

**BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**REPORT TO THE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**25 MARCH 2021**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**  
**CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS COSTS OF CARE AND PERSONAL ASSISTANCE**

**1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to promote the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' (IRPW) determination in relation to contribution towards Costs of Care and Personal Assistance (CPA).

**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 wellbeing-objectives.
  - **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.
  - **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** A report was presented to Council on 10 March 2021 outlining the IRPW Annual Report published in February 2021. The following determination was made in relation to CPA which applies to members of principal councils and co-opted members of these authorities:

*“All relevant authorities must provide a payment towards necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs as follows:*

- *Formal (registered with CIW) 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.*

*This must be for the additional costs incurred by members to enable them to carry out official business or approved duties. Each Authority must ensure that any payments made are appropriately linked to official business or approved duty. Payment shall only be made on the production of receipts from the care provider”.*

3.2 The IRPW reviewed the arrangements for this financial support and made the following changes:

- As payments are taxable under the current HMRC rules, full reimbursement is not possible so for clarity this is retitled “Contribution towards the Costs of Care and Personal Assistance”. Members will still be required to provide receipts to accompany claims;
- Claims can be made in respect of a dependant under 16 years of age, or a minor or adult who normally lives with the member as part of their family and who cannot be left unsupervised;
- Clarification in respect of a Member’s own care or support needs: Reimbursement may be claimed where the support and or cost of any additional needs are not available or are not met directly by the Authority such as Access to Work, Personal Payments, Insurance. These could arise when the needs are recent and or temporary.

#### **4. Current situation/proposal**

4.1 The contributions towards CPA enable people who have personal support needs or caring responsibilities to carry out their duties effectively as a member of the Authority. The IRPW believes that additional costs of care required to carry out approved duties should not deter any individual from becoming or remaining a member of the Authority or limit their ability to carry out the role.

4.2 During recent visits to local authorities, the IRPW found that very few Members were utilising the Reimbursement of Costs of Care provision in their Annual Reports. The IRPW believe that many are reluctant to claim all they are entitled to support them in their role because of concerns about the adverse publicity this may attract. The IRPW continues to recognise the issues relating to the publication of this legitimate expense and has stipulated in its Annual Report the requirement to only publish the total amount reimbursed during the year for the Authority as a whole and not against an individual. It will be a matter for the Authority to determine its response to any request made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, however it is not intended that details of individual claims should be disclosed.

4.3 The IRPW has urged Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of the CPA provision so that Members are not financially disadvantaged.

4.4 It is proposed that the Committee and the Head of Democratic Services promote the CPA provision throughout the Authority. This work should begin with the Annual Report presented to Council on 10 March 2021 and this report to the Committee.

4.5 A Costs of Care and Personal Assistance “Claim Form” has been designed which is aimed at making the process simpler for Members. This form will be available on request from the Democratic Services Team.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no effect upon policy framework and procedure rules.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

## **7. Wellbeing 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 introduction of these proposals will increase the cost of remuneration of those members entitled to claim for this expense. The previous Reimbursement of Costs of Care monthly cap of £403 has now been removed by the IRPW. Very few people will be eligible for such a payment and history has shown that no Councillors / Co-opted Members have ever made a claim for this legitimate expense. However, 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. Recommendation**

9.1 The Committee is recommended to note the report.

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**8 March 2021**

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**Background documents:** None