion the Parliament agreed.
4. The SPCB discussed the scheme's transitional arrangements in respect of Members employing close family members at its meeting on 4 June 2014 and agreed to return to the issue later in the year. The Presiding Officer absented herself from the meeting for this item and Liz Smith MSP took over the chair.
5. The SPCB is now invited to consider lodging a motion for the Parliament to extend the existing transitional arrangements up until 31 July 2016 in line with the original intent of the McIntosh recommendation.

Resource Implications

6. None.

Governance issues

7. Changes to the Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme are a matter for the Scottish Parliament.

Publication Scheme

¹ The actual wording in the McIntosh report specified "In the case of existing family members, their appointments should continue to attract funding through the next Parliamentary cycle which runs to May 2015 and for three months beyond that point to 31 July 2015..."

8. This paper will be published.

Recommendation

9. The Corporate Body is invited to consider lodging a motion for the Parliament to extend the existing transitional arrangements up until 31 July 2016 in line with the original intent of the McIntosh recommendation.

Head of Financial Resources

November 2014