

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COUNCIL

11 DECEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Council of the Supplementary Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel (the Panel) for Wales in respect of payments to co-opted members of local authorities who have the right to vote.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Co-opted members (with voting rights) are appointed to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Standards Committee and the Audit Committee. These are statutory roles that aid the achievement of the Corporate Priorities relating to the roles that they cover.

3. Background

- 3.1 In the 2012 Annual Report the Panel determined that the annual maximum (10 days) payable to co-optees may be too restrictive and decided that each council will have discretion in determining the maximum to suit its circumstances. They also recognised that time spent on attending authorised training events, conferences and pre-meetings with officers can be part of the functions for which co-opted members may be paid.
- 3.2 It was considered that there was insufficient information available at that time to determine whether the 10 day maximum needed to be amended for this authority. A suitable period has elapsed to enable an evaluation to be undertaken. The outcomes of that evaluation are shown at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 During a 10 week period, from March to June 2013 the Panel visited each of the 28 authorities where issues were raised in respect of payments to co-opted members. The Panel considered that there were matters that needed to be rectified and that this should be actioned in advance of the next Annual Report which will not take effect until Spring 2014. A copy of the Supplementary Report of the Panel is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.4 The following determinations have been made by the Panel and will take effect on 1st January 2014:
- i) Reasonable time for pre meeting preparation is eligible to be included in claims made by co-opted members the extent of which can be determined by the appropriate officer in advance of the meeting.

- ii) Travelling time to and from the place of the meeting can be included in the claims for payments made by co-opted members (up to the maximum of the daily rate).
- iii) The appropriate officer within the authority can determine in advance whether a meeting is programmed for a full day and the fee will be paid on the basis of this determination even if the meeting finishes before four hours has elapsed.
- iv) Meetings eligible for the payment of fee include other committees and working groups (including task and finish groups) or any other formal meeting to which co-opted members are requested to attend. (pre meetings with officers, training and attendance at conferences are already eligible for payment).

4. Current situation / proposal

- 4.1 There are currently a total of 12 co-optees with voting rights currently sitting on Council committees. These are:
- 1 Independent “lay” member on the Audit committee;
 - 4 Independent Members on the Standards committee (including the Chairperson) with a further 2 co-opted members from the Town and community Councils (1 co-opted post is vacant);
 - 5 Registered representatives on the Children & Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.2 The Panel has determined that travelling and preparation time can be taken into account when considering the appropriate level of remuneration for co-optees. Each of these committees has a significant amount of preparation to be undertaken in advance of a meeting. It is considered that the Standards Committee has the highest level of preparation for any individual meeting.
- 4.3 Preparation time alone may not adversely affect the level of most claims that can be made i.e. a 3 hour meeting and 1 hour preparation could still result in a 4 hour claim being made. The addition of travelling time could add to any potential claim time. This combined with the preparation time would mean that a number of meetings would exceed the 4 hour time criteria which would entitle the co-opted members to claim a full day’s remuneration.
- 4.4 The increase in the number of full day claims that may be received will not exceed that of the entitlement of a co-opted i.e. currently 10 full days. No claims would be considered if the current 10 day limit had been reached.
- 4.5 The Panel has also determined that an “appropriate officer” can be nominated to assess the:
- anticipated length of any meeting involving co-opted members
 - preparation time that is required for any meeting
 - travelling time to and from a meeting that can considered for remuneration
- 4.6 It is proposed that the Monitoring Officer carry out the role of the “appropriate

Officer” to undertake the assessment of meeting timings and advise of the appropriate level of remuneration that can be made to each co-optee.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules

5.1 There is no effect on the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equalities implications in respect of this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 All activities described in this report will be met from existing budget provisions.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that Council:

8.1 Note the Supplementary Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel in respect of payments to co-opted members who have the right to vote;

8.2 Approve that the Monitoring Officer be designated as the “appropriate officer” within the authority for determining preparation time, travelling time and length of meetings for co-optee remuneration.

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18 November 2013

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Background documents – None

ASSESSMENT OF CO-OPTED MEMBERS REMUNERATION

- 1 The following table shows the number of formal committee meetings, training and other events that each of the respective co-optees may be involved in during a year

Committee	Committee Meetings		Training and other meetings		Total (Days)
	Full day	½ Day	Full Day	½ Day	
Audit	0	5	0	2	3.5
CYP Scrutiny	0	7	0	14*	7.0
Standards	2	4	0	2	5.0
Total	2	16	0	18	19.0

*not all co-optees are involved in every training event or other meeting. These meetings may include Research and Evaluation Panels, School Performance Monitoring and any associated training activities.

2. In accordance with the current Schedule of Remuneration co-opted members are permitted to claim the following “meeting” payments

Role	Daily fee (over 4 hours)	½ day fee (up to 4 hours)
Chairperson of Standards, Audit Committee	£256	£128
Ordinary member of standards committees; education scrutiny committee; crime and disorder scrutiny committee and audit committee	£198	£99

3. If all Co-optees claimed the full rates to which they were entitled for the current 10 day maximum the total cost (excluding expenses) would amount to £24,340.
4. Records are made of all claims for co-optee meeting payments. The following table details the co-optee claims from 7 May 2012 to 14 May 13 and 012-13

Committee	Total number of co-optees	Number of co-optees that have made claims	½ day claims	Full day claims	Total days claimed (Days)	Average per claimant (Days)
Audit	1	1	5	0	2.5	2.50
CYP Scrutiny	5	2	9	1	5.5	2.75
Standards	6*	5	23	10	21.5	4.30
Total	12	8	37	11	29.5	3.69

* 1 Town & Community Council co-optee post is vacant

5. Actual claims for meeting attendances resulted in payments amounting to £6,102 which equates to only 25% of the liability for co-optee remuneration.