

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Meeting:	Democratic Services Committee
Date:	10 December 2019
Title of report:	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report for 2020/21
Report by:	Head of Democratic Services
Purpose of Report:	To report on the Panel’s draft proposals for 2020/21

1.0 Background

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP) is independent of central and local government and was initially established to determine the range and levels of allowances payable by county and county borough councils to their elected members and co-opted members with voting rights. Each year the Panel must produce an Annual Report which sets out the type and levels of payments that authorities may or must make available to their members and co-opted members.

The IRP’s Draft Annual Report for 2020/21 has been published for consultation, which closes on 10 December 2019. The final report will be published in February 2020.

Group Leaders have been made aware of the proposed changes affecting this Authority, as outlined below.

2.0 Basic Salary

The basic salary in 2020/21 for elected members of principal councils will be **£14,218** - an increase of £350 a year, which equates to 2.5%.

This salary shall be paid by each principal authority in Wales from 1 April 2020 to each of its elected members unless any individual member opts personally and in writing to receive a lower amount.

3.0 Senior and Civic Salaries

3.1 Number of senior salaries

The limit on the number of senior salaries payable will remain, ie a total of 16 for Anglesey, including civic salaries.

3.2 Payments to members of the Executive

No additional increases will be paid to members of the Executive in 2020. Such members received an uplift in last year's annual report and senior salary holders will receive only the basic salary element increase.

3.3 Committee Chairs and Leader of the Largest Opposition Group

No increase to the senior salary, but the total paid reflects the increase of £350 to the basic salary.

Councils are reminded that they do not have to pay chairs of committees. It is a matter for each council to decide which, if any, chairs of committees are remunerated. This allows councils to take account of differing levels of responsibility.

3.4 Senior Salary Bands

2020/21 Senior Salaries (which include the basic salary):		
Band 1	Leader	£44,450
	Deputy Leader	£31,450
Band 2	Members of the Executive	£27,450
Band 3	Committee Chairs (if paid)	£22,918
Band 4	Leader of the largest opposition group	£22,918
Band 5	Leader of other political groups	£17,918

3.5 Civic Salaries

The Panel had previously allowed councils to vary salaries of civic heads and deputy civic heads to reflect the specific responsibilities attached to the roles. However, councils have strongly expressed to the Panel that elected members do not wish to make any choices that require Councils themselves to choose. All such choices were removed in 2019. The Panel has decided that civic salaries of:

£22,918 (Band 3) be paid to civic heads (if paid) and

£17,918 (Band 5) be paid to deputy civic heads (if paid).

These posts are included in the cap.

4.0 Updated Determinations

4.1 Determination 4 - Payments to Presiding Members has been updated.

The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 allows councils to appoint a presiding member whose role is to chair meetings of the whole council. Where appointed, there would be a consequential reduction in the responsibilities of the respective civic head.

Councils are reminded that, if a presiding member is appointed, they do not have to be remunerated. If they are remunerated the post will count towards the cap and be paid at a Band 3 senior salary of £22,918.

The post of Deputy Presiding Member would not be remunerated.

4.2 Determination 7 – National Park Authorities / Fire and Rescue Authorities - has been updated. The additional wording has been outlined below in bold:

*Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary cannot receive a salary from any NPA or FRA to which they have been appointed. **They remain eligible to claim travel and subsistence expenses and reimbursement of costs of care.***

5.0 Implementing the Panel's Determinations

The Panel refers to one issue that has been a point of discussion during the last year - the action of the Council in respect of the reports of the Panel which it receives. The draft report states:

“When the Panel’s Annual Report is issued, principal councils must comply with the statutory requirements and apply all the relevant determinations. The proper officer of the council must put in place mechanisms for all eligible council members to receive payments as determined by the Panel. There are currently no options relating to levels of remuneration by principal councils that require a decision by full council. Levels of payments to which members are entitled cannot be varied by a vote of a principal council.

*Only an individual member may communicate in writing to the proper officer if, **as an individual**, they wish to decline all or part of the payment to which they are entitled.*

How the IRPW Annual Report is formally received or noted by full council is not a matter that is within the Panel’s statutory remit. Individual constitutions or standing orders of councils may vary as to matters that may be submitted to full council for consideration. It is for each council to decide how they wish to manage receipt of the IRPW Report and if appropriate seek the advice of their legal officers. However, all council members and officers should take care that no misleading statements are made or reported in media, in particular, an indication that a council has taken a decision to reduce or vary levels of payments. There are no powers that permit a principal council to take such action.”

The relevant part of the Council’s Constitution is set out below:

“6.1 Members’ Schedule of Remuneration

6.1.1 The range and levels of Allowances payable are specified in the Schedule to this scheme, which shall be updated annually or on any change.

6.1.2 Any other changes to the Schedule or to this scheme must be approved by the full Council.

6.1.3 Payment of allowances will be made by the Head of Function (Resources) / S151 Officer as provided in this scheme.

6.1.4 The Head of Democratic Services will deal with any changes affecting entitlement to basic, senior and civic salaries.”

The ‘Members’ Schedule of Remuneration following receipt of the IRP’s annual report’ is also currently included in the Council’s Policy Framework under section 3.2.2.1.1 – those required by law to be adopted by the Council.

6.0 Recommendation

The Committee is requested to consider the draft determinations within the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for 2020/2021 and whether it wishes to respond to the consultation.

Huw Jones
Head of Democratic Services
2/12/19

Background paper: The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report 2020/21
https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/independent-remuneration-panel-draft-annual-report-2020-2021_0.pdf