

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2008**

**1. MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND VISITS**

Report of the Clerk.

**RECOMMENDED**

THAT the events for 2008/09 set out in the attached appendix be approved for the purpose of the payment of travel and subsistence allowances and conference fees (where appropriate), subject to the necessary budgetary provision being available.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To seek approval for attendance of Members at conferences and seminars for 2008/09.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The schedule of Approved Duties within the Members' Allowances Scheme allows for *'attendance as an appointed representative of the Authority, or of a Committee or Sub-Committee, at a conference, seminar or authorised meeting or visit at any other meeting authorised by the Authority.'* In the past reports have been submitted to the Executive Committee to obtain specific authority for members to attend individual events. At the Authority meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2007, members suggested that this process was time consuming and unnecessary.
- 3.2 The Authority on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2007 considered a revised process and approved an arrangement whereby a schedule of conferences, seminars and visits for the forthcoming year is submitted annually to the Authority for approval (See Appendix). The revised arrangements provide for attendance by nominated members at three conferences per year and also make provision for the approval of attendance by members at other ad hoc events, subject to the necessary budgetary provision being available. For the purposes of an audit trail it is proposed that the Clerk would authorise attendance at each individual event.

#### 4. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has therefore not been carried out. The matters contained in this report do not relate to a policy change.

#### 5. **LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 the Authority is required to make and publish a scheme setting out provisions for the payment of allowances to Members of the Authority.
- 5.2 Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 states that such a scheme may provide for the payment of allowances in respect of travelling and subsistence undertaken in connection with or relating to such duties specified within the scheme (the scheme of approved duties).

#### 6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Provision is included in the Authority's budget for costs associated with attendance at conferences and seminars and for members' travel and subsistence costs.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Members' Allowances Scheme.  
Minutes of the Authority and the Executive Committee.

## Appendix

Events proposed for approval by the Authority for 2008/2009 for the purpose of the payment of travel and subsistence allowances and conference fees (where appropriate), subject to the necessary budgetary provision being available.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Attendance By</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>
LGA Annual Fire Conference*	Chair and Vice-Chair (or their nominees)	Conference fees and travel and subsistence
Annual Fire Conference*	Chair and Vice-Chair (or their nominees)	Conference fees and travel and subsistence
Annual Assembly of Standards Committees*	Chair of the Standards Committee (or his/her nominee)	Conference fees and travel and subsistence
*It is proposed that attendance at three conferences per year be approved. In previous years these have included the conferences shown above.		
Fire Service Briefing Meetings arranged by the Dept for Communities and Local Government	Chair and Vice-Chair (or their nominee) OR all members of the Authority (as appropriate)	Travel and subsistence
Annual Visits to the Houses of Parliament to meet West Midlands MPs and members	All Members	Travel and subsistence
Member training events/seminars organised by the Authority or approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair	All Members	Travel and subsistence
Monitoring visits to fire stations (up to two per quarter)	All Members	Travel and subsistence