

CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 14 October 2020
Report Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report for 2021/22
Report Author	Head of Democratic Services
Type of Report	Operational

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 28th September, requesting comments to be made by no later than the 23rd November 2020.

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 2021/22 the following changes are proposed:

'The Basic salary in 2021/22 for elected members of principal councils shall be £14,368 with effect from 1 April 2021.' This is an increase of £150 on the 2020/21 level. An increase of 1.06% is also proposed for senior and civic salaries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers and comments on the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for 2021/22.
2	That the Head of Democratic Services 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 2021/22
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 for the following year.
1.02	For 2021/22, the IRPW has made 48 Determinations, 24 of which are directly relevant to Flintshire County Council (the other determinations relate to Community and Town Councils , Fire & Rescue and National Park Authorities) The Panel's Determinations for 2021/22 are listed in Annex 1 on page 51 of the attached IRPW report.
1.03	There is a slight change proposed to the basic salary of 1.06% which means £150 on each basic salary: a rise from £14,218 to £14368. (Determination 1) To set this determination in context, the IRPW have produced analyses of basic members' salaries and alternative comparators between 2010 and 2020 and made the point 'that backbench (council) members' salaries have fallen significantly behind by any reasonable measure of inflation'.
1.04	An increase of 1.06% is also proposed for each senior or civic salary which the Council has. Senior salaries are paid to Cabinet members, the leader of the largest opposition group and most committee chairs. Civic salaries are payable to the Chair and Vice-chair of Council.
1.05	The IRPW have reaffirmed their previous determinations that recipients of Bands 1 or 2 salaries cannot receive a salary from a Fire & Rescue Authority to which they are appointed or from a community or town council of which they are a member. However, they can claim for travel, subsistence and reimbursement of costs of care.
1.06	Determinations 9 and 10 deal with necessary support, including 'adequate telephone, email and internet facilities giving electronic access to appropriate information' should be made, without cost to the individual member. A separate report on Member IT provision is to be considered at this meeting.
1.07	The previous entitlement to retain salaries during family absence is reaffirmed(determinations 13 -18)
1.08	The IRPW have previously expressed their concerns at the low take up of contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance. Flintshire supported the principle of such provision in the response to the 20/21 report. The IRPW published a supplementary report on this issue last summer. Flintshire have previously agreed that any payments made under this provision would not identify the individual who had claimed them. Instead, we would show a combined figure for all claims.

1.09	The entitlement for eligible elected members to join the Local Government Pension Scheme is reaffirmed (Determination 12)
2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	Budget provision for Members' salaries will need to be increased by £150 per councillor, plus any on-costs which apply (national insurance). An increase of 1.06% will also be sought for each senior and civic salary. A pressure bid for has already been made.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	This report is in response to external consultation.

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 Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. Appendix 2: IRPW Draft Annual for 2021/22

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

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) - body established by the Welsh Government to determine the level of Local Authority payments to Members. Determinations - the decisions which the IRPW makes Basic Salary – the salary or allowance which the IRPW determines should be paid to each Member of the Council which for 2020/21 is £14,218. 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).

	Civic Salaries - these are the payments made to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council.
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