

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth
John Swinney MSP

AML has
report

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↓ Mrs

You have been forwarded a copy of the 2009 report from the Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee (SLARC) on councillors' remuneration, published on 19 November 2009, which you will now have had time to consider.

The report makes fifteen recommendations. In summary the recommendations are, no salary increases in 2010/11 and 2011/12, an additional mileage and passenger allowance for councillors in island councils travelling by private boat, no changes to other allowances and expenses, publication of additional information on councillors' salaries, allowances and expenses to increase transparency and access to such information, published on Council websites.

Any revisions to the current levels of salary, allowances or reimbursement of expenses for councillors will require me to lay amending Regulations in Parliament. I am conscious that the timescale for implementing any changes from 1 April 2010 limits my opportunity to consult on the regulations. I am therefore taking this opportunity to seek your views on the SLARC Report recommendations.

On 10 December 2008, in my response to SLARC's 2008 Report, I indicated that there was a need, exceptionally, to address some of the issues raised at that time as part of a 2010 review. The Committee have identified further issues in their 2009 Report. I plan to outline the scope of the 2010 Review at the same time as I respond to their 2009 Report. With the current pressures on council budgets, affordability will be a key driver. The Review might include, for example, arms length companies, basic salaries, responsibilities, leaders' issues, Joint Board and Community Justice Authority salaries. I would, however, welcome views on the scope of the review.

I am therefore inviting you to let me have your views on the report's recommendations and the scope of the 2010 review by 7 January 2010.

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