

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Democratic Services Committee

14th October 2021

Report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services – Mr Craig Griffiths

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected:

All wards

Draft Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Purpose of the Report:

To advise Members of the Democratic Services Committee of proposals set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales which, if implemented, would impact on Member remuneration in the civic year 2022/2023 and to seek the views of the Committee so as to inform the Council's formal response to the draft proposals.

Background:

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales exercises powers set out in various legislation and can also make recommendations. It has the power to set the level of remuneration payable to elected members and co-opted members of local authorities. It has also been given a general power to review councils' pay policy statements as far as they relate to heads of paid service, extended on a temporary basis to chief officers of principal authorities.

Before making its final determinations for the following civic year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales publishes a draft report each year and invites comments on its draft proposals. Proposals for 2021/22 are set out in the attached draft report which is before the

Committee for consideration today.

The proposed changes that would affect the existing arrangements in this Council are summarised in the table below:

Element of Remunerations	2021/2022	Proposed by IRPW for 2022/2023	Change
Basic Salary	£14,368	£16,800	+£2,432
Leader	£49,974	£56,700	+£6,726
Deputy Leader	£35,320	£39,906	+£4,586
Executive Members	£30,773	£34,020	+£3,247
Chairs of Committee	£23,161	£25,593	+£2,432
Leader of largest opposition Group	£23,161	£25,593	+£2,432
Leader of other Political Group	£18,108	£20,540	+£2,432
Civic Head	£23,161	£25,593	+£2,432
Deputy Civic Head	£18,108	£20,540	+£2,342

The limits on the number of senior salaries available to the Council remain unchanged as does the threshold for other opposition group leaders to qualify for the other political group leader salary.

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales take the view that as 2022 is an election year for local government and the new five year term, it provides the opportunity to reset the basic salaries of elected members to align with the average earnings in Wales. They consider that it is important that the payments to elected members of principal councils be fair and at a level that is not a disincentive to potential candidates for election and that levels of remuneration need to be set at a level sufficient to encourage a diversity of willing and able people to undertake local governance through elected, appointed or co-opted roles.

Financial Impacts:

The proposals would be contained within the budget provision.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

There is no requirement for an Integrated Impact Assessment as this is a report in respect of governance arrangements only.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

There are no valley community impacts

Workforce Impacts:

There are no workforce impacts associated with this reports.

Legal Impacts:

The Panel are exercising powers set out in Part 8 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, as amended by the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 and the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015.

Risk Management Impacts:

Any proposed increased to Member remuneration has the potential to attract public criticism at a time of severe and enduring austerity. The Panel acknowledge this in making its proposals but point to the workloads and responsibilities being borne by elected Members as justification for the proposed changes. Furthermore, the Panel provides details of how councillor remuneration is continuing to diverge from the benchmark rate

Consultation:

All Members were sent a copy of the draft Report on the 30th September 2021. The Panel is required to allow a minimum of 8 weeks between issuing its draft and final Annual Report.

Recommendations:

Members of the Democratic Services Committee are invited to consider the proposals set out in the draft Annual Report and to determine the nature of the Council's formal response to the proposals.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To formulate a response to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' draft Annual Report within the consultation timetable.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft IRPW Annual Report

List of Background Papers:

None

Officer Contact:

Craig Griffiths
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Tel: 01639 763767 or E-mail: c.griffiths2@npt.gov.uk

Stacy Curran
Democratic Services Manager (Head of Democratic Services)
Tel: 01639 763194 or E-mail: s.curran@npt.gov.uk