

Report to: **Governance Committee**

Date: **29 June 2015**

By: **Assistant Chief Executive**

Title of report: **Revised Members' refreshment provision at meetings**

Purpose of report: **To consider ceasing the provision of lunch for Members at meetings.**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Committee is recommended to agree to stop providing lunches (meals, sandwiches and buffet lunches) for elected Members whether provided directly or by 'lunch tickets' at meetings of council bodies.**

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### **1. Supporting Information**

1.1 The County Council currently provides lunches (either a meal, buffet or 'lunch tickets') for elected Members at many of its meetings including: Full Council, Cabinet (and associated briefings), scrutiny committees, scrutiny reviews and boards, lead member meetings, several committees and certain other events including whole Council Forums.

1.2 Annual expenditure for provision of refreshments at Member meetings is currently approximately £15,400. An analysis of this expenditure is shown in the following table:

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Approx. cost (£)</b>
<b>County Council</b>	<b>5,100</b>
<b>Cabinet (and associated meetings)</b>	<b>3,600</b>
<b>Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)</b>	<b>800</b>
<b>Scrutiny committees (not HOSC)</b>	<b>2,100</b>
<b>Other meetings</b>	<b>3,800</b>
<b>Current annual expenditure</b>	<b>15,400</b>

1.3 The provision of food for Members at these meetings lies outside the East Sussex County Council Members' allowances scheme. The scheme provides that:

*Subsistence allowances (up to the limits of the overnight subsistence rates) will be paid where the performance of a specified duty involves an overnight stay; otherwise a subsistence allowance shall not be payable.*

1.4 There is an opportunity to make a saving of approximately £14,000 by not providing lunches at meetings. Teas, coffees and filtered water would continue to be provided, and would also be available at all times in the Members' Room. Subsistence allowances will of course continue to be provided to Members in accordance with the Members' Allowances Scheme.

1.5 Filtered water units are being installed near to the meeting rooms which will remove the need to provide bottles of mineral water.

## **2. Conclusion and recommendation**

2.1 The Committee is recommended to agree to stop providing lunches (meals, sandwiches and buffet lunches) for elected Members whether provided directly or by 'lunch tickets' at meetings of council bodies.

2.2 The annual savings would be in the region of £14,000 and the provision of refreshments would then be brought in line with the Members' allowances scheme.

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Local Member: All

Background Documents:  
Members Allowance Scheme