

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 24 th October 2017
Report Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report for 2018/19
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determines the rates of payment which are to be made to elected and co-opted members of Welsh Local Authorities for the following year. The IRPW is required to send the draft Annual Report to County Councils which this year it did on the 4th October, requesting comments to be made by no later than the 29th November 2017.

The IRPW is required to take into account the representations which it receives on the draft before issuing its final version of the report in February. For 2018/19 the following changes are proposed:

- Basic salary – “to avoid further erosion in relation to average earning the Panel has decided to increase the basic salary to £13,600 (an increase of 1.49%). This is a £200 increase in the basic salary for Councillors from £13,400.
- Senior salaries – no increase is proposed for senior salaries but the postholders will receive the increase in the basic salary being paid to all Councillors. The IRPW have removed the “two tier” approach for payment of Cabinet Members and Committee Chairs as no local authorities had adopted the approach (Flintshire had opposed this change when consulted previously).

Council is also invited to consider whether an application should be made to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a specific or additional senior salary which does not fall within the current remuneration framework to recognise the role of the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee, which is currently unpaid.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Council considers and comments on the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for 2018/19.
2	That Council endorses the application to the Independent Remuneration Panel for a specific, additional senior salary which does not fall within the current remuneration framework to recognise the currently unpaid role of the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee.
3	That the Chief Officer (Governance) be authorised to make a response on behalf of the Council, reflecting the decision made at the meeting, to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DETAILING THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2018/19
1.01	Members will be aware that the IRPW produces a report on an annual basis, which sets out what it has decided (these are called Determinations) should be the rates of payment to Members and co-optees of Local Authorities in Wales.
1.02	For 2018 the IRPW has made 52 Determinations, 19 of which are directly relevant to Flintshire County Council and 9 which relate to Town & Community Councils (the other Determinations relate to Fire & Rescue and National Park Authorities). The Panel's Determinations for 2018 are located in Annex 1 on page 55 of the attached IRPW report.
1.03	There is a slight change proposed for the basic salary of 1.43% which equates to £200 on each basic salary which will increase from £13,400 to £13,600 (Determination 1)
1.04	No increase is proposed for senior salary holders, but the postholders will receive the £200 increase being paid to all Councillors (Determination 2).
1.05	The rates for civic salaries (which are paid to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council) are increased by £200, to reflect the increase payable to all Councillors (Determination 3). NB: Flintshire must determine annually which level of payment to make to the Chair and Vice Chair. It has previously decided to pay level 2.
1.06	The payment rate for Co-opted Members remains unchanged at the level to which they were set in 2010 (Determination 38).

1.07	The entitlement for all eligible elected Members of principal councils to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is reaffirmed (Determination 17).
1.08	For several years, the number of senior salaries (this excludes the civic salaries) which a Group B Council such as Flintshire has been able to pay has been fixed at 18. This provides payment to 8 Cabinet Members (including the Leader and Deputy), 6 Overview & Scrutiny Chairs, the Chairs of Audit, Planning and Licensing and the leader of the largest opposition group.
1.09	Since the Council decided that those posts identified above should be the 18 salaried posts for Flintshire, we have been required to set up a new committee, the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee. The work of that Committee is growing in scale and importance, particularly following the pooling arrangements where the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund will sit on a joint committee with the Chairs of the other 7 Pension Funds across Wales. On that basis it is considered reasonable to apply to the IRPW for a specific, additional salary to be paid to the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee. Determination 8 provides for such an application to be made. This has been mentioned already to IRPW representatives at meetings held last month.
1.10	During a recent visit to Flintshire the IRPW representatives raised the fact that Flintshire does not pay for councillors' telephone and internet connections (which is as a result of the Council previously rejecting a proposal to cover these costs). A report will be taken to the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee setting out the IRPW's comments and the options.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The budget provision required for payment for Members Allowances in 2018/19 will need to be increased by £200 per Councillor, resulting in an increase in £14,000 in the Members Allowance Budget. If Council supports a case being made for an additional payment for the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee Chair this will require an additional £8,700.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	This report is in response to external consultation. Group Leaders and their deputies have been made aware of the draft IRPW report in advance.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	No risk management issues have been identified during the preparation of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Covering letter from the IRPW. Appendix 2 - IRPW draft report for 2018/19.

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>The background document to this report is the draft IRPW report which is attached as an appendix.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: Robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>IRPW – Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is the independent body established by the Welsh Government to determine the level of Local Authority payments to Members.</p> <p>Determinations - the decisions which the IRPW makes</p> <p>Basic Salary – the salary or allowance which the IRPW determines should be paid to each Member of the Council which for 2017/18 is £13,400. For 2018/19, £13,600 is proposed.</p> <p>Senior Salary - a senior salary is payable to a Councillor with special responsibility such as the Leader, Deputy Leader, Cabinet Members, Committee Chairs and the leader of the largest opposition group (a Group B Council such as Flintshire may pay up to 18 senior salaries).</p> <p>Civic Salaries - these are the payments made to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council</p>