

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

20 OCTOBER 2022

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the draft Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report 2023/24 to the Committee for Members to provide views on its content as part of the consultation process.

2. Connection to corporate well-being objectives / other corporate priorities

- 2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:-

Smarter use of resources – ensure that all resources (financial, physical, ecological, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the creation of resources throughout the community that can help to deliver the Council's well-being-objectives.

Supporting a successful sustainable economy– taking steps to make the county borough a great place to do business, for people to live, work, study and visit, and to ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all people in the county borough.

3. Background

- 3.1 In accordance with the requirements of Section 147 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the IRPW has published its draft Annual Report setting out its determinations for the municipal year 2023/24.
- 3.2 In order to meet the requirement of the Measure to publish its final report in Spring 2023 the IRPW has requested that any representations or comments about this report should be received no later than 1 December 2022. The IRPW has advised that representations or comments received after this date may not be considered.
- 3.3 The IRPW determined that this year would be one of consolidation following the major changes put in place last year including the significant salary uplift, allowing time for these changes to bed in. They have also condensed the draft report significantly and focused predominantly on the changes made as a result of the proposals.

4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 The draft IRPW Report is attached at **Appendix A** and proposes some changes to the current remuneration prescribed for Elected Members at Principal (County

Borough) and Town and Community Council levels. The following paragraphs summarise the key elements of the report for the Authority.

4.2 Basic Salary for Elected Members of Principal Councils – Determination 1

4.2.1 In 2009 the Panel decided the average work commitment of an elected councillor of a principal council was three working days and having reviewed this time commitment, this has not changed.

4.2.2 Last year the Panel reset the basic salary to align with the 2020 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office of National Statistics. This reduced the imbalance that had arisen between the basic salary of members of principal councils and the average salaries of their constituents. The change took effect from the May 2022 local elections.

4.2.3 The Panel has determined to continue this link with ASHE and for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 **the basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of the all Wales 2021 ASHE, the latest figure available at drafting. This will be £17,600. This will represent a 4.76% increase in the basic salary.**

4.3 Salaries paid to Senior, Civic and Presiding members of Principal Councils

4.3.1 The number of senior salaries available to this Authority remains unchanged at 18 based on a review undertaken last year of differentials and market comparators. Senior salaries will therefore be increased at the same rate as basic salaries (4.76%).

4.3.2 The ASHE increase also applies to the role element of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Members.

4.3.3 For Committee Chairs and the leader of the largest opposition group, the Panel determined that there would be a small increase to the role element of their pay whilst for leaders of other political groups this would remain the same. The increase in basic salary will apply in both cases.

4.3.4 The senior salaries for 2023-24 are summarised in the table below:

Basic salary (payable to all elected members) £17,600			
	Group A Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea	Group B Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Newport, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham	Group C Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Isle of Anglesey
Senior salaries (inclusive of basic salary)			

Basic salary (payable to all elected members) £17,600			
Band 1			
Leader	£66,000	£59,400	£56,100
Deputy Leader	£46,200	£41,580	£39,270
Band 2			
Executive Members	£39,600	£35,640	£33,660
Band 3			
Committee Chairs (if remunerated):		£26,400	
Band 4			
Leader of Largest Opposition Group		£26,400	
Band 5			
Leader of Other Political Groups		£21,340	

4.4 Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JOSC) – Determination 3

4.4.1 Last year's IRPW report stated that as there had been little use made of the arrangements for JOSCs, the Panel decided to delete the payment from the Framework. If, in future, a JOSC is formed by an individual council and it wishes to remunerate, it can apply using the arrangements contained in paragraphs 3.27 and 3.28 of the IRPW report 2022-23. These paragraphs set out guidance for Local Authorities on the application of specific or additional senior salaries that do not fall within the framework. Current JOSCs in operation will continue without need for further confirmation.

4.4.2 There are no other changes relating to Joint Committees other than the salary of a chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be £8,800 and the salary of vice-chair will be £4,400.

4.5 Payments to Fire and Rescue Authorities – Determination 5

4.5.1 The three fire and rescue services (FRAs) in Wales: Mid and West Wales, North Wales and South Wales were formed as part of Local Government re-organisation in 1996. FRAs comprise elected members who are nominated by the Principal Councils within each fire and rescue service area.

4.5.2 Payments will increase as a result of the uplift proposed for elected members of principal councils, therefore, there will also be an uplift of 4.76% in the basic salary element.

4.5.3 The remuneration for Chairs will remain linked to a Band 3 senior salary of principal councils, therefore, there will be a small increase to the role element of their pay. Deputy Chairs, Committee Chairs and other senior roles will remain linked to Band

5, therefore, their role element of pay will remain frozen. The increase in basic salary will apply. Further details of this are provided below:

Fire and Rescue Authorities

Basic salary for ordinary member	£2,482
Chair	£11,282
Deputy Chair (where appointed)	£6,222
Committee Chair or other senior post	£6,222

4.6 The IRPW report indicates no further changes to the payments and benefits paid to elected members and therefore all other Determinations from 2022 to 2023 still stand and should be applied in 2023 to 2024, including those covering:

- Travel and subsistence;
- Care and Personal Assistance;
- Sickness Absence;
- Corporate Joint Committees,
- Assistants to the Executive,
- Additional salaries and Job sharing arrangements and
- Co-opted Members
- Contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance;
- Compensation for financial loss
- Restrictions on receiving double remuneration where a member holds more than one post.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is no effect upon the policy framework and procedure rules in respect of this report.

6. Equality Act 2010 implications

6.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales, the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there is no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The proposed changes to the remuneration of Elected Members for the 2023-24 financial year will potentially increase the financial commitment required from this Authority.

8.2 A full assessment of the financial impact to the Council in respect of Elected Members' remuneration will be required. Any additional costs will be a budget pressure for the service in 2023-24 and will need to be considered when finalising the Medium Term Financial Strategy and addressed as part of the budget setting process for that year.

9. Recommendations

9.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a. Note the content of the report;
- b. Provide any response in respect of the IRPW Draft Annual Report 2023-24;
- c. Approve that any response of the Committee be submitted to the IRPW and the WLGA by the deadline of 1 December 2022.

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Background documents:

IRPW Report 2022-23

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/pdf-versions/2022/3/4/1646920825/independent-remuneration-panel-wales-annual-report-2022-2023.pdf>