

Report to: Democratic Services Committee

Date of Meeting: 19 October 2018

Lead Officer: Gary Williams (Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services)

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Title: Consultation on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Draft Annual Report for 2019 - 2020

1. What is the report about?

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) publishes an annual report on the level of payments and support to members each year. The draft version of the annual report is now available and outlined in this report.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) determine the level of payments and support available to members. These *determinations* or decisions are published in an annual report which is preceded by a draft version for consultation and this is attached.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee reviews the IRPW's draft annual report and considers a response to the IRPW's consultation exercise.

4. Report details

- 4.1 This month the IRPW has issued a draft annual report on the payments and support available to members during 2019 / 2020. The IRPW welcome comments on the draft proposals and their consultation closes on the 27 November 2018.
- 4.2 The final annual report which will set the levels and rules for payments is expected to be published in February 2019.
- 4.3 The IRPW note that the financial constraints on the public sector and particularly local authorities has meant that the link between councillors' salaries and average Welsh earnings has not been maintained over recent years. The IRPW wishes to avoid further erosion so is proposing to raise the basic salary available to all county councillors by 1.97% (£268) to £13,868.
- 4.4 The draft report proposes increasing the salaries for Cabinet members by £532. The IRPW notes that the post-holders have significant functional responsibility and,

compared to the remuneration of many other public sector roles, are not well paid. Cabinet members would also receive the proposed increase in the basic salary.

- 4.5 For recent years the IRPW has determined that any payments made to civic heads and deputy civic heads would be at one of three levels set for each role, with each local authority choosing which level best reflected the role. The draft report proposes removing the choice of levels with payments to the Chair of Council being set at the same level as a chair of a committee (£22,568 inclusive of the basic salary) which is, for the civic element, £500 higher than the remuneration available this year.
- 4.6 The IRPW proposes to set the salary for the deputy civic head (Vice Chair of Council) at £17,568. This would be an increase in the civic element of £3,000 on the current year.
- 4.7 The draft report does not propose changing the senior salary for committee chairs though each committee chair would receive the increase in the basic allowance.
- 4.8 Determination 6 in the draft annual report says:
- ‘The Panel has determined that each authority, through its Democratic Services Committee, must ensure that all its members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. All elected members should be provided with adequate telephone, email and internet facilities giving electronic access to appropriate information.’*
- 4.9 The IRPW also highlights its expectation that all voting co-opted members are given as much support as is necessary to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively; and this should be without cost to the individual co-optee.
- 4.10 From page 40 of the draft report the IRPW outlines their proposed changes to payments to members of city, town and community councils. Table 9 on page 46 summarises the scheme of payments being proposed.
- 4.11 Appendix 1 is a letter from the Chair of the IRPW and Appendix 2 contains a copy of the draft annual report. The following link can be used to view the documents online and for details of the consultation process:

<https://gov.wales/irpwsub/home/publication-reports/draft-annual-report-2019-20/?skip=1&lang=en>

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

No direct contribution.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no costs associated with this consultation exercise. Any increases in payments or support costs for members as a result of the IRPW’s final determinations will have to be met from the Council’s budgets.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

An impact assessment is not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Responding to the consultation by the IRPW is a function of the Democratic Services Committee. All members will receive notification of this item and will be able to attend the Committee's meeting. A report on the final determinations will be taken to full Council early next year.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

Not required.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The IRPW has authority to set the level of payments for members and make determinations regarding certain support issues. There are no risks identified with the matters raised in this report.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 111 Local Government Act 1972

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011