

THE DRAFT RESPONSE FROM BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL TO THE SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT RELATING TO REMUNERATION IN RESPECT OF FAMILY ABSENCE

Bridgend County Borough Council appreciates the opportunity provided by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales to participate in the consultation process regarding its supplementary report relating to remuneration in respect of family absence.

The draft report has been considered by the Democratic Services Committee which made recommendations to Council for consideration and approval.

The following responses are requested to be considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales as part of their consultation process.

Determination A

A member is entitled to retain a basic salary when taking family absence under the regulations irrespective of their attendance record prior to the commencement of the family absence.

Response:

This determination would not change the current remuneration of Elected Members. The "6 month rule" will continue to be applied by this Authority for any period of absence that exceeded six months. Any Elected Member requesting a 26 week period of family absence will still have to comply with this rule even though they were entitled to this period of absence in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Determination B

When a senior salary holder is eligible for family absence, he/she will be able to continue to receive the senior salary for the duration of the absence if the authority so decides whether or not it makes a substitute appointment.

Response:

This determination would not change the current remuneration of Elected Members. The "6 month rule" would continue to apply and this would not adversely impact the remuneration of Senior Salary Holders taking a period of family absence.

Determination C

The member substituting for a senior salary holder taking family absence will be eligible for a senior salary.

Response:

Bridgend County Borough Council welcomes the opportunity to be able to provide substitutes for senior salary holders during period of family absence and for those substitutes to be remunerated for the additional responsibilities that they undertake. Additional consideration should be given to other absences which include but are not limited to those Elected Members that are carers or those suffering a sustained period of illness. The equality of access should be considered for all reasonable periods of absence to ensure that no individual is disadvantaged by the inequality of provision.

This Authority has reduced the number of senior salary holders below that of the maximum number of senior salary holders permitted by the IRP which provides an element of flexibility regarding substitutions. In the current economic climate and with the significant

budget savings being made by all Local Authorities the remuneration of substitutes may place an additional financial burden on them to make the necessary funding available.

Determination D

If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries as set out in the Panel's Annual Report, an addition to the maximum will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. However, this cannot apply to the Isle of Anglesey and Merthyr Tydfil Councils if it would result in the number of senior salaries exceeding fifty percent of the Council's membership as specific Welsh ministerial approval would have to be obtained.

Response:

This determination would not change the current remuneration of Elected Members. Due to the current demographic of this Council it is unlikely to exceed the number of senior salary holders permitted by the IRP or reach the 50 percent of the Council's Membership limit.

Determination E

When an authority agrees a substitution for family absence, the Panel must be informed, within 14 days of the date of the decision, of the details including the particular post and the duration of the substitution.

Determination F

The schedule of remuneration must be amended to reflect the implication of the family absence.

Response:

The Democratic Services Team have a good working relationship with the IRP and provide regularly updates on our Schedule of Remuneration