

## CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	Wednesday, 17 November 2021
<b>Report Subject</b>	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW)
<b>Report Author</b>	Head of Democratic Services

### 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.

Established by the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the IRPW is independent of local authorities. It has emphasised from its inception that:

*“Local democracy and governance of public services is not cost free and need to be valued if we are to enable everyone to participate. Levels of remuneration need to be set at a level sufficient to encourage a diversity of willing and able people to undertake local governance through elected, appointed or co-opted roles. “*

The draft Annual Report is sent by the IRPW to County Councils each year. This year, it did so on the 29th September, requesting comments to be made by no later than the 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The IRPW is required to take into account any representations which it receives on the draft before issuing its final version of the report in February.

The IRPW says an increase is needed because basic salaries and other payments to councillors have fallen behind measures of inflation and other possible comparators such as the Retail Prices Index, Consumer Prices Index, NJC (public sector employees), Members of Senedd Cymru, and MPs and also the Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings (ASHE). For 2022/3, the following changes are proposed:

The basic salary in 2021/22 for elected members of principal Councils shall be £16,800 with effect from 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Increases are also proposed for Cabinet Members, Council Leaders and their deputies.

## 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 2022/23.
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

<b>1.00</b>	<b>DETAILING THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) 2022/23</b>																
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 2022/23, the Panel have made 52 determinations, 30 of which relate specifically to principal Councils, of which Flintshire is one. Seven relate to National Park Authorities, seven to Fire & Rescue Authorities and the remainder to Community and Town Councils.																
1.03	<p>In their report (which is attached as an appendix) , the Panel states</p> <p>“Since 2009, remuneration of elected members of local government in Wales has not kept pace with measures of inflation or other possible comparators. These include Retail Prices Index, Consumer Prices Index, NJC (public sector employees), National Living Wage (NLW), <a href="#">the Living Wage Foundation’s Living Wage (LWF) rates</a>, Members of Senedd Cymru, and MPs and also the Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings (ASHE).”</p> <p>It is therefore proposing increases that will narrow the gap.</p> <p>The table below shows the 2021 IRPW determined salary levels and the proposed levels for 2022. Flintshire Members are actually on a variety of different salaries, as Members have not accepted increases payable in 2020 or 2021. This is a matter of personal conscience, and so it would be inappropriate to comment further.</p> <p>All salaries include the basic Member salary. (Determinations 1- 4 and 7)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Position</th> <th>Current, 2021 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Proposed, 2022 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Amount of increase proposed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member of Council</td> <td>£14,368</td> <td>£16,800</td> <td>£ 2,432</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chair</td> <td>£23,161</td> <td>£25,593</td> <td>£ 2,432</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leader of largest Opposition Party</td> <td>£23,161</td> <td>£25,593</td> <td>£ 2,432</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Position	Current, 2021 IRPW Determination	Proposed, 2022 IRPW Determination	Amount of increase proposed	Member of Council	£14,368	£16,800	£ 2,432	Committee Chair	£23,161	£25,593	£ 2,432	Leader of largest Opposition Party	£23,161	£25,593	£ 2,432
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	Chair of Council	£23,161	£25,593	£ 2,432
	Vice-Chair of Council	£18,108	£20,540	£ 2,432
	Cabinet Member	£30,773	£34,020	£ 3,247
	Deputy Leader	£35,773	£39,690	£ 3,917
	Leader	£49,974	£56,700	£ 6,726
	These increases will apply from 9 <sup>th</sup> May 2022.			
1.04	The Welsh Government have now confirmed the number of Members for the 'new' Council to be elected in May 2022. Therefore, a pressure bid based on 67 Members, and the increases for Cabinet Members, Leaders and Deputies has been made.  The pressure bid amounts to £169,538.			
1.05	Determinations 5 and 6 relate to payments to Presiding members and deputies – which do not apply in Flintshire.			
1.06	Determinations 8 and 9 reiterate previous determinations which preclude Members in receipt of a Band 1 or 2 senior salary (Leaders, deputies and Cabinet Members) from receiving a salary from the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority (if appointed; Flintshire have never done this) or a payment, other than expenses, from any Community or Town Council of which they are a member.			
1.07	Determinations 10 and 11 relate to additional support being provided to Members. Flintshire offers i pads and lap top computers to all elected Members. We also offer a broadband allowance of up to £30 per month to Members who wish to claim. In addition, we have acknowledged that a small number of Members who, despite having the maximum broadband provision in their area, still do not get sufficient bandwidth. This has caused connectivity problems and resultant frustration for those Members. In such circumstances, 'a MiFi' device is provided. This has a cost of around £30 per month, offset against a Member's £30 broadband allowance.			
1.08	Determination 12 provides principal councils with the ability to apply to the Panel for specific or additional salaries' that do not fall within the current remuneration framework'. It should be noted that the Panel have previously informed Flintshire that the Council's decision to make a payment equivalent to Band 3 (Committee chairs) to the Chair of the Clwyd Pension Fund Committee is not within their remit. Therefore, whilst payment is made to that Chair, this is through the Clwyd Pension Fund itself.			
1.09	The Local Government & Elections Act 2021) has introduced the concept of 'assistants to the executive'. When Council considered the final draft of the then Local Government & Elections Bill, in January 2020, this was supported in principle, recognising the benefits of providing for career progression and potentially promoting diversity and enabling job sharing for Leaders and Cabinet Members.			

	<p>The assistants to the executive would be elected members who are appointed by the Leader of the Council, who would be able to decide on the number of appointments, their duration and their responsibilities</p> <p>As these posts are new, the Panel has determined that it will decide, on a case by case basis, the appropriate senior salary, if any for assistants to the executive. (Determination 13).</p>																				
1.10	Determinations 14 and 14 relate to Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committees, and thus do not currently apply to Flintshire.																				
1.11	Determination 16 reiterates previous decisions made by the Panel to enable Members to join the Local Government Pension Scheme.																				
1.12	Determinations 1722 deal with the rights of Members to take 'family absence'.																				
1.13	Determinations 23- 29 relate to National Park Authorities, which do not apply to Flintshire.																				
1.14	<p>Determinations 30-36 relate to Fire &amp; Rescue Authorities, where the increases are shown on the table below</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Position</th> <th>Current, 2021 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Proposed, 2022 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Amount of increase proposed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member</td> <td>£2,026</td> <td>£2,369</td> <td>£343</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chair</td> <td>£10,818</td> <td>£11,612</td> <td>£794</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice-Chair</td> <td>£5,765</td> <td>£6,109</td> <td>£344</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chair</td> <td>£5,765</td> <td>£6,109</td> <td>£344</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Flintshire nominates six members of the North Wales Fire &amp; Rescue Authority.</p>	Position	Current, 2021 IRPW Determination	Proposed, 2022 IRPW Determination	Amount of increase proposed	Member	£2,026	£2,369	£343	Chair	£10,818	£11,612	£794	Vice-Chair	£5,765	£6,109	£344	Committee Chair	£5,765	£6,109	£344
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1.15	Determinations 37 – 42 relate to co-opted Members. No increase on the current levels of payment is proposed for 2022.																				
1.16	Determination 43 relates to 'Contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance', which Flintshire has always supported in principle.																				
1.17	Determinations 44- 51 relate to Community and Town Councils.																				
1.18	<p>The IRPW Draft report for 2022 was considered by Group leaders at a meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> October. Following extensive discussion, the collective view of Group Leaders was that:</p> <p>1) It is disappointing that the IRPW have allowed the situation to develop that such a large increase in Members' salaries was now necessary</p>																				

	2) We believe that the increase should not be in one tranche, but incrementally over the life of the next council also ensuring that those increments take into account levels of inflation prevailing at the time
1.19	This year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales held three consultation meetings with Chairs and Heads of Democratic Services. Cllr Phillips and the Head of Democratic Services attended the meeting held on 2 <sup>nd</sup> November. They made preliminary observations on the draft report, informed by the comments from Group Leaders on 28 <sup>th</sup> October
1.20	The Committee is invited to consider, and comment on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report and its Determinations for 2022. The consultation period ends on Friday, 26 <sup>th</sup> November.

<b>2.00</b>	<b>RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS</b>
2.01	A pressure bid based on 67 Members, and the increases for Cabinet Members, Leaders and Deputies has been made.  The pressure bid amounts to £169,538.

<b>3.00</b>	<b>CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT</b>
3.01	Group Leaders have been consulted on this report, at their meeting on 28 <sup>th</sup> October.

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

<b>5.00</b>	<b>APPENDICES</b>
5.01	Appendix 1 - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report Appendix 2 - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Letter Appendix 3 – Welsh version Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Letter

<b>6.00</b>	<b>LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS</b>
6.01	The background paper to this report is the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft report, attached as an appendix.  <b>Contact Officer:</b> Robert Robins, Head of Democratic Services <b>Telephone:</b> 01352 702320 <b>E-mail:</b> <a href="mailto:robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk">robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk</a>

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