

Public Document Pack

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Prif Swyddog (Llywodraethu)



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To: Cllr Robert Davies (Chair)

Councillors: Gillian Brockley, Steve Copple, Ian Hodge, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Linda Thew, Arnold Woolley and Antony Wren

14 March 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

NOTICE OF HYBRID MEETING
CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 2024 at 2.00 PM

Yours faithfully

Steven Goodrum
Democratic Services Manager

Please note: Attendance at this meeting is either in person in the Delyn Committee Room, Flintshire County Council, County Hall, Mold, Flintshire or on a virtual basis.

The meeting will be live streamed onto the Council's website. The live streaming will stop when any confidential items are considered. A recording of the meeting will also be available, shortly after the meeting at <https://flintshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

If you have any queries regarding this, please contact a member of the Democratic Services Team on 01352 702345.

A G E N D A

1 APOLOGIES

Purpose: To receive any apologies.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Purpose: To receive any Declarations and advise Members accordingly.

3 MINUTES (Pages 3 - 10)

Purpose: To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2024.

4 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 11 - 16)

Purpose: To agree the items of business to be discussed at future meetings.

5 MEMBER WORKSHOPS BRIEFINGS AND SEMINARS UPDATE (Pages 17 - 30)

Purpose: To provide Members with an update on engagement events held since the last report.

6 INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) ANNUAL REPORT, FEBRUARY 2024 (Pages 31 - 64)

Purpose: To provide details of the final annual report from the IRPW for 2024-25.

Please note that there may be a 10 minute adjournment of this meeting if it lasts longer than two hours

CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE **24 JANUARY 2024**

Minutes of the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee of Flintshire County Council held as a remote attendance meeting on Wednesday, 24 January 2024

PRESENT: Councillor Rob Davies (Chair)

Councillors: Gillian Brockley, Steve Cople, Ian Hodge, Alasdair Ibbotson, Paul Johnson, Gina Maddison, Roz Mansell, Ted Palmer, Andrew Parkhurst, Michelle Perfect, Vicky Perfect, Linda Thew Arnold Woolley and Antony Wren

SUBSTITUTION: Councillor Bernie Attridge (for Councillor Ian Hodge)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Jean Davies

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Officer (Governance), Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Attridge declared a personal interest as his wife and two daughters worked for the Authority in social care.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst declared a personal interest as his wife worked as a lunchtime supervisor in the local school.

Councillor Ted Palmer declared a personal interest as his partner and daughter both worked for the Authority.

Councillor Roz Mansell declared a personal interest as her sister worked for Streetscene.

Councillor Gillian Brockley declared a personal interest as her brother worked for the Authority.

Councillor Palmer asked if this personal interest was declared on the Registration of Interest form when Councillors were first appointed, would it still need to be declared. In response the Chief Officer (Governance) clarified that this form did not include a question on whether a family member worked for the County Council. This was a prescribed form but for the vast majority it had no impact on individuals or the organisation. He provided information on the potential events where this would be required which was why it was included within the Code and that the role of the partners of those Members who had declared an interest, had not impinged on their role as a Councillor.

21. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2023 were presented for approval.

Matters Arising

Councillor Antony Wren asked for the following amendments to be made:

Page 5, paragraph 4 –change the word basis to basic.

Page 7, first paragraph – change the word employees to employers.

Page 8 Q3 Councillor Paul Johnson's name was spelt incorrectly.

Councillor Wren asked for an updated on the Cycle to Work Scheme. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to circulate the information following the meeting.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst asked for an update on the consultation on Allowances for all elected and co-opted Members. The Democratic Services Manager understood that this had been completed but agreed to check and come back.

Subject to the above amendments the minutes were moved as a correct record by Councillor Ted Palmer and seconded by Councillor Linda Thew.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the amendments the minutes be approved as a correct record.

22. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Forward Work Programme for consideration and provided information on the regular items which were included together with those scheduled for the forthcoming meetings in March and June. Moving forward it was suggested that an action tracking report be included, similar to other committees to assist committee members.

The recommendations within the report were approved as moved by Councillor Paul Johnson and seconded by Councillor Ted Palmer .

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee considered the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend, as necessary.
- (b) That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arose.

23. ROLLING REVIEW OF THE MEMBERS CODE OF CONDUCT

In presenting the report the Chief Officer (Governance) commented that the Penn Review had recommended that Councils across Wales considered whether they should harmonise the level that Members were required to declare around the receipt of gifts and hospitality. It was explained that currently Councils chose their own figures which varied from £0 up to £50 and that following a discussion at the National Forum of Standards Committee Chairs, it was agreed that they would seek to harmonise the levels around the value of £25. The Forum was not a decision-making body and the Council was required to decide whether or not to formally adopt that recommended figure. This had been considered by the Standards Committee who were happy to do accept this figure. A decision was required by this committee prior to it being presented to Full Council.

In response to a question from Councillor Bernie Attridge on the number of declarations made by Members, the Chief Officer (Governance) confirmed that he had received two or three in the last 12 months. He explained that Richard Penn was appointed by Welsh Government (WG) to review the operation of the Ethical Framework and made the recommendation to seek to harmonise the figure and enable consistency across Wales.

In response to a clarification question from Councillor Gillian Brockley around the receipt of multiple gifts from the same source, the Chief Officer referred to paragraph 17.2 of the Code which highlighted the current value. This related to a member receiving a series of gifts or hospitality which were below the threshold to declare but which could over time mount up.

Councillor Paul Johnson asked why councillors would accept any gift as they were being paid to do a job and was quite prepared to keep the level at £10.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst commented that this had been discussed by the Standards Committee and he felt that the £25 figure with the £100 limit was not out of kilter given the increases in inflation since the previous figure of £10 was applied. He felt that it was important if Members were offered or received gifts of any amount then these should be disclosed and that a reminder be sent to Members of the procedures to ensure that this Policy was fully complied with.

The Chief Officer (Governance) referred to the paragraph within the Code which stated that Members must reject any gift or hospitality whatever the value if it appeared to place them under any obligation.

Councillor Bernie Attridge wished to move that the amount remained the same at £10 and that it should be declared. Members had to be sure that they did not accept anything which could place them in a position.

The Chief Officer (Governance) explained that Councillor Attridge had moved a motion not to follow the officer recommendation for the amount to stay the same.

Councillor Paul Johnson seconded this motion.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee agreed that the value which gifts or hospitality had to be registered remained the same at £10.

24. ROLLING REVIEW OF THE EMPLOYEES CODE OF CONDUCT

In presenting the Chief Officer (Governance) explained that the Codes and Protocols within the Constitution were continually reviewed to ensure that they were up to date and relevant. This document formed part of the Employees Contract of Employment and would be enforced through disciplinary action. It was explained that the statutory Code of Conduct for employees was different to the Members Code of Conduct. The Chief Officer then referred to the report and clarified that the text in bold was the statutory text with the non-bold text referring to extra information or requirements included by County Council over the years. The Code had been reviewed with a number of changes recommended following debate by the Standards Committee and those were summarised at point 1.04 of the report. Information was provided on the changes and additions which related to behaviour, standing for election, public statements criticising the Authority, use of IT and dress code which had also been included.

In response to a question from Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson on section 2.3 of the proposed code the Chief Officer (Governance) suggested the following wording be included

“Close personal familiarity between employees and individual councillors in the workplace could damage the relationship and prove embarrassing for other employees.” It was suggested that further wording be included for when Councillors and employees were in a relationship stating that it was incumbent upon the employee to declare that to their line manager.

In response to Councillor Ibbotson’s second point concerning section 5.01, the Chief Officer felt it was appropriate to fully debate all of the issues and comments that members had. It was confirmed that the comments from this committee would be presented to full Council. He also confirmed that if there were any concerns or the need to double check with committee members then this would be carried out by email to ensure all comments were included prior to the finalisation of the report.

In response to a question from Councillor Bernie Attridge on the reporting mechanism for the Officer Code of Conduct, the Chief Officer confirmed that paragraph 8 of the Code required officers to declare an interest where their private lives could conflict with their public duty. He outlined the differences between the Officer’s Code and Members Code and explained how this was covered within paragraph 8. This was about the potential in case the need arose.

Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson moved the recommendation with a small change “ that the Committee **note** the changes being recommended by the Standards Committee to Full Council for adoption.”

The Chief Officer suggested that this was changed following the meeting to incorporate the changes suggested around paragraph 2.3 and 5.1.

The recommendations within the report were approved as moved by Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson and seconded by Councillor Antony Wren .

RESOLVED:

That the Committee note the changes being recommended by the Standards Committee to Full Council for adoption.

25. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE SIZES

In presenting the report the Chief Officer (Governance) referred to the comments made around committee sizes at the Annual Meeting of Full Council last year. Information was provided on the work which had been undertaken and committee were referred to the table at paragraph 1.06 of the report. The Chief Officer outlined his rationale and the difficulties that he had encountered trying to ensure that all groups were represented. An outline was provided of the complexities of increasing or decreasing the seats on committees whilst ensuring that they were compliant with the Political Balance Rules. It was also explained that some committees, such as Audit & Governance Committee, Planning Committee and Standards had been ruled out from this as the membership for these was different.

Councillor Bernie Attridge commented that he would vote for this to remain the same.

Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson referred to the illustration and wondered if it would assist if the Labour party lost one seat on the Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee for which it had 6 seats, to be compensated by gaining a seat on the Audit & Governance Committee, where the Labour group had two seats and the Independent Group had 3. This would ensure that there were no changes in the Labour Group's allocation and remove the majority on any committee with the seat on Community & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee becoming available to compensate the group which would lose a seat on Audit & Governance Committee

In response the Chief Officer commented that this was lawful and that he could not see an issue with it. If Members wished to reduce the size to 11 then he was happy to go away and work on this. He felt that the current system worked because of the way members chose to apply the rules with seats allocated to people who were interested in the work of a specific committee. This was why Members were happy with the current situation.

Councillor Paul Johnson referred felt the way that the seats were awarded on political balance worked well and he could see no reason to change the existing status quo.

Councillor Arnold Woolley also felt that there was no need to change the present system as it worked well.

Councillor Ted Palmer moved the recommendation which was seconded by Councillor Paul Johnson

RESOLVED:

That committee sizes remained as they were.

26. MEMBER WORKSHOPS BRIEFINGS AND SEMINARS UPDATE

The Democratic Services Manager presented the report and provided an overview of the training and development plan for Members which was based on the Statutory and Non- Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales, with Appendix 1 highlighting relevant information on this. He explained that the information had been split into two sections with mandatory training relative to the role of a Councillor on Planning and Licensing Committees, with follow up reports presented to committee around attendance at these mandatory training sessions. The majority of training sessions would be delivered in house and would have the option to be held in person and remotely. The WLGA also provided remote sessions for Members together with remote sessions provided by Human Resources for Members to complete at their leisure on topics such as Cyber Ninja training.

The Chief Officer (Governance) confirmed that the list for mandatory sessions was based around the modules which employees were required to undertake. It was suggested to rename them so Members undertook for example Cyber Security Training and Equalities. Having broader topics could reduce the number which members were required to undertake. He suggested that Carbon Reduction and Environmental Awareness was included which was around ensuring the Council achieving carbon neutrality by 2030. The Council had a Carbon Reduction Policy and Climate Change Committee but this could not be confined to the work of one committee and it was important that all Members were aware of what was required to achieve this.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the Guidance did allow for more sessions to be included.

Councillor Bernie Attridge referred to page 77, Information Technology General, and commented that Planning Committee members had requested extra training on the IT system which all members would benefit from and said that this was a priority. Social Media and Communication had been requested by the Standards Committee and himself. He also wondered if someone from the Ombudsman's Office could attend to provide guidance around what Members were able to share on their private social media pages. He referred to rules and regulations around freedom of speech on comments made by Members of Parliament and Assembly Members which would not be permitted to be made by County Councillors. Clear guidance was required for Social Media and that training was provided by the Ombudsman's Office

The Chief Officer confirmed that he had spoken to the trainers prior to Christmas about Respectful Communication, especially around how to treat people with respect even when you disagree with them. He had chased them again. He referred to the Code of Conduct for Westminster and the Senedd, which were below the standards expected for local councillors and then provided an overview of the reasons for the formation of the Nolan Committee. An outline of the different roles was provided between Members of Parliament, Members of the Senedd and local councillors.

Councillor Alasdair Ibbotson welcomed the proposals put forward by the Chief Officer, especially those around Climate Change. He did however have concerns around the number of training modules listed as mandatory and outlined his reasons for this. He felt it would increase the pressure on councillors who worked and had to request the time to complete the training. He fully appreciated that some of the mandatory training for Planning, for example, were needed but had reservations especially if they were penalised for not attending. He commented that Members could also risk losing the good will of their employer.

The Chief Officer appreciated the perspective provided by Councillor Ibbotson. He felt that moving the topics and combining the training could accommodate those Members with commitments. Looking at the delivery method such as eLearning which could be completed in their own time could assist. He then outlined the suggested themes which could be reduced to 6, Cyber Security, Equalities, Environment & Carbon Reduction, Safeguarding and Modern Slavery, Corporate Parenting which could be included with safeguarding. This left Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse which was mandated by Welsh Government. There was also the Charing Skills Training which would be just for Chairs.

Councillor Andrew Parkhurst shared Councillor Ibbotson's concerns but welcomed the Chief Officer's suggestion around how the courses were delivered. He commented that he had just completed the Cyber Ninja training which he found more convenient than having a 2-hour training session. If these sessions could be delivered along these lines that it would ease the workload. He referred to discussions in relation to Planning specifically for section 106 agreements and asked if this could be included within the modules.

In response the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this would be included in the Planning training.

Councillor Ted Palmer proposed that an item being included for all co-opted lay members to receive training on how the Council operated to enable them to scrutinise at committee.

Councillor Arnold Woolley referred to the Council's Learning Academi which had topics which could be undertaken at home at their own leisure.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this would be included in Appendix 1 under eLearning and would encourage Members to undertake the training available.

Councillor Linda Thew referred to discretionary IT support and would like to see a range of sessions and support to be provided to suit people's needs, online and in person. Councillor Roz Mansell outlined the IT training that she had received when she collected her laptop but had not received any further training since.

The Democratic Services Manager agreed to take these comments on board when decisions were made around the delivery of these sessions.

The Chief Officer (Governance) then summed up the comments made which included:-

- Specific training around the use of the Planning System, software and 106 agreements
- Request that a range of different media, whether face to face or online. Depending on the nature of the training to use face to face and eLearning to assist Members.
- The 5 themes for mandatory training put forward Cyber Security, Equalities, Environment & Carbon Reduction, Safeguarding Modern Slavery and Corporate Parenting, and Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse
- Mandatory training for co-opted members

The recommendations within the report were approved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee agree to categorise the 12 sessions listed in Para. 1.05 as 'mandatory' and the remaining sessions as 'discretionary'.
- (b) That if Members had any suggestions for future development 'topics', they were invited to contact the Democratic Services Manager to discuss them.
- (c) That the Committee receive a quarterly report of attendance at each of the sessions delivered.

27. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

None.

(The meeting started at 2pm and ended at 3.56 pm)

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Chair



CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday 20 th March 2024
Report Subject	Forward Work Programme
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Constitution & Democratic Services Committee fulfils a dual role within the Council. It undertakes the detailed consideration of changes to the constitution ahead of recommendation to Council for adoption and it fulfils the role of the statutory role of democratic services Committee with responsibility for examining the support provided to Councillors.

Having a Forward Work Programme presents an opportunity for Members of the Committee to formulate and influence the future work of the Committee. An effective Forward Work Programme will ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues.

A copy of the draft Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been recently updated.

The Committee is asked to consider, and amend where necessary, the Forward Work Programme for the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme and approve/amend as necessary.
2	That the Democratic Services Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
1.01	<p>The work of the Committee can be defined as having two main areas of responsibility:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The detailed consideration of proposed changes to the constitution prior to them being reported to Council for adoption.2. Statutory role to oversee the role of the Head of Democratic Services to support (non-executive) members and promote scrutiny.
1.02	<p>Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources, but will broadly cover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Reviewing the programme of training and development of Members.2) Considering recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.3) Issues pertaining to the support of Members in carrying out their duties, for example: adoption of parental leave rules, supply of equipment etc.4) Co-ordination of the work programmes of the five Overview and Scrutiny Committees (this is a nominal role only and has not been needed in recent years). <p>Members can also suggest topics for consideration by the Committee. Items can also be referred to the Committee by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Chief Officers.</p>
1.03	<p>Once the Schedule of Meetings has been agreed at the AGM in May, the Forward Work Programme will be updated and brought back to Committee in June.</p>
1.04	<p>Members are encouraged to consider and propose items for inclusion on the FWP, noting the guidance at paragraph 1.05.</p>
1.05	<p>In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?2. Is it an area of major change or risk?3. Are there issues of concern in performance?4. Is there new Government guidance of legislation?5. Is it prompted by the work carried out by Regulators/Internal Audit?6. Is the issue of public or Member concern?

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	None as a result of this report.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
4.01	None as a result of this report.

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Forward Work Programme

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	<p>The Flintshire County Council Constitution</p> <p>The Independent Remuneration for Wales: annual report for 2024 to 2025</p> <p>Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Service Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk</p>

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - the independent body that is responsible for determining the level of payments to elected members of Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities in Wales.

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CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
PROPOSED FWP

Date of meeting	Subject	Purpose of Report	Report Author
Tuesday 11th June 2024 at 2pm	Member Workshops, Briefings and Seminars Update	<p>For the committee to receive a progress report on the Member Development and Engagement events which have taken place or are scheduled.</p> <p>The report will provide details of events which have been held since the last meeting and also outline any that are planned.</p>	Democratic Services Manager
	Diversity in Democracy Action Plan	For the committee to consider, review and update the Council's 'Diversity in Democracy Action Plan'.	Democratic Services Manager
	Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report	The Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report is drafted in consultation with the relevant Committee Chairs. The draft is then submitted to this committee for Member comment before being submitted to Council for formal approval. The Annual Report provides the Council with assurance that the Overview & Scrutiny function is fulfilling its constitutional role.	Democratic Services Manager
	Update on Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales – supporting provisions within the Local Government Act 2000, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 and the	To provide Members with an update on the implementation of the measures outlined in the <i>Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance for Principal Councils in Wales</i> document.	Democratic Services Manager

CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

	<p>Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.</p>		
	<p>Multi-location Meetings</p>	<p>To provide Members with an update from the working group that was set up to review and update the 'interim Multi-Location Meeting Policy' and explore the implications of any changes.</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager</p>



CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 20 March 2024
Report Subject	Member Workshops Briefings and Seminars Update
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It has previously been the practice for this committee to receive a progress report on any Member Development and Engagement events which have taken place.

Following the induction programme last year and the subsequent 'settling in' period, focus will move to developing a training and development schedule for Members.

Delivery of this programme will be reported back to the Committee at regular intervals through the year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That the Committee notes the training programme provided as Appendix 1.
2	That if Members have any suggestions for future development 'topics', they are invited to contact the Democratic Services Manager to discuss them.
3	That the Committee receives a quarterly report of attendance at each of the sessions delivered.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	MEMBER WORKSHOPS, BRIEFINGS AND SEMINARS
1.01	<p>Local authorities are required to provide reasonable training and development opportunities for its members. Following the May 2022 elections, a comprehensive induction programme was provided to new and returning members.</p>
1.02	<p>It has previously been the practice for this committee to receive a progress report on any Member Development and Engagement events which have taken place.</p> <p>An update report of sessions delivered will be brought to the committee on a quarterly basis and will be included within the Committee's Forward Work Programme.</p> <p>This will also reflect details of scheduled sessions ahead of the next update report.</p>
1.03	<p>The induction programme provided new and returning Members with an overview of how the Council operates, including the rules and regulations, the role of elected Members and the role of Officers.</p> <p>The programme was designed to be 'high-level' in order that Members could undertake their role as a Councillor as quickly as possible.</p> <p>The programme will now focus on specific 'themes' and/or topics for Members to receive training on. It is intended that some of the topics covered during the induction programme last year will be revisited, and refresher sessions provided. These are identified in Appendix 1.</p>
1.04	<p>Officers have access to a number of training courses, where some are specific to their individual roles and others that are classed as 'mandatory'.</p> <p>The 'mandatory' courses include Cyber Security; Equality Act 2010; Equality in The Workplace; Hate Crime; Safeguarding Tackling Modern Slavery; Think Before You Click; VAWDASV; and, Welsh Language Awareness.</p> <p>Following consideration of proposals to introduce a similar 'model' for elected Members, the following topics were identified as 'mandatory':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cyber Security• Equalities• Environment & Carbon Reduction• Safeguarding and Modern Slavery• Corporate Parenting• Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse Awareness

1.05	There are certain Committees that require elected Members to have received appropriate training before they are able to sit on them: Planning; Licensing; and Governance & Audit Committee. These are already 'mandatory', as is attending the Code of Conduct session.
1.06	<p>Appendix 1 shows the proposed list of training sessions / workshops that will be made available to Members during 2024.</p> <p>It is split into two sections. Section 1 reflects the sessions / workshops identified as being 'mandatory' and Section 2 those that are 'discretionary'.</p> <p>Each section has been sorted to show courses / sessions that are available on the Council's training platform. Members will be provided with access to the site, meaning the courses / sessions can be taken at a convenient time.</p> <p>There will still be the option for courses / sessions to be delivered as they currently are: a daytime session with attendance in-person, and an evening session where attendance is remote.</p> <p>The list will be used to provide a reporting tool that will be brought to this committee on a quarterly basis for review and consideration. This will provide high level information about attendance at the sessions for monitoring purposes.</p> <p>A training 'brochure' will be developed for Members that provides details of the sessions / courses, including the delivery method, length of session, aims and objectives, and how to book attendance.</p>
1.07	Sessions need to be appropriate and relevant to ensure Members are receiving appropriate training. A ' <i>training needs analysis</i> ' will be undertaken of all Members to ensure any training is relevant to what individual Members want and need, whilst also addressing any skills shortages that may exist across the Council.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Where possible, workshops, seminars and briefings will be offered on more than one occasion, including evening sessions where appropriate.</p> <p>They will be delivered in the most appropriate manner, whether that be in-person, remote or online. The method of delivery will be determined by the topic and who is delivering the session(s).</p> <p>Training sessions will, where possible be provided by the Council's own officers to minimise costs. Where relevant, this will be supplemented by external bodies as required, such as the WLGA. Members will be provided with access to the Council's online training toolkit software.</p> <p>There are some courses that can only be delivered by an external provider and these will attract a cost that will be met from existing budgets.</p>

	Some sessions may be hosted 'remotely' to help mitigate costs.
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3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
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3.01	<p>This report has been prepared to consult the Members of this Committee on any training items that it feels may be needed in the coming year.</p> <p>The Chief Officer Team have been consulted on topics for inclusion relevant to specific portfolios / services.</p> <p>A 'Training Needs Analysis' will then be undertaken during Spring 2024 with elected Members to determine topics for training / awareness / information sessions. These will be reported to this committee in March.</p>
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4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
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4.01	<p>The Member Development Programme will be designed to mitigate risk by providing councillors with the knowledge and skills to carry out their roles effectively.</p> <p>Any potential risks will be included in the scoping for the training sessions.</p>
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5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	Appendix 1 – Draft Councillor Development Plan 2024
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	None.
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7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
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7.01	<p>Contact Officer: Steven Goodrum, Democratic Service Manager Telephone: 01352 702320 E-mail: steven.goodrum@flintshire.gov.uk</p>
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8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
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8.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WLGA – Welsh Local Government Association.
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Appendix 1: Proposed content for inclusion on a Schedule of Member Development Sessions

Section 1: Topics deemed 'Mandatory'

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method	Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates	
Constitution, Code of Conduct, the Flintshire Standard and Group leader roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Knowledge Ethics 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining 'the rules' so that all Members are reminded of them. 	All Members	Induction following CC elections then a refresher after 2 years.
Chairing Effective Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills 	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective chairing and recognition of the chair's role. 	Chairs and Vice-Chairs of all Committees. Also relevant for any Member interested in becoming a Chair and/or Vice-Chair.	Delivered September 2023. To be offered again later in 2024 (after AGM).
Planning Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical Organisational Knowledge 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the Members of the Planning Committee in determining planning applications. 	Members of the Planning Committee. Only those who have been trained are eligible to be members of this committee.	Induction following CC elections then periodic refreshers as necessary. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fri- 24-May Mon-3-June

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
Licensing Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for Members of the Licensing committee and how the sub-committees work to deal with individual applications. 	<p>Members of the Licensing Committee.</p> <p>Only those who have been trained are eligible to be members of this committee.</p>	Delivered June 2022.
Governance & Audit Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of the Committee: to support and promote efficient and economic use of resources. effective control of expenditure and review audit performance. Signing off Annual Accounts 	<p>G&A committee members, whether Councillors or lay members.</p> <p>Only those who have been trained are eligible to be members of this committee.</p>	<p>Induction following CC elections then periodic refreshers as necessary.</p> <p>Dates TBC</p>
Cyber Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To raise awareness of Cyber Security and GDPR best practice. 	All Members	Live – Ongoing
Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Regulatory / Technical 	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How we fulfil requirements within Flintshire 	All Members	Spring/Summer 2024

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
Safeguarding and Modern Slavery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Members with details of safeguarding roles, responsibilities and duties. 	All Members	Spring/Summer 2024
Corporate Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Service / Topic Based 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide Members with an overview of what Corporate Parenting is and their role. 	All Members	Spring/Summer 2024
Violence Against Women and Domestic Abuse Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	TBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	All Members	TBC
Environment & Carbon Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service / Topic Based 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	All Members	Carbon Literacy for Members delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autumn 2023 January 2024 February 2024

Section 2: Topics deemed 'Discretionary'

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
How Elected Members work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Organisational Knowledge 	Explore sessions offered by WLGA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in meetings, managing ward work, maintaining a healthy work/life balance, self-care arrangements, protocol on operating outside the ward. • Cabinet and committee roles. • Social media profile. 	All Members.	Awaiting dates from WLGA
How the Council works	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Organisational Knowledge 	Explore sessions offered by WLGA		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in meetings. • Functions of the Council. • Cabinet and committee roles. 	Co-opted members	TBC
Committee workings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational knowledge 	Combination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person • Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Members to receive specific training targeted at each of the specific committees, such as the role and workings of Scrutiny etc. 	All Members – although relevant to those on specific committees	To be delivered as part of each Committee's FWP.
Planning for non-committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory / Technical • Organisational Knowledge 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person • Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the Planning system for non-committee members, their role in consultation and representation 	Members who are not on the	Induction following CC elections then periodic refreshers as necessary.

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
					Planning Committee	
Strategic Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Knowledge Regulatory / Technical 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Size of budget, how made up, sources of income, members role in setting budget etc, WG/WLGA stance on funding formula. 	All Members	Delivered October 2023. Repeat Annually.
External Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational knowledge 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training on specific roles members may undertake on external bodies. 	All Members	Summer 2024
Information Technology (General)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure Members are familiar with the use of the council's IT systems, including laptops, iPads, Citrix applications. A basic introduction to Microsoft Office applications. 	All Members	Under development.
Social Media & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Regulatory / Technical 	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Members with guidance on the use of social media – including well-being, bullying and harassment etc. 	All Members	TBC
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide Members with an understanding their role in respect of H&S. 	All Members	Autumn 2024

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method	Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates	
Lone Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Remote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Members with guidance and steps if working alone (e.g. home visits etc.) 	All Members	Spring/Summer 2024
Information management, security & Data protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical 	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of data security, role of Members as data controllers, dangers of re-using previous emails and their trails. 	All Members	TBC
Difficult Situations & Conversations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Organisational knowledge 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide members with skills to manage conflict in difficult situations and conversations. 	All Members	TBC
Welsh Matters – For Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics 	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide members with an understanding of National Policy and legislation and the Language Standards in Flintshire. 	All Members	TBC
Social Media Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Regulatory / Technical Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide members with an understanding of the benefits of social media and practical skills on how to positively engage with people in the community. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
Corporate Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory / Technical Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding Governance is identifying what local people need and meeting those needs ethically, responsibly and efficiently. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Community Leadership & casework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing Members with information on why community leadership is important in their role as a Councillor. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Ethics & Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information on the importance of ethics and standards in public life. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Welsh Language Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Regulatory / Technical Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Understanding of the obligations of local councils in relation to the Welsh language. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Equality & Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the duties relating to the Equality Act that apply in the public sector and in Wales. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method	Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates	
Unconscious Bias	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide Members with an understanding and awareness of Unconscious Bias. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
LGBTQ+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide practical advice for developing practice and understanding of allyship, and support LGBTQ+ colleagues. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Hate Crime Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ethics 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide Councillors with an awareness of Hate Crime and its impact across the County. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Wellbeing of Future Generations Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide members with information and tools on how to make decisions that benefit future generations. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Social Services & Wellbeing Act 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Ethics Regulatory / Technical Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a practical guide to how the legislative framework impacts on the work of the council and people in the community. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Public Speaking & Working with the Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide members with a skillset to using different communication channels including press releases 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time

Topic	Theme(s)	Delivery method		Outline/Purpose	Target audience	Dates
				and working with the media.		
Equality & Diversity (Councillor Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics • Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing understanding of the specific roles Equality and Diversity plays in a Councillor's role. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Ethics & Standard (Councillor Development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics • Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the importance of the ethical framework and Code of Conduct. 	All Members	Online – Available to access at any time
Local Government Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory / Technical • Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of how councils manage finances and Welsh government's sources of funding. 	All Members	TBC – Under review
Introduction to Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Regulatory / Technical 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an understanding of planning policies and the stages of the planning process. 	All Members	TBC – Under review
Introduction to Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills • Regulatory / Technical • Organisational knowledge 	eLearning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on licensing and why it's needed as well as the legal framework and councils management toward licensing. 	All Members	TBC – Under review

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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>



Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Annual Report

February 2024

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Foreword

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, setting the decisions and determinations on pay, expenses, and benefits for elected members of Principal Councils, Community and Town Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities for implementation from April 2024.

This has been a year of change for the Panel, with one longstanding member leaving us and the appointment of two new members. I would like to thank Helen Wilkinson for her contribution over the years to the Panel and wish her well for the future.

Earlier last year we were able to appoint two new members to bring our current complement up to five. I welcome Dianne Bevan and Kate Watkins to the Panel and thank Saz Willey, Vice Chair, and Bev Smith for their continued contribution throughout the year. You can find out more about our Panel members on our [website](#).

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, Part 8 (The Measure), which gives the statutory authority for the Panel's work, allows the appointment of a minimum of 3 and up to 7 members.



Frances Duffy
Chair

Detailed information about the members, our Strategic Plan, our deliberations and supporting research and evidence can be found on the [Panel's website](#).

Executive Summary

Last year we published our first Strategic Plan. This covers the period from 2023 until 2025 and sets the framework for our deliberations and wider context for our decisions. The key elements are set out below under Roles and Responsibilities of the Panel.

With a strengthened Panel, we were able to focus on building our research and evidence plan to support our discussions on our remuneration framework. Our evidence plan is available on our [website](#) in line with our aim to be open and transparent in all our decision making.

Our goal continues to be to ensure that levels of remuneration are fair and reasonable. We agreed to continue to align levels of remuneration for elected members of Principal Councils, National Park and Fire and Rescue Authorities within the context of average Welsh earnings. This has meant using the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings within Wales (ASHE) published by Office for National Statistics (ONS) as the main benchmark for setting remuneration.

The Measure states that “the Panel must take into account what it considers will be the likely financial impact on relevant authorities” of its decisions. The Panel considered evidence on public sector finances and the impact on Principal Authorities’ budgets. Whilst the total cost of remuneration for elected members is relatively low in terms of overall budgets, the Panel were mindful of the heightened economic and fiscal strain on Principal Councils.

In reaching our decision to continue the link between the remuneration of elected members of Principal Councils, National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and the average earnings of their constituents (ASHE), the Panel remain of the view that a fair and reasonable remuneration package will continue to support elected members and not act as a barrier to participation. This is an important principle, underpinning our considerations on appropriate remuneration. This was widely supported in both our engagement meetings and the consultation feedback.

In line with our commitment to simplifying reporting and compliance, the Panel this year looked at the reporting requirements for Community and Town Councils. Currently each Community and Town Council must report annually to the Panel, and publish on its website, the details, and names of each councillor in receipt of any expenses. In previous years we agreed that in respect of costs of care and personal assistance allowances, it would be inappropriate to name individual councillors, and that it would be sufficient to simply list the total amounts paid and the total number of recipients.

The Panel feels that it would be appropriate to extend this to the mandatory payment for working from home, the flat rate consumables allowance and travel and subsistence claims. This will give the right balance between public accountability and individual privacy, and we hope will encourage all to accept the payments they are entitled to. This was positively received during our consultation and engagement.

We will provide a new template report for use from September 2024 and will continue to monitor the level of payments made.

We continue to receive queries regarding the PAYE treatment of the mandatory allowance for working from home (£156 per annum) and the option of a flat rate of £52 a year for consumables. We are updating our guidance on this issue which should help give clarity to local clerks.

We are also mindful of a continuing, albeit reducing, number of Community and Town councillors who decide to forego all or part of their entitlement. We strongly believe that councillors should be reimbursed for expenses they necessarily incur whilst carrying out their duties or receive a contribution to help defray these costs. We reiterate that the basic payments are mandatory and should be made available to all councillors who are entitled to receive them. Any decision to forego these payments must be a personal and individual choice.

The final area that the Panel considered, was the method of calculating payments made to co opted members of Principal Councils, National Park and Fire and Rescue Authorities.

Following feedback on last year's Annual Report and queries raised through the year by some co opted members and by several Heads of Democratic Services, the Panel took evidence from the correspondents on the impact of both the increase in numbers of co opted members and the changing nature of working patterns. This showed that the current arrangement of either a half day rate for anything up to 4 hours and a full day rate for anything over, was insufficiently flexible to reflect the patterns of working now more normally in place, mainly due to more online or hybrid working.

In our draft Report, the Panel proposed that the relevant local officer should have the flexibility to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate and when to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings. There was quite a wide range of views on this during our engagement meetings, but the overall feedback is that this change would be supported. **Therefore, the Panel agreed that this flexibility should be given and that decisions on whether an hourly or daily rate might be appropriate are to be made locally.**

Finally, the Panel is aware of feedback that our website can be difficult to navigate and that finding the right Determination to deal with a specific issue is not always straightforward, especially for newly elected members or officials. We have therefore updated the links on our website and created a new link to a page setting out all the current Determinations that should be applied. It will be updated every year when the Final Annual Report is issued, and we hope this will be easier to navigate than having to refer to every year's Report.

This is supported in our newly updated [Guidance](#) (previously called the Regulations).

Role and responsibilities of the Panel

Our Role:

The Panel is responsible for setting the levels and arrangements for the remuneration of elected and coopted members of the following organisations:

- Principal Councils – County and County Borough Councils
- Community and Town Councils
- National Park Authorities
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Joint Overview Scrutiny Committees
- Corporate Joint Committees.

The Panel is an independent organisation and the organisations listed above are required, by law, to implement the decisions it makes.

We make determinations on:

- The salary structure within which members are remunerated
- The type and nature of allowances to be paid to members
- Whether payments are mandatory or allow a level of local flexibility
- Arrangements in respect of family absence
- Arrangements for monitoring compliance with the Panel's decisions

Our Aim:

- Supporting local democracy and giving communities their voice, through setting up an appropriate and fair remuneration framework, which encourages inclusion and participation.

Our Goals:

- Our Determinations should ensure that levels of remuneration are fair, reasonable, represent value for money for the taxpayer, and are set within the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales.
- Our Determinations should support elected members from a diverse range of backgrounds, and levels of remuneration should not act as a barrier to participation.

Our Strategic Objectives:

- To make evidence based Determinations
- To use clear and accessible communications
- To proactively engage and consult
- To simplify compliance and reporting
- To work collaboratively

The Panel:

Frances Duffy (Chair)
Saz Willey (Vice Chair)
Dianne Bevan (Member)
Bev Smith (Member)
Kate Watkins (Member)

Further information on Panel members can be found on the [Panel's website](#).

Methodology

Deliberations and Determinations for 2024 to 2025

As set out in our strategic objectives the Panel has committed to making evidence based decisions.

This year we prepared an evidence and research paper to pull together the various sources of information that the Panel considered in making its Determinations. This provided a wide range of data, evidence, and contextual factors to inform the Panel's decision-making process in relation to its Determinations for the 2024 to 2025 financial year. This included:

- Data on average UK and Wales weekly earnings, including ASHE (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings)
- Annual Consumer Price Index Housing (CPIH) and Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rates Benchmarks, including councillor remuneration in Scotland
- Research on councillor workload, views and attitudes to remuneration and diversity (Welsh Government)
- Findings of Senedd Cymru Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee (2019)
- Data collected on the take up of remuneration and benefits packages by councillors
- Data on local authority finances

The full set of evidence and research considered, is available on our [website](#).

In line with our updated Communications and Engagement Strategy, the Panel held a number of discussions with key stakeholders which provided an opportunity for the Panel to explore views about existing arrangements, the impact decisions are having on individuals, how the arrangements are operating in practice and any issues or concerns individuals wish to raise. It also provides an opportunity for discussion about emerging situations which the Panel may need to consider in respect of its decision making.

The Panel engaged directly with key stakeholder representative groups including the Welsh Local Government Association, Principal Council Leaders Group, Heads of Democratic Services committee, One Voice Wales, Society for Local Council Clerks and North and Mid Wales Association of Local Councils. The Panel also held an online seminar in November for Community and Town councillors and local Clerks. This was well attended, and we received good feedback on our work. In particular, the Panel noted the question of remuneration for Youth Representatives and agreed to review this in the future.

This year the Panel focused on three main issues – affordability, payments made to co opted members and reporting requirements for Community and Town Councils. The Panel would like to thank all those that contributed to our deliberations either directly or through feedback and Responses to the consultation on our Draft Report.

Consultation: Summary of responses

The Panel produced and issued a draft report on Friday 13 October 2023 for an eight week consultation, which closed on Friday 8th December 2023. The consultation period was extended to Wednesday 20 December 2023, to allow more time for all respondents to submit feedback.

In addition, as part of the consultation process, stakeholders were invited to answer six questions using an online survey or by return email. A total of 44 responses were received online, whilst 12 were submitted by email to the IRP Mailbox. The Panel engaged in a number of stakeholder meetings during the consultation period to gather important feedback. The Panel would like to thank everyone who contributed to the consultation. A summary of responses is included in the report below.

The website link and Pdf version of the draft report was sent to:

- One Voice Wales
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Society for Local Council Clerks
- Principal Councils
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- National Parks Authorities and
- Community and Town Councils

Determination 1: Basic salary for elected members of principal councils

Determination 2: Salaries paid to Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils

Determination 3: Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Determination 4: Payments to national parks authorities and fire and rescue authorities

Determination 7: Compensation for financial loss

No comments/responses were received directly, in respect of the above Determinations. However, during our engagement sessions, the Panel heard concerns about lack of payments to Youth Representatives on Community and Town Councils and disappointment that the Panel had not raised the remuneration levels for co opted members on National Parks Authorities. These are issues that the Panel may consider in future Reports.

Determination 5: Payments made to co opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

There were only a small number of responses regarding this proposal; One response agreed with the proposal in respect of changing working practices and supporting the introduction of an hourly rate and another recommended that guidance issued in respect of the hourly payment is clear as to when it should be applied.

Another strongly supported the principle of authorities being able to be flexible to suit their own requirements.

Determination 6: Community and Town Councils Mandatory payments

Payment for extra costs of working from home and Set payment for consumables

Two Community Councils requested that the proposal to make the £156 payment to Councillors mandatory be changed to allow Councillors to opt out of the payment as in previous years.

Two Community councils fully supports inclusivity and appreciates that the payment may assist elected members but feels very strongly that it should not be mandatory.

The Panel reaffirms individuals are able to opt out of receiving mandatory payments. Any opt outs should be declared in writing.

Determination 8: Reporting requirements

It was agreed that the reporting of the mandatory payment for working from home, the flat rate consumables allowance and travel and subsistence claims as global sums, rather than individual listings, gives the right balance between public accountability and individual privacy.

In addition, as part of the consultation process, stakeholders were invited to answer six questions via an online survey or by return email. A total of 44 responses were received online, whilst 12 were submitted by email to the IRP Mailbox. The Panel attended stakeholder engagement meetings during the consultation process to gather and receive feedback.

Summary of responses to online questionnaire

Question 1

Uplift of remuneration using the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

The Panel is fully aware of the current constraints on public funding and the impact its decisions will have on the budgets of Principal Authorities. The Panel is also mindful of our Aims and Objectives to provide a fair and reasonable remuneration package to support elected members and to encourage diversity of representation. We therefore propose to uplift their remuneration based on the average earnings of their constituents.

Do you think that the Panel has struck the right balance between affordability and adequate remuneration for representatives? If not, do you have other suggestions?

Responses

55% of those who answered this question agreed that the Panel have struck the right balance between affordability and adequate remuneration for representatives. 21% did not agree whilst 19% had no opinion on this question.

Some respondents highlighted that it was important to attract a diverse range of candidates to stand for election and that more needed to be done to increase diversity.

Another proposed that the report showed the recommended increase as a percentage uplift, similar to pay awards, so that the public understood in terms of transparency.

Question 2

Local flexibility for payments to co opted individuals

The Panel has received evidence that it would be more cost effective and fairer to provide for flexibility in paying those who are co opted to serve on committees of principle councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Panel has therefore proposed there should be flexibility for the relevant local officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a few short meetings.

Do you agree with this proposal? If not, do you have any suggested alternatives?

Responses

64% of those who answered this question agreed. 11% did not agree whilst 19% had no opinion. An hourly rate was thought to be more cost effective and would provide flexibility to attend shorter meetings with officers when needed. The principle of authorities being able to be flexible to suit their own requirements was strongly supported by one individual.

Question 3

Encouraging sustainable travel

The Panel would like to ensure that we support environmental sustainability in our decisions about remuneration. We are aware that there are schemes in many bodies in Wales which encourage sustainable travel and we have advised that, if possible, elected members should be encouraged to participate in these schemes.

Do you have any examples of good practice or other ideas of ways in which we might use our powers to encourage more sustainable travel among members?

Responses

Of those who responded to this question, 34% provided examples of good practice to encourage more sustainable travel. Holding online meetings would be useful in achieving environmental sustainability, however it was also proposed to hold meetings in person as well as online.

Other suggestions included the provision of public service timetables in council buildings can help in terms of encouraging alternatives to private car use and encouraging vehicle sharing between members who are attending the same meeting. An example provided was an authority having an area map that showed where each NPA member was located, to encourage car sharing.

Question 4

Awareness of the entitlements of representatives

The Panel has seen evidence of a lack of awareness amongst local elected members of the payments to which they are entitled. We would like to find out if this is a significant issue, and if so, we will aim to raise awareness further, targeted at areas where this may be a problem.

What steps does your council or authority take to make its members and co optees aware of their entitlements?

Responses

The comments stated that members are informed of their entitlements by email from the Clerk on appointment, included in a briefing pack that newly elected members receive and discussed at the time of budget preparation and at the annual general meeting.

However, we also received examples of there being a culture of members not claiming entitlements and some members being pressured into completing an opt out form. An individual may decline to receive part, or all, of the payments if they so wish. This must be done in writing and is an individual matter. A community or town council member wishing to decline payments must themselves write to their proper officer to do so. Each community and town council principal authority must ensure that it does not create a climate which prevents persons accessing any monies to which they are entitled that may support them to participate in local democracy.

Question 5

Publication of consolidated sums

Community and Town Councils are required to submit an annual statement of payments to the Panel by 30 September each year, and also publish this on their website. The Panel have provided a template return for clerks to use. The Panel have discussed and considered changing the requirements for Community and Town Councils when submitting their statement of payment returns. The Panel's aim is to simplify administration and encourage Councils to ensure all mandatory payments are made to individual members.

The Panel proposes that from September 2024, the returns need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home, the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid.

This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances.

*Do you agree that these figures may be published as a global total rather than individually?
What are the reasons for your view?*

Responses

There was overwhelming agreement to the proposal of the statement of payments being published as a global sum. 11% did not agree and 2% had no opinion on the question. Respondents agreed that publishing a global sum would be administratively easier and provides confidentiality of members. It also reducing any embarrassment should a member wish to claim. However, it was highlighted that Councillors should be seen to have received the payments, so that residents can see where the money has been spent.

Question 6

In future reports, we are thinking of allowing consolidation of the travel and subsistence expenses of members of principal councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and would be interested in your views.

*Do you agree that these figures may be published as a global total rather than individually?
What are the reasons for your view?*

Responses

Just under half of the respondents agreed that the payments for travel and subsistence should be published as a global sum. 13% did not agree and 28% had no opinion on the question. This proposal would help to avoid individual identification and or potential prejudice for those who need to claim. However, those who disagreed stated that a breakdown of all expenses allows transparency into councillor activity and allows resident scrutiny and transparency that all activities are justified.

Panel's determinations for 2024 to 2025

Following consideration of the views received in response to its consultation the Panel now makes its final determinations.

Basic salary for elected members of principal councils: Determination 1

The basic salary, paid to all elected members, is remuneration for the responsibility of community representation and participation in the scrutiny, regulatory and related functions of local governance. It is based on a full time equivalent of three days a week. The Panel regularly reviews this time commitment, and no changes are proposed for 2024 to 2025.

The Panel is fully aware of the current constraints on public funding and the impact its decisions will have on the budgets of Principal Authorities. The Panel is also mindful of our Aims and Objectives to provide a fair and reasonable remuneration package to support elected members and to encourage diversity of representation.

The Panel also noted that in previous electoral cycles, the remuneration of councillors fell far behind the key benchmark of Average Hourly Earnings in Wales (ASHE) and a significant uplift was therefore required in 2022.

The Panel has therefore determined that for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 it is right to retain the link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. **The basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of all Wales 2022 ASHE. This will be £18,666 as set out on Table 1.**

Salaries paid to Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils: Determination 2

The limit on the number of senior salaries payable ("the cap") will remain in place.

All senior salaries include the basic salary payment. The different levels of additional responsibility of and between each role is recognised in a banded framework. No changes to banding are proposed this year.

The basic pay element will be uplifted in line with ASHE and this uplift will also apply to the role element of Bands 1, 2, 3 and 4. Where a Band 5 is paid, there is no increase to the role element as this remains temporarily frozen. The increase in the basic salary will apply.

The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will therefore be £69,998. All other payments have been decided in reference to this and are set out on Table 1.

Group A

- Cardiff
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Swansea

Table 1 – Salaries payable to Basic, Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils (Group A)

Description	Amount
Basic salary	£18,666
Band 1 leader	£69,998
Band 1 deputy leader	£48,999
Band 2 executive members	£41,999
Band 3 committee chairs (if paid)	£27,999
Band 4 Leader of the largest opposition group	£27,999
Band 5 Leader of other political groups (if paid) and deputy civic head	£22,406
Civic Head (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Civic Head (if paid)	£22,406
Presiding member (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Presiding Member (basic only)	£18,666

Group B

- Bridgend
- Caerphilly
- Carmarthenshire
- Conwy
- Flintshire
- Gwynedd
- Newport
- Neath Port Talbot
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Wrexham

Table 1 – Salaries payable to Basic, Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils (Group B)

Description	Remuneration
Basic salary	£18,666
Band 1 leader	£62,998
Band 1 deputy leader	£44,099
Band 2 executive members	£37,799
Band 3 committee chairs (if paid)	£27,999
Band 4 Leader of the largest opposition group	£27,999

Band 5 Leader of other political groups (if paid) and deputy civic head	£22,406
Civic Head (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Civic Head (if paid)	£22,406
Presiding member (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Presiding Member (basic only)	£18,666

Group C

- Blaenau Gwent
- Ceredigion
- Denbighshire
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Monmouthshire
- Torfaen
- Isle of Anglesey

Table 1 – Salaries payable to Basic, Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils (Group C)

Description	Remuneration
Basic salary	£18,666
Band 1 leader	£59,498
Band 1 deputy leader	£41,649
Band 2 executive members	£35,699
Band 3 committee chairs (if paid)	£27,999
Band 4 Leader of the largest opposition group	£27,999
Band 5 Leader of other political groups (if paid) and deputy civic head	£22,406
Civic Head (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Civic Head (if paid)	£22,406
Presiding member (if paid)	£27,999
Deputy Presiding Member (basic only)	£18,666

There are no further changes to the payments and benefits paid to elected members. All current Determinations are published on our [website](#).

Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Determination 3

The salary of a chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee will continue to be aligned to Band 3 and will be set at £9,333.

The salary of a vice chair is set at 50% of the Chair and will be £4,667.

There are no other changes.

Payments to National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities: Determination 4

The three national parks in Wales: Eryri (Snowdonia), Pembrokeshire Coast and Bannau Brycheiniog (Brecon Beacons), were formed to protect spectacular landscapes and provide recreation opportunities for the public. National Park authorities comprise members who are either elected members nominated by the principal councils within the national park area or are members appointed by the Welsh Government through the Public Appointments process. Welsh Government appointed and council nominated members are treated equally in relation to remuneration.

The three fire and rescue services (FRAs) in Wales: Mid and West Wales, North Wales and South Wales were formed as part of Local Government reorganisation in 1996. FRAs comprise elected members who are nominated by the Principal Councils within each fire and rescue service area.

In line with the Panel's decision to increase the basic salary of elected members of principal councils, the remuneration level for ordinary members of both NPAs and FRAs is also increased in line with ASHE. The remuneration for Chairs will remain linked to a principal council Band 3 senior salary. Their role element will therefore increase accordingly. Deputy chairs, Committee chairs and other paid senior posts will remain linked to a Band 5. This means the role element of their pay will continue to be temporarily frozen. Full details of the levels of remuneration for members of NPAs and FRAs is set out on Table 2.

Table 2 – Payments to National Parks Authorities

National Parks Authorities	Amount
Basic salary for ordinary member	£5,265
Chair	£14,598
Deputy Chair (where appointed)	£9,005
Committee Chair or other senior post	£9,005

Table 2 – Payments to Fire and Rescue Authorities

Fire and rescue authorities	Amount
Basic salary for ordinary member	£2,632
Chair	£11,965
Deputy Chair (where appointed)	£6,372
Committee Chair or other senior post	£6,372

All current Determinations, including restrictions on receiving double allowances, are available on our [website](#). Other than the above increases, there are no changes proposed this year.

Payments made to co opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities: Determination 5

The current Determination (made in the 2022 to 2023 Annual Report) states that co opted members of the relevant bodies should be remunerated on a day or half day basis. In addition, the relevant officer may decide on the total number of days remunerated in a year and set a reasonable time for meeting preparation.

The Panel has noted the changes to working practices, put in place during Covid and now becoming more routine, that has meant a move towards more frequent use of online meetings and or training courses, often short, as well as more regular committee meetings. The panel also received feedback from Heads of Democratic Services raising this issue.

The Panel considered moving to an hourly rate instead. This would better reflect new ways of working and hours actually worked. However, the Panel recognised that this may not always be appropriate, especially to cover in person meetings scheduled to last several hours.

The Panel therefore determines there should be local flexibility for the relevant officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings. The Panel will also provide guidance of good practice examples. The amounts are set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Payments made to co-opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

	Hourly rate payment	Up to 4 hours payment rate	4 hours and over payment rate
Chairs of standards, and audit committees	£33.50	£134	£268
Ordinary Members of Standards Committees who also chair Standards Committees for Community and Town Councils	£29.75	£119	£238
Ordinary Members of Standards Committees; Education Scrutiny Committee; Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£26.25	£105	£210

Community and Town Councils

The Panel continues to mandate payments for the extra costs of working from home and payments for office consumables. There is no change to the Determination made last year.

Mandatory Payments: Determination 6

Payment for extra costs of working from home

All councils must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power, and broadband) of working from home.

Set payment for consumables

Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

It is a matter for each council to make and record a policy decision in respect of when and how the payments are made and whether they are paid monthly, yearly, or otherwise. The policy should also state whether and how to recover any payments made to a member who leaves or changes their role during the financial year.

Compensation for Financial Loss; Determination 7

Compensation for financial loss is an optional payment. The amount for financial loss was not increased last year. Previously, the Panel determined that an appropriate level of payment should be set at the daily rate of ASHE. To maintain this link, the figures for 2024 are now set at £119.62 for a full day and £59.81 for a half day.

Reporting Requirements; Determination 8

Community and Town Councils are required to submit an annual statement of payments to the Panel by the 30 September each year, and also publish this on their website. The Panel have provided a template return for clerks to use.

The Panel have discussed and considered changing the requirements for Community and Town Councils when submitting their statement of payment returns. The Panel's aim is to simplify administration and encourage Councils to ensure all mandatory payments are made to individual members.

The Panel proposes that from September 2024, the returns need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home and the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid.

This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances.

Payments to Community and Town Councils

Type of Payment	Group	Requirement
Extra costs payment	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Mandatory for all members
Senior role	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Mandatory £500 for 1 member; optional for up to 7
Mayor or chair	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Optional: up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy mayor or deputy chair	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Optional: up to a maximum of £500
Attendance allowance	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Optional
Financial loss	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Optional
Travel and subsistence	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Optional
Costs of care or personal assistance	1 (Electorate over 14,000)	Mandatory
Extra costs payment	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Mandatory for all members
Senior role	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Mandatory for 1 member; optional up to 5
Mayor or chair	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Optional: up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy mayor or deputy chair	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Optional: up to a maximum of £500
Attendance allowance	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Optional
Financial loss	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Optional
Travel and subsistence	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Optional
Costs of care or personal assistance	2 (Electorate over 10,000 to 13,999)	Mandatory
Extra costs payment	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Mandatory for all members
Senior role	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or chair	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy mayor or deputy chair	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance allowance	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional
Financial loss	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional
Travel and subsistence	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Optional
Costs of care or personal assistance	3 (Electorate over 5,000 to 9,999)	Mandatory
Extra Costs Payment	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Mandatory for all members

Senior Role	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or Chair	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional
Financial Loss	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Optional
Costs of Care or Personal Assistance	4 (Electorate over 1,000 to 4,999)	Mandatory
Extra Costs Payment	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or Chair	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional
Financial Loss	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Optional
Cost of Care or Personal Assistance	5 (Electorate less than 1,000)	Mandatory

There have been no changes made to payments for undertaking senior roles; allowances for Travel and subsistence; Care and Personal Assistance or Attendance allowance. All current Determinations are published on our website.

Summary of Determinations for 2024 to 2025

Determination 1:

The basic level of salary for elected members of principal councils will be set at £18,666.

Determination 2:

The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will be £69,998. All other payments have been decided in reference to this.

Determination 3:

The salary of a chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be £9,333.

The salary of vice chair will be £4,667.

Determination 4:

The basic pay of members of National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities has been increased.

All current Determinations, including restrictions on receiving double allowances, will be published on our website. Other than the above increases, there are no changes proposed this year.

Determination 5:

For co opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities, payments, the Panel proposes there should be local flexibility for the relevant officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings.

The full and half day rates remain unchanged from 2023 to 2024. The only change is the stipulation of hourly rates.

Determination 6:

Members of Community and Town Councils will be paid £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power, and broadband) of working from home. And Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables. Therefore, there is no change from last year.

Determination 7

Compensation for financial loss is an optional payment. The amount for financial loss was not increased last year. The Panel determined that this payment should continue to be linked to the daily rate of ASHE. To maintain this link, the figures for 2024 are now set at £119.62 for a full day and £59.81 for a half day.

Determination 8:

The Panel has determined that from September 2024, the returns due from all Community and Town Council need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home and the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid.

This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances.

All other Determinations set out on our [website](#) remain valid and should be applied.

Contact details

To request a printed version of the Annual Report please [email us](#) or write to:

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This Annual Report and other information about the Panel and its work are available on our [website](#).

CONSTITUTION & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	Wednesday, 8 November 2023
Report Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) draft Annual Report 2024/2025
Report Author	Democratic Services Manager

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 issue a draft Annual Report in October/November each year. This year, it did so on the 13 October 2023, requesting comments on the report and accompanying consultation to be made by no later than the 8 December 2023.

The IRPW is then required to take into account any representations which it receives on the draft report before issuing its final version of the report in February.

In its annual report 2022/23, the IRPW reset the basic salary for elected members of principal councils to align with the 2020 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), based on a full-time equivalent of 3 days a week. They have retained the link between basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents, according to ASHE.

The IRPW has proposed the basic salary for elected members of principal Councils in 2024/25 shall be £18,666 with effect from 1st April 2024. Increases are also proposed for Cabinet Members, Council Leaders and their deputies, and Chairs of Committees where remunerated.

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 2024/25.
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2	That the Head of Democratic Services be authorised to make a response on behalf of the Council, reflecting the decision and comments made at the meeting, to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.
3	That the Head of Democratic Services issue Question 4 of the consultation document to all elected Members and co-opted members for them to respond to individually.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DETAILING THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) 2024/25																
1.01	Members will be aware that the IRPW produces a report on an annual basis, which sets out what it has decided (called Determinations) the rates of payment to Members and co-optees of Local Authorities in Wales for the following year should be.																
1.02	In their report (which is attached as appendix 1), the Panel states that in setting the levels of remuneration etc. they have focussed on <i>“affordability, payments made to co-opted members and reporting requirements for Community and Town Councils.”</i>																
1.03	<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 proposed levels for 2024.</p> <p>All salaries include the basic Member salary. (Determinations 1 and 2)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Position</th> <th>Current, 2023 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Proposed, 2024 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Amount of proposed increase</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member of Council</td> <td>£17,600</td> <td>£18,666</td> <td>£1,066</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chair (where remunerated)</td> <td>£26,400</td> <td>£27,999</td> <td>£1,599</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leader of largest Opposition Party</td> <td>£26,400</td> <td>£27,999</td> <td>£1,599</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Position	Current, 2023 IRPW Determination	Proposed, 2024 IRPW Determination	Amount of proposed increase	Member of Council	£17,600	£18,666	£1,066	Committee Chair (where remunerated)	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599	Leader of largest Opposition Party	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599
Position	Current, 2023 IRPW Determination	Proposed, 2024 IRPW Determination	Amount of proposed increase														
Member of Council	£17,600	£18,666	£1,066														
Committee Chair (where remunerated)	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599														
Leader of largest Opposition Party	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599														

	Chair of Council	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599																				
	Vice-Chair of Council	£21,340	£22,406	£1,066																				
	Cabinet Member	£35,640	£37,799	£2,159																				
	Deputy Leader	£41,580	£44,099	£2,519																				
	Leader	£59,400	£62,998	£3,598																				
	Presiding Member*	£26,400	£27,999	£1,599																				
	Deputy Presiding Member*	£17,600	£18,666	£1,066																				
	<p>These 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>																							
1.04	Determination 3 relates to Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees which do not currently apply to Flintshire.																							
1.05	<p>Determination 4 relates to National Park Authorities and Fire & Rescue Authorities. National Park Authorities do not apply to Flintshire.</p> <p>The changes to payments to Fire & Rescue Authorities are shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Position</th> <th>Current, 2023 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Proposed, 2024 IRPW Determination</th> <th>Amount of proposed increase</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Member</td> <td>£2,482</td> <td>£2,632</td> <td>£150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Chair</td> <td>£11,282</td> <td>£11,965</td> <td>£683</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vice-Chair</td> <td>£6,222</td> <td>£6,372</td> <td>£150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chair</td> <td>£6,222</td> <td>£6,372</td> <td>£150</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Flintshire nominates 6 members of the North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority.</p>				Position	Current, 2023 IRPW Determination	Proposed, 2024 IRPW Determination	Amount of proposed increase	Member	£2,482	£2,632	£150	Chair	£11,282	£11,965	£683	Vice-Chair	£6,222	£6,372	£150	Committee Chair	£6,222	£6,372	£150
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1.06	<p>Determination 5 details payments to co-opted members of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities.</p> <p>Currently co-opted members receive either a half-day or full-day payment for work they undertake for the committees they sit on. The Panel are proposing that in addition to these payments, an hourly rate payment for co-opted members is to be introduced from April 2024. Which rate to use is to be determined by the 'local relevant officer'.</p> <p>Payments to co-opted members are shown in the table below:</p>																							

	Role	Hourly rate payment	Up to 4 hours payment rate	4 hours and over payment rate
	Chairs of standards, and audit committees	£33.50	£134	£268
	Ordinary Members of Standards Committees who also chair Standards Committees for Community and Town Councils	£29.75	£119	£238
	Ordinary Members of Standards Committees; Education Scrutiny Committee; Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£26.25	£105	£210
	Community and Town Councillors sitting on Principal Council Standards Committees	£26.25	£105	£210
1.07	Determinations 6 to 8 relate to Community and Town Councils.			
1.08	<p>All of the other determinations made for 2023-24 will remain the same and therefore be applied to 2024-25. These cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance; • Reimbursement of Travel and subsistence costs; • Compensation for financial loss; and, • Restrictions on receiving double remuneration where a member holds more than one post. 			
1.09	As with each draft Annual Report, the Panel are seeking feedback on the content of the report. A copy of the consultation questions is included as Appendix 2. For ease of reference, the questions are listed in paragraph 1.10 below.			

1.10	<p>Q1 – Do you think that the Panel has struck the right balance between affordability and adequate remuneration for representatives? If not, do you have other suggestions?</p> <p>Q2 – Do you agree with the Panels proposal in relation to co-opted members of committees? If not, do you have any suggested alternatives?</p> <p>Q3 – Do you have any examples of good practice or other ideas of ways in which we might use our powers to encourage more sustainable travel among members?</p> <p>Q4 – This question is seeking individual Member responses. See paragraph 1.11.</p> <p>Q5 – This question relates specifically to Community and Town Councils so does not apply.</p> <p>Q6 – Do you agree that figures for travel and subsistence expenses of members of principal councils should be published as a global total rather than individually?</p>
1.11	<p>Question 4 of the consultation is seeking to establish whether individual Members are aware of the payments they are entitled to.</p> <p>It would not therefore be appropriate for this Committee to provide an answer on behalf of all elected Members and co-opted members of committees.</p> <p>It is proposed that the Democratic Services Manager issues this question to all elected Members and the co-opted members. This could take the form of an anonymous survey, or they could be asked to provide an individual response direct to the IRPW.</p>
1.12	<p>The Committee is therefore invited to consider, and comment on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report and its Determinations for 2024, and to provide comments for inclusion in the response to the consultation. The consultation period ends on 8 December 2023.</p>

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>Any member or co-opted member may by notice in writing to the proper officer of the authority 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>If all of the increases are accepted as per the IRPW report, there will be a budget increase of £88,921 for 2024-25.</p>

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	The IRPW are consulting about their proposals and Members have the opportunity to feedback their views.

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	Appendix 1 - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2024 Appendix 2 - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report 2024 – consultation questions

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

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 2024/25 is £18,666. • 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 of paid. • Co-opted member – a person chosen by the Council to serve on one of its Member Bodies