

REIMBURSEMENT OF MEMBERS' EXPENSES SCHEME – APPLICATION FOR A SECOND REGIONAL OFFICE

Executive summary

1. This paper invites the SPCB to consider an application submitted under the provision made at 4.2.6 of the recently amended Reimbursement of Members' Expenses Scheme. This provision enables the SPCB to determine, on receipt of an application, that where more than one member is returned from the same political party in Highlands and Islands, North East Scotland, South Scotland, West Scotland and Mid-Scotland and Fife Regions may establish a second regional office.

Issues and Options

2. Margaret McDougall MSP, Mary Fee MSP and Neil Bibby MSP have submitted an application to establish two offices in West Scotland Region. One office has already been established in Paisley.

3. In considering previous applications, the SPCB has taken into account the geographic location of each proposed office within the region, and would expect the offices to be located to ensure a geographical spread within the region. The office in Paisley is already established and the second office is proposed to be located in Irvine which is approximately 25 miles from Paisley.

4. It is proposed to establish the second office in Irvine on the basis that this would make the Members more accessible to constituents in North Ayrshire. Irvine is the most highly populated town in the area and is accessible by good transport links to all smaller towns and villages in North Ayrshire including Arran and Cumbrae.

Resource Implications

5. There are sufficient funds in the overall expenses budget to meet the additional costs associated with the establishment of a second office.

Governance issues

6. Provision is made for an additional office within the expenses scheme.

Publication Scheme

7. This paper will be published in line with the SPCB's Publication Scheme.

Next steps

8. Advise the Members of SPCB decision.

Decision

9. The SPCB is invited to consider this application.

Allowances Office
December 2011