

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO COUNCIL

10 MARCH 2021

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2021-2022

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To advise Council of the Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in respect of the level and range of remuneration the Authority must make available to its elected members for the 2021/22 municipal year.

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

- 2.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has acknowledged the need to ensure that financial barriers do not stand in the way of attracting more people to serve in local government. The active participation of all members contributes to the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives under the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**:

1. **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 focussed on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions for all people in the county borough.
2. **Helping people and communities to be more healthy and resilient** - taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services. Supporting individuals and communities to build resilience, and enable them to develop solutions to have active, healthy and independent lives.
3. **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.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members) (Wales) Regulations 2007 provided for the establishment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.
- 3.2 This is the thirteenth Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (the Panel), and the tenth published under the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (attached as **Appendix 1**). The Measure extended the responsibilities of the Panel and its powers under Section 142 to decide (prescribe) payments to members of relevant authorities.

- 3.3 Representatives of the Panel held consultation meetings on their proposals, which was attended by the Authority's Head of Democratic Services. The Panel has acknowledged each of the 39 responses to the consultation on the draft report and answered all the queries that were raised.
- 3.4 The Panel's Determinations for 2021/22 are shown at Annex 1 of the Annual Report (page 51 onwards). Section 153 of the Measure empowers the Panel to require a relevant authority to comply with the requirements imposed on it by the Annual Report. The Panel's determinations must be implemented by 1st April 2021.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Basic Salary

- 4.1.1 The Basic Salary in 2021/22 for elected members of principal councils shall be **£14,368** with effect from 1st April 2021 (**Determination 1**). This salary shall be paid by each principal authority to each of its elected members unless any individual member opts personally and in writing to receive a lower amount. Adjustments in recent years have been in keeping with the Panel's principle that its determinations should be affordable and acceptable. This principle is maintained in the increase for 2021/22 in the basic salary elected members of £150.

4.2 Senior Salaries

- 4.2.1 The senior salary levels in 2021-22 for members of principal councils shall be as set out in Table 3, page 14 of the Annual Report (Appendix 1). The Panel considers that the leadership and executive roles carry the greatest individual accountability and that size of population remains a major factor in influencing levels of responsibility and the use of the population groups has therefore been retained. (**Determination 2**).

4.2.2 Leader and Deputy Leader

The Salary for the Leader and Deputy Leader has been based on the population of the County Borough (100,000 to 200,000). The Leader is entitled to receive **£49,974** and the Deputy Leader **£35,320**.

4.2.3 Cabinet Members

Cabinet Members will be entitled to receive a senior salary of **£30,773**.

4.2.4 Chairs of Committees

Where chairs of committees are remunerated, the chairs will be paid a salary of **£23,161**. The Panel has re-iterated that it is a matter for individual authorities to determine which chairs are paid. At its Annual Meeting in May 2020 Council determined that the following Committee Chairpersons be remunerated as shown below:

- Chairperson Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1
- Chairperson Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2
- Chairperson Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3
- Chairperson of Development Control Committee
- Chairperson of Licensing Committee

- Chairperson of Governance and Audit Committee
- Chairperson of the Appeals Panel
- An Independent Member chairs the Standards Committee and will now receive £268 for a meeting lasting over 4 hours or £134 for meeting under 4 hours

4.2.5 Largest Opposition Group Leader

The Panel has determined that Council must make a senior salary of **£23,161** available to the leader of the largest opposition group.

4.3 Civic Salaries

4.3.1 Councils have strongly expressed to the Panel that Elected Members do not wish to make any choices that require Councils themselves to choose and match the level of activity or duties of a specific member to a given range of salary levels for a role. The Panel has determined (**Determination 3**) that (where paid) a Civic Head (Mayor) must be paid a salary of **£23,161** and (where paid) a Deputy Civic Head (Deputy Mayor) must be paid a salary of **£18,108** with effect from 1st April 2021.

4.3.2 The Panel recognises the wide range of provision made for Civic Heads in respect of transport, secretarial support, charitable giving and clothing. Funding decisions in relation to levels of such additional support are not matters of personal remuneration, but of the funding required to carry out the tasks and duties. These matters remain entirely a matter for individual councils. Councils remain free to invest in support at whatever levels they deem appropriate for the levels of civic leadership they have in place.

4.4 Co-opted Members

4.4.1 The Panel has determined that a daily/half daily fee is appropriate remuneration for the important role undertaken by co-opted members of authorities with voting rights (this includes the co-opted member from a Town or Community Council). The Panel proposes an increase of £12 to £210 daily rate for ordinary co-opted members and for those with additional responsibility. This Authority must pay the following fees to Co-opted Members (who have voting rights) (**Determination 35**):

Chairs of standards, and governance and audit committees	£268 (4 hours and over) £134 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for community and town councils	£238 daily fee (4 hours and over) £119 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees; education scrutiny committee; crime and disorder scrutiny committee and governance and audit committee	£210 (4 hours and over) £105 (up to 4 hours)
Community and town councillors sitting on principal council standards committees	£210 (4 hours and over) £105 (up to 4 hours)

4.4.2 Recognising the important role that co-opted members discharge, payment must be made for travel and preparation time; committee and other types of meetings as well as other activities, including training (**Determinations 36 to 39**).

4.5 Contributions towards Costs of Care and Personal Assistance (CPA)

4.5.1 The Panel believes that additional costs of care required to carry out approved duties should not deter any individual from becoming and remaining a member of an authority or limit their ability to carry out the role. The Panel has adopted specific principles related to support for the costs of care which were the subject of a Supplementary Report published in February 2020 (the principles are set out in table 7 on page 33 of the Annual Report). The Panel reviewed the maximum monthly payment in recognition that this has not changed for several years. The monthly cap will now be replaced with the following arrangements:

- Formal (registration with Care Inspectorate Wales) care costs to be paid as evidenced;
- Informal (unregistered) care costs to be paid up to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real UK Living Wage at the time the costs are incurred.

4.6 Sickness Absence for Senior Salary Holders

4.6.1 The Family Absence for Members of Local Authorities (Wales) Regulations 2013 are very specific relating to entitlement and only available for elected members of principal councils. The Panel's Framework provides specific arrangements for long term sickness (as set out on page 36 of the Annual Report).

4.6.2 The Regulations also apply to elected members in cases of maternity, new born, adoption and parental absences from official business.

4.7 Compliance with Panel Requirements

4.7.1 The Panel is empowered to require the Authority to comply with the requirements imposed on it by the Annual Report of the Panel and further enables the Panel to monitor compliance by the Authority of the Panel's determinations. Details of all remuneration received by elected members must be published annually on the Authority's website in the prescribed format.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules

5.1 There is currently no impact of the Policy Framework or Procedure Rules.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

6.1 No Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has the power under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to set members allowances.

6.2 This report is supportive of the equalities implications for elected members by including care, family and other allowances.

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

7.1 The Panel Report contributes to the well-being goals identified in the Act. It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act to encourage more diverse representation among

Councillors and Co-opted Members. A more representative group should be better able to take into account the well-being goals when reviewing services and policies and consider the positive and negative impacts upon future generations, long term community resilience and economic, environmental and social capital.

8. Financial implications

8.1 The introduction of these proposals will increase the cost of remuneration of all elected members by approximately £12,700. Some of this cost may be negated by members electing to forgo some or all of their salaries. Only an individual member may communicate in writing to the Proper Officer if, as an individual, they wish to decline all or part of the payment to which they are entitled. Should a shortfall occur for the year 2021/22, the costs will be met from the centrally held provision for pay and price increases.

9. Recommendations

9.1 Council is recommended to note the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2021 and approve:

- the adoption of the relevant determinations of the Panel contained within its Annual Report (**Appendix 1**);
- those posts (as shown in the revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration at Schedule 1), who will receive a senior/civic salary;
- the level of remuneration for the Senior and Civic Salaries (where appropriate);
- the revised Members' Schedule of Remuneration at **Appendix 2**, and for it to become effective from 1 April 2021;
- that the Members' Schedule of Remuneration be updated with any changes to Senior/Civic Salary positions subsequently made by Council during the 2021/22 municipal year;
- the Democratic Services Committee reviewing the provisions on the contribution towards Costs of Care and Personal Assistance as set out in paragraph 4.5.

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1st March 2021

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Background documents: None