

CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 20 th March 2024
Report Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report, February 2024
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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.

It publishes a draft report for consultation each year in the autumn before publishing its final report in February.

On the 28th of February 2024, the IRPW published its Annual Report for 2024/25. There were no changes to the proposals included in its draft report which was considered by this Committee at its meeting in November 2023.

The IRPW determinations will therefore be implemented from 1 April 2024.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee notes the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their Annual Report for 2024/25.
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REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DETAILING THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) 2023/24
1.01	The IRPW produces an annual report that sets out what it has decided the rates of payment to Members and co-opted members of Local Authorities in Wales should be for the following year. These are called Determinations.

1.02	<p>A draft Annual Report is sent by the IRPW to Local Authorities in Wales during the autumn each year requesting feedback on their proposals. A report was brought before this Committee's November (2023) meeting, and is included as Appendix 2. Following the meeting, feedback was submitted to the IRPW by the Democratic Services Manager.</p>
1.03	<p>The IRPW is required to take into account any representations which it receives on the draft report before issuing its final version of the report in February.</p>
1.04	<p>The final Annual Report has now been issued by the IRPW and is included as Appendix 1.</p> <p>There are no material changes to the proposals in respect of the IRPW's determinations included in their draft report that the Committee considered in November 2023.</p> <p>This means the basic salary in 2024/25 for elected members of principal Councils shall be increased to £18,666 with effect from 1st April 2024.</p> <p>Increases have also been made for Cabinet Members, Council Leaders and their deputies. These are summarised in Para. 1.06.</p>
1.05	<p>The Panel have introduced a new, hourly rate of payment for co-opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities. They have retained the half-day and full-day payments. There are no changes to the rates of remuneration.</p> <p>The Panel have determined that it is for the relevant officer at each authority to decide the appropriate rate to apply. Work will be undertaken over the coming months to better understand the implications of this change. Until this is completed, there are no proposals to change the current method of remunerating Flintshire County Council co-opted members.</p>
1.06	<p>After reviewing the evidence and data that the Panel use when making their determinations, they have confirmed that they will continue to align levels of remuneration with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office of National Statistics.</p> <p>The Panel continue to base the basic Members salary on the full-time equivalent of 3 days a week. Payments to Cabinet Members, including the Leader and any Deputy/ies are based on the full-time equivalent of 5 days a week.</p> <p>The table below shows the 2023 IRPW determined salary levels and the confirmed levels for 2024.</p> <p>All salaries include the basic salary. (Determinations 1 and 2).</p>

Position	Current, 2023 IRPW Determination	Confirmed, 2024 IRPW Determination
Member of Council	£17,600	£18,666
Committee Chair (where remunerated)	£26,400	£27,999
Leader of largest Opposition Party	£26,400	£27,999
Chair of Council	£26,400	£27,999
Vice-Chair of Council	£21,340	£22,406
Leader	£59,400	£62,998
Deputy Leader	£41,580	£44,099
Cabinet Member	£35,640	£37,799
Presiding Member*	£26,400	£27,999
Deputy Presiding Member*	£17,600	£18,666
<p>The increases will apply from 1st April 2024, and equate to an uplift of 6.05%.</p> <p>* Flintshire County Council doesn't have either of these posts.</p>		
1.07	<p>Any member or co-opted member may give notice in writing to the proper officer of the authority that they elect to forgo any part of their entitlement to a payment under the determination of the Panel for that particular year (as relating to the authority).</p> <p>This must be their own personal choice and cannot be influenced by other individuals or political groups.</p>	

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>If all the increases are accepted as per the IRPW report and no members forgo any part of their entitlement to a payment, there will be a budget impact of £88,921 (exc. Employer National Insurance and Pension Contributions) for 2024-25. This has not changed since the report was considered in November 2023.</p>

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The IRPW consulted on its Annual Report with all County Councils in Wales about their proposals in October 2023. The Council provided feedback in November 2023.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	The decision to increase Member Salaries is made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, not Flintshire County Council.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	<p>Appendix 1: Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report, February 2024.</p> <p>Appendix 2: Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) draft Annual Report 2024/2025</p>

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>The background paper to this report is the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report, attached as an appendix.</p> <p>Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Services Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: Steven.Goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) – 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. For 2024/25 this will be £17,600.</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>