

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Democratic Services Committee**

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2023**

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

#### **Matter for Decision**

#### **Wards Affected:**

All wards

#### **Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2023/24**

#### **Purpose of the Report:**

To advise Members of the Democratic Services Committee of the content of the final Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for the civic year 2023/2024.

The link to the annual report is [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Annual Report - February 2023](#)

#### **Background:**

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) 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

## **Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales**

Each year, and before making its final determinations for the next civic year, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales publishes a draft report and invites comments on its draft proposals. The proposals proposed for the civic year 2023-24 were considered by this Committee in November 2022 and the following comments were forwarded to the IRPW:

From the Head of Democratic Services, Mrs Stacy Curran:

“As the Head of Democratic Services to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (“the Council”), I acknowledge receipt of your Draft Annual Report.

A copy of this draft report was taken to the Council’s Democratic Services Committee on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2022 for their comment and consideration and the members of the Democratic Services Committee note your proposals.

As the Council’s Head of Democratic Service, I am supportive of the increased proposed to the basic salary and senior salaries of elected members. A growing number of our elected members are of working age where the basic salary is their sole income. Remuneration must be sufficient to enable those members to carry out their role.

In terms of those receiving senior salary, whilst accepting that arrangements may vary from council to council, our local position is that the responsibilities shouldered by those in these roles and the hours worked have increased sharply. In addition to the significant service and policy changes necessary to respond to the cost of living crisis, the recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic and the Ukraine (among others), members are increasingly involved in complex partnership arrangements at the local, regional and national level.

I also attach the Council’s response to your set questions as part of the consultation.”

A copy of the consultation responses as agreed at the November meeting of the Democratic Services Committee are attached at Appendix 1.

The IRPW has now published its final proposals for the civic year 2023-24 and Members are asked to note that proposals are unchanged from those contained in the draft report.

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

<b>Element of Remunerations</b>	<b>2022/2023</b>	<b>Proposed by IRPW for 2023/2024</b>
Basic Salary	£16,800	£17,600
Leader	£56,700	£59,400
Deputy Leader	£39,906	£41, 580
Executive Members	£34,020	£35,640
Chairs of Committee	£25,593	£26,400
Leader of largest opposition Group	£25,593	£26,400
Leader of other Political Group	£20,540	£21,340
Civic Head	£25,593	£26,400
Deputy Civic Head	£20,540	£21,340

The Panel has re-emphasised the need for Democratic Services Committees to ensure that all elected members are given the support necessary for them to fulfil their duties effectively

### **Financial Impacts:**

The proposals would be contained within the budget provision.

### **Integrated Impact Assessment:**

A beneficial impact in attracting people from diverse backgrounds to stand for election as councillors.

### **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.

### **Consultation:**

All Members were sent a copy of the draft Report. The Committee and the Head of Democratic Services wrote, on behalf of the Chair and Committee to the IRPW, summarising Members' views on the draft proposals as outlined above

### **Recommendations:**

Members of the Democratic Services Committee are invited to note the contents of the final Annual Report issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

To note the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report to inform arrangements for the 2023/24 Civic Year.

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Consultation Questions response to the IRPW Draft Report November 2022

**List of Background Papers:**

None

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