

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 20 th November 2018
Report Subject	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Draft Annual Report for 2019/20
Report Author	Chief Officer (Governance)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determines the rates of payment which are to be made to elected and co-opted members of Welsh Local Authorities for the following year. The IRPW is required to send the draft Annual Report to County Councils which this year it did on the 2nd October, requesting comments to be made by no later than the 27th November 2018.

The IRPW is required to take into account the representations which it receives on the draft before issuing its final version of the report in February. For 2019/20 the following changes are proposed:

Basic salary – “to avoid further erosion in relation to average earning the Panel has decided to increase the basic salary to £13,868 (an increase of 1.97%). This is a £268 increase in the basic salary for Councillors from £13,600.

Senior salaries – the IRPW have said that ‘The salaries of leaders and members of the executive have not been increased for several years (except for the increase in the basic element). We consider that the holders of these posts have significant functional responsibility and compared to the remuneration of many other public sector roles are not well paid.’ They have proposed an increase of £800 for each (inclusive of the £268 increase in the basic salary).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	That Council considers and comments on the Determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for 2019/20.
2	That the Chief Officer (Governance) be authorised to make a response on behalf of the Council, reflecting the decision made at the meeting, to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	DETAILING THE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES 2019/20
1.01	Members will be aware that the IRPW produces a report on an annual basis, which sets out what it has decided (these are called Determinations) should be the rates of payment to Members and co-optees of Local Authorities in Wales for the following year.
1.02	For 2019/20, the IRPW has made 45 Determinations, 20 of which are directly relevant to Flintshire County Council and 9 which relate to Town & Community Councils (the other Determinations relate to Fire & Rescue and National Park Authorities). The Panel's Determinations for 2019/20 are located in Annex 1 on page 57 of the attached IRPW report.
1.03	There is a slight change proposed for the basic salary of 1.97% which equates to £268 on each basic salary which will increase from £13,600 to £13,868 (Determination 1) To set this determination in context, the IRPW have produced analyses of basic members' salaries and alternative comparators between 2010 and 2018 and made the point that bench council members salaries have remained relatively static over 9 years. Over the same period, they have pointed out, assembly members' salaries have increased by 24% and members of parliament by 17.7%.
1.04	An increase of £800 is proposed for leaders and cabinet members which is inclusive of the £268 increase being paid to all Councillors (Determination 2). There is no specific increase (other than the basic increase paid to all members) for committee chairs and the leader of the largest opposition group
1.05	The payment rates for salaries to civic heads and deputies (which are paid to the Chair and Vice Chair of Council) were previously on a variable scale. However, the IRPW has found councils to be strongly opposed to making decisions on levels of civic salary. Therefore, the 'choice' element has been removed. A civic head must now receive a civic salary of £22,568 (the same as that proposed for committee chairs and a £500 increase on the current payment, level plus the £268 increase). The deputy civic head must receive a Band 5 salary of £17,568, which is an increase of £1,000). However, a council may decide not to apply any civic salary to either of these two posts (Determination 3)
1.06	Determinations 4 and 5 relate to the remuneration of presiding and deputy presiding officers. In Flintshire, the role of the civic head and deputy encompass those roles and so the determinations are not relevant here.
1.07	Determinations 6 and 7 relate to the provision of adequate telephone, email and internet facilities giving electronic access to appropriate information without cost to the individual member. Members will be aware that we provide I pads for most Members (a small number preferred not to use an iPad) and computers in the group rooms. The Constitution & Democratic Services Committee on 30 th January 2018 considered a report on the provision of mobile phones for members and decided against universal provision in favour of the very limited provision.

1.08	Determination 8 is a reiteration of the provision for specific or additional senior salaries which are outside the current remuneration framework. In Flintshire, we pay a senior salary to the chair of the Clwyd pensions Committee, but that additional cost is borne by the Clwyd Pension Fund rather than the Members' Allowances budget.
1.09	The entitlement for all eligible elected Members of principal councils to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is affirmed.(Determination 9).
1.10	Determinations 10- 15 deal with entitlements to Family Absence and cover substitution arrangements for senior salary holders.
1.11	Determinations 30 – 35 relate to co-opted members with voting rights. There is no increase in the fees payable, but the need to allow reasonable time for pre-meeting preparation, traveling and attending non-formal meetings are emphasised. The co-optees have previously been made aware of this.
1.12	Determination 36 reiterates that all authorities must provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children or adults provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs up to a maximum of £403 per month.

2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	The budget provision required for payment for Members' Salaries in 2019/20 will need to be increased by £268 per Councillor, resulting in an increase of £18, 760. In addition, there are proposed increases for cabinet members of £800 each (inclusive of the basic increase) which means a further £4,256. The proposed simplification of civic salaries means an increase of £500 for the Chair of Council and of £1,000 for the vice-chair. The resultant budget pressure including on costs is £29,549.

3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
3.01	This report is in response to external consultation. Group Leaders and their deputies have been made aware of the draft IRPW report in advance by email on 2 nd October 2018.

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

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	Appendix 1 - Covering letter from the IRPW. Appendix 2 - IRPW draft report for 2019/20.

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

7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	<p>IRPW – Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales is the independent body established by the Welsh Government to determine the level of Local Authority payments to Members.</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 which for 2017/18 is £13,400. For 2018/19, £13,600 is proposed.</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>