

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DATE: TUESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2013

REPORT BY: DEMOCRACY & GOVERNANCE MANAGER

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013/14 OF THE
INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR
WALES

1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.01 To inform County Council of the annual report issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) for 2013/14.

2.00 BACKGROUND

2.01 At its meeting on the 11 September 2012 County Council determined its response to consultation by the IRPW on its draft annual report for 2013/14. Those views were communicated to the IRPW on the 25 September and are attached as appendix 1 to this report.

2.02 On the 19 December 2012 the IRPW issued the final version of its annual report for 2013/14. Copies of that report, together with the covering letter from the chair of the IRPW have been placed in Member Services and in the political group rooms. Councils must implement the report from the date of their annual meetings.

2.03 The covering letter explains that the final version of the report reflects the outcome of careful consideration given to the representations received on the draft report which has resulted in a number of changes to proposals that were in that draft report. The most obvious example of change is not to implement a proposal in the draft report that if a Council makes a senior salary available to the chair of an Overview & Scrutiny Committee it must do so for all such chairs.

3.00 CONSIDERATIONS

3.01 The Panel has decided that the amounts of what it refers to as "basic salaries" and "senior salaries" will remain the same for 2013/14. When consulted on the draft report the Council recognised that in the current economic climate it was not appropriate to increase these amounts. The report requires that a senior salary of £21,910 be paid to the Leader of the largest opposition group provided that group comprises at least 10% of the Council membership. As this figure includes the basic salary of £13,175 in effect the Leader of the largest

opposition group will in future receive a special responsibility allowance of £8,735. This proposal was in the draft report and in response to consultation the Council believed that if this was imposed then the limit on the number of senior salaries should be increased from the current limit of 18. There has however, been no change to this limit in the final version of the report. As the Council currently pays 18 senior salaries, at its annual meeting it will have to decide which posts no longer receive such a payment so as to enable the required payment to the Leader of the largest opposition group.

- 3.02 The Council currently pays a mileage rate of 40p per mile (up to 10,000 miles a year) to Members and co-opted members when using their own vehicle to travel to meetings and on other approved duties. The annual report withdraws the ability for Councils to pay less than 45p per mile and at the annual meeting the Council's schedule of member remuneration will have to be amended to increase this rate to 45p per mile.
- 3.03 The annual report has recognised that there is a developing pattern of joint scrutiny and other collaborative arrangements and it will keep this under review in relation to the implications for the remuneration framework. The annual report does however determine that where a Council enters into such joint arrangements the senior salary (if paid) to the chair of such a joint committee should be paid by the Council of which the chair is a member. As this will count against that Council's maximum in practice this is likely to lead to few such payments being made as most Councils, like Flintshire, will have utilised to the maximum their senior salaries.
- 3.04 In relation to co-opted members the annual report makes two changes to the current arrangements. Firstly, it is now recognised that time spent on attending authorised training events, conferences and pre-meetings with officers qualify for payment to a co-optee of the co-optees' allowance. At present co-optees allowance can only be paid for attendance at committee meetings. This change is to be welcomed and is one that the Council suggested when responding to consultation on the draft report. Secondly, the annual report removes the limit of 10 days which currently is the maximum number of days for which a co-opted member may be paid in any one year. Instead from the annual meeting the Council may decide on the maximum number of days for which a co-opted member should receive payment in any one year.
- 3.05 The annual report contains a chapter relating to payments to members of Town & Community Councils. The IRPW has determined that such Councils should be free to make various types of payment to their members if they wish to do so. The County Council welcomed this proposal when responding to the draft report.

4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.01 To note the contents of the annual report and the decisions that will need to be made at the Council's annual meeting.

5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.01 It is estimated these could be £6,000 p.a.

6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT

6.01 None as a result of this report.

7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

7.01 None as a result of this report.

8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.01 None as a result of this report.

9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.01 None as a result of this report.

10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED

10.01 None as a result of this report.

11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN

11.01 None as a result of this report.

12.00 APPENDICES

12.01 Appendix 1 – The Council's response to consultation.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Annual report for 2013/14 of the IRPW

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