

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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| Date of Meeting | Wednesday, 19 October 2016 |
| Report Subject | Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report for 2017/18 |
| Report Author | Chief Officer (Governance) |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determines the rates of payment which are made to elected and co-opted members of Welsh Local Authorities for the following municipal year. The IRPW is required to send the draft Annual Report to County Councils, which this year it did on the 3rd of October, requesting comments to be made by no later than 28th of November 2016.

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. In 2017/18 the following changes are proposed:

- Basic salaries a “very modest increase of 0.75% to the basic salary” for Councillors. This is the first increase for 3 years and “follows the slight easing of restraint in the pay of public sector employees”. It means a £100 increase in the basic salary for Councillors to £13,400.
- Senior salaries – no increase is proposed for senior salaries but postholders will receive the increase in the basic salary being paid to all Councillors.
- Sickness absence for senior salary holders – this is a proposal in response to feedback from Members and Local Authorities. The approach will operate in a similar way to the current “family absence” provisions.
- Care allowances. Following concern at the low take up, the IRPW is proposing to re-name “care allowances” as “reimbursement of costs of care” to seek to separate it from being perceived as part of an individual councillor’s salary or allowances. The IRPW also proposes changing the way such payments are published by allowing Councils to either :
 1. Publish the details of the amounts reimbursed to named Members or
 2. To the total amount reimbursed by the Authority during the year but not attributed to any named Member

RECOMMENDATIONS

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| 1. | To consider and comment on the determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for the 2017/18 municipal year. |
| | To indicate whether or not the following are supported: (a) Increase in the basic salary or allowance payable to all elected Members from £13,300 to £13,400. (b) The proposal to allow for payments during the sickness absence of senior salary holders (on the same basis as the current Family Absence Regulations) (c) The proposal to rename 'care allowances' to 'reimbursements of costs of care' together with the revised approach to publishing details thereof. |
| 2. | To authorise the Chief Officer (Governance) 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

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| 1.00 | DETAILING THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2017/18 |
| 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 rates of payment to Members and Co-optees of the Local Authorities. |
| 1.02 | For 2017/18, the IRPW has made 51 Determinations, 13 of which are directly relevant to Flintshire County Council and 8 which relate to Town and Community Councils. (The other Determinations relate to Fire & Rescue and National Park Authorities) The Panel's Determinations for 2017/18 are located at Annex 1 on page 56 of the report. |
| 1.03 | There is a slight change proposed for the basic salary of 0.75% which equates to £100 on each basic salary, which increases from £13,300 to £13,400. (Determination 1) |
| 1.04 | No increase is proposed for senior salary holders but the postholders will receive the £100 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 the Council) are increased by £100 (being the increase payable to all Councillors). (Determination 3) |

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| | Flintshire has previously decided to pay Band B (which was changed to Level 2 for 2016/17 and subsequent years) which is £21,600 for the Chair and £16,100 for the Vice Chair respectively. At the next annual Meeting, on 23 rd may 2017, the Council will be requested to make a decision on the level of payment made to the Chair and Vice-chair for the ensuing municipal year. |
| 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 | A new provision sickness absence for senior salary holders has been introduced. This is proposed in response to feedback from Members and Authorities. It will operate in a similar way to the current “family absence” provisions. (Determinations 18 - 23) |
| 1.09 | Following concern at the low level of take up, the IRPW is proposing to re-name “care allowances” as “reimbursement of costs of care” to seek to separate it from being perceived as part of an individual councillor’s salary or allowances. The IRPW also proposes changing the way such payments are published by allowing Councils to either : Publish the details of the amounts reimbursed to named Members <i>or</i> the total amount reimbursed by the Authority during the year but not attributed to any named Member.(Determination 43) |

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| 2.00 | RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS |
| 2.01 | The Budget provision required for payment of Members’ Allowances in 2017/18 will need to be increased by £100 per Councillor, resulting in an increase in £7,000 in the Members’ Allowances Budget. This has already been flagged for inclusion within the draft Budget for next year. |

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| 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 IRPW report in advance. |

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

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| 5.00 | APPENDICES |
| 5.01 | The IRPW draft report for 2017/18 is attached as Appendix 1 The letter from the IRPW is attached as Appendix 2 |

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| 6.00 | LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS |
| 6.01 | The background document to this report is the draft IRPW report which is attached as an Appendix. Contact Officer: Robert Robins, Member Engagement Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: robert.robins@flintshire.gov.uk |

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| 7.00 | GLOSSARY OF TERMS |
| 7.01 | 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. Determinations – The decisions which the IRPW makes Municipal Year - The “Council Year” which runs from one Annual Meeting (which is held in May to the next) Basic Salary – The salary or allowance which the IRPW determines is paid to each member of the Council, which for 2016/17 is £13,300. For 2017/18 £13,400 is proposed. 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. |