

<b>ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL</b>	
<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Democratic Services Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>25 March 2015</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Annual Report for 2015/16</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Interim Head of Democratic Services</b>
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<b>To inform the Committee of determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales with regard to member support</b>

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The Panel requires all local authorities to publish Schedules of Member Remuneration by 31 July each year. The purpose of the Schedules is to ensure openness and transparency across all authorities regarding payments made to elected members. This Council complied in full with the Panel's requirements with regard to the 2014/15 municipal year.
- 1.3 The payments to members and co-opted members for 2015/16 as prescribed by the IRP in its annual report (February 2015) will be reported to the full Council on 14 May 2015. This is summarised in **Appendix 1**. In relation to civic salaries, there is discretion for the Council to set payments within prescribed limits. This aspect will be discussed with group leaders in advance of the Council meeting.
- 1.4 This report concentrates on the Panel's expectations with regard to supporting the work of local authority elected members.

## **2.0 Supporting the work of local authority elected members**

- 2.1 In its Annual Report for 2014/15 (published February 2014), the Panel noted with concern the wide variation and inconsistency of support provided to members to enable them to discharge their functions effectively. The Panel determined that:
- in order to provide consistency such support should be provided without cost to the individual elected member

- costs of support must be appropriate, reasonable and publicly declared
- deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective authority as a contribution towards those support costs which the authority considers necessary for the effectiveness and/or efficiency of members

2.2 In its 2015/16 Report (published February 2015), the Panel states that it remains concerned with regard to this issue. It notes that the functions of Democratic Services Committees include a requirement to review the level of support provided to members to carry out their duties and that the Panel would expect these committees to carry this out and bring forward proposals to the full Council as to what is considered to be reasonable.

2.3. 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 and email facilities and electronic access to appropriate information.
- such support should be without cost to the individual member. Deductions must not be made from members' salaries by the respective authority as a contribution towards the cost of support which the authority has decided necessary for the effectiveness and/or efficiency of members.

2.4 It is suggested that the views of members be sought as to whether the support they receive is sufficient to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively. This would allow the Committee to consider the responses as part of its 2015/16 work programme and report back to the full Council.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

The Committee is requested:

- 3.1 to note the determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales with regard to member support;
- 3.2 to authorise the Interim Head of Democratic Services to seek the views of members as to whether the support they receive is sufficient to enable them to fulfil their duties effectively.

**Huw Jones**  
**Interim Head of Democratic Services**  
**17/03/15**

## Member Remuneration for 2015/16 as prescribed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (February 2015)

### 1.0 Payments to elected members of principal councils

#### Basic salary

- 1.1 The Panel has determined there shall be no increase in the level of basic salary for members of principal councils. Basic salary for elected members shall therefore remain at **£13,300** for 2015/16.

#### Senior salaries

- 1.2 The Council has discretion on the number of senior salaries it pays, up to the maximum set by the Panel. The maximum number of senior salaries for the Isle of Anglesey remains at 15 for 2015/16 and this figure still includes civic salaries. For 2014/15, the Council decided to allocate senior salaries to 14 office-holders.
- 1.3 A council must make a senior salary available to the leader of the largest opposition group. The stipulation that an opposition group leader or any other group leader must represent at least 10% of the council membership before qualifying for a senior salary remains unchanged.
- 1.4 The Panel has determined that senior salary levels for 2015/16 for members of principal councils shall remain as set out below:

<b>Senior Salaries (inclusive of Basic Salary):</b>		
<b>Band 1</b>	Leader	<b>£43,000</b>
	Deputy Leader	<b>£30,000</b>
<b>Band 2</b>	Other Executive members	<b>£26,000</b>
<b>Band 3</b>	Committee Chairs (if remunerated)	<b>£22,000</b>
<b>Band 4</b>	Leader of largest opposition group*	<b>£22,000</b>
<b>Band 5</b>	Leader of other political group*	<b>£17,000</b>

#### Civic heads and deputy civic heads

- 1.5 The Panel remains of the view that it is appropriate for authorities to set remuneration levels which reflect activity and responsibility rather than population. A council may decide not to apply any civic salary to the posts of civic head and deputy civic head.
- 1.6 The Council therefore has discretion to pay a civic salary (inclusive of basic salary) in accordance with the following payment levels prescribed by the IRP:

<b>Civic Salaries (inclusive of Basic Salary):</b>	
Civic Head (Chair of Council)	<b>A - £24,000</b> <b>B - £21,500</b> <b>C - £19,000</b>
Deputy Civic Head (Deputy Chair of Council)	<b>A - £18,000</b> <b>B - £16,000</b> <b>C - £14,000</b>

- 1.7 In 2014/15 the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council received a salary of £19,000 and £14,000 respectively, inclusive of basic salary.

### **Payments to presiding members**

- 1.8 The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 allows councils to appoint an additional post of presiding member whose role it will be to chair meetings of the whole council. Where appointed, there would be a consequential reduction in the responsibilities of the respective civic head. The Panel has determined that, where appointed and if remunerated, a presiding member must be paid a Band 3 senior salary of £22,000 and that this post would count towards the maximum cap and that the post of deputy presiding member will not be remunerated.
- 1.9 The Council resolved on 27 February 2014 not to proceed in this respect.

### **Key factors underpinning the Panel's determinations**

- 1.10 The basic salary, paid to all members, is remuneration for the responsibility of community representation and participation in the scrutiny, regulatory and related functions of local governance at the time equivalent of three days a week. Any time commitment beyond three days is an unpaid public service contribution.
- 1.11 The remuneration of council leaders and executive members (Band 1 and Band 2 senior salaries) is based on the Panel's assumption that the roles are equivalent to full-time.
- 1.12 The prescribed salary and expenses must be paid in full to each member unless an individual has independently and voluntarily opted in writing to the authority's proper officer to forego all or any element of the payment.

The following must be applied:

- 1.13 An elected member must not be remunerated for more than one senior post within his or her authority.
- 1.14 An elected member must not be paid a senior salary and a civic salary.

- 1.15 All senior and civic salaries are paid inclusive of basic salary.
- 1.16 If a council chooses to have more than one remunerated deputy leader, the difference between the senior salary for the deputy leader and the other executive members should be divided by the number of deputy leaders and added to the senior salary for other executive members in order to calculate the senior salary payable to each deputy leader.
- 1.17 Members in receipt of Band 1 and Band 2 Senior Salaries cannot receive a salary from any National Park Authority or Fire and Rescue Authority for which they have been appointed.

**Specific or additional senior salaries**

- 1.18 In order to allow flexibility at a local level, the Panel in its February 2014 report introduced the opportunity for authorities to apply for specific or additional senior salaries outside the remuneration framework. The IRP has noted in this year’s report that only one application has been received to date.

**Allocation of senior salaries for 2015/16**

- 1.19 The Council will be requested at its meeting on 14 May 2015 to confirm the number of members entitled to a senior salary during 2015/16.

**2.0 Supporting the work of local authority elected members**

- 2.1 The Panel remains concerned that there has been a wide variation and inconsistency of support provided to members. The functions of Democratic Services Committees include a requirement to review the level of support provided to members to carry out their duties and the Panel would expect these committees to carry this out and bring forward proposals to the full council as to what is considered to be reasonable.

**3.0 Payments to co-opted members of principal councils**

The determinations for 2015/16 are set out below:

<b>Principal councils must pay the following fees to co-opted members (who have voting rights):</b>	
Chairs of standards committees and audit committees	£256 (4 hours and over) £128 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for community and town councils	£226 daily fee (4 hours and over) £113 (up to 4 hours)
Ordinary members of standards committees; education scrutiny committee; crime and disorder scrutiny committee and audit committee	£198 (4 hours and over) £99 (up to 4 hours)

- 3.1 Reasonable time for pre meeting preparation is eligible to be included in claims made by co-opted members, the extent of which can be determined by the appropriate officer in advance of the meeting.

- 3.2 Travelling time to and from the place of the meeting can be included in the claims for payments made by co-opted members (up to the maximum of the daily rate).
- 3.3 The appropriate officer within the authority can determine in advance whether a meeting is programmed for a full day and the fee will be paid on the basis of this determination even if the meeting finishes before four hours has elapsed.
- 3.4 Meetings eligible for the payment of fee include other committees and working groups (including task and finish groups) pre-meetings with officers, training and attendance at conferences or any other formal meeting to which co-opted members are requested to attend.
- 3.5 Authorities can decide on the maximum number of days in any one year for which co-opted members may be paid.

#### **4.0 Other payments and allowances**

The remainder of this paper details other payments and allowances payable as prescribed by the IRP.

##### **Reimbursement of mileage costs**

- 4.1 The Panel has decided there will be no charge in 2015/16 to mileage rates which members are entitled to claim. All authorities may only reimburse travel costs for their members undertaking official business at current HMRC rates which are:
- 45p per mile – up to 10,000 miles in a year by car
  - 25p per mile – over 10,000 miles in a year by car
  - 5p per passenger per mile – passenger supplement
  - 24p per mile – motor cycles
  - 20p per mile – bicycles
- 4.2 Authorities should pay mileage at the prescribed rates to a member who has been a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone else provided the authority is satisfied that a cost has been incurred by the member.
- 4.3 The Panel notes that the UK Government has announced in its Autumn Statement 2014 that travel expenses paid to councillors by their local authority will be exempt from Income Tax and employee NICs. The exemption will be limited to the Approved Mileage Allowance Payment rates where it applies to mileage payments. This change will take effect from 6 April 2015.

##### **Reimbursement of subsistence costs**

- 4.4 Reimbursement of subsistence expenses for members and co-opted members are based on the maximum rates set out below by the Panel on the basis of receipted claims except for occasions when members stay with friends and/or family:

- £28 per day – day allowance for meals, including breakfast, where not provided in the overnight charge
- £150 per night - London
- £95 per night – elsewhere
- £25 per night – overnight staying with friends and/or family

### **Reimbursement of the costs of care**

- 4.5 The Panel has determined that all authorities must provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) up to a maximum of £403 per month. Reimbursement shall only be made on production of receipts from the carer.
- 4.6 The reimbursement of the costs of care is intended to enable any person whose ability to participate as a member of an authority would be limited by their responsibility as a carer. The Panel recognises that there is some sensitivity concerning the publication of this legitimate expense. However, the Panel has urged authorities to promote this allowance and encourage greater take-up of this support to facilitate increased engagement amongst authority members.
- 4.7 Such provision would be especially relevant to those individuals in sectors of the population that are currently under-represented on authorities but who may become engaged when awareness of the support available for the costs of care becomes more widely known.

### **Entitlement to family absence**

- 4.8 The Regulations relating to family absence for elected members of principal councils were approved by the National Assembly for Wales in November 2013. The Panel issued a supplementary report in March 2014. The determinations contained in the supplementary report have been consolidated in the February 2015 annual report and are set out below:
- An elected member is entitled to retain a basic salary when taking family absence under the regulations irrespective of the attendance record immediately preceding the commencement of family absence.
  - When a senior salary holder is eligible for family absence, he/she will continue to receive the salary for the duration of the absence.
  - It is a matter for the authority to decide whether or not to make a substitute payment. The elected member substituting for a senior salary holder taking family absence will be eligible to be paid a senior salary, if the authority so decides.
  - If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries which relates to it, as set out in the Panel's Annual Report, an addition to the maximum will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. However, this will not apply to this Council if it would result in the number of senior salaries exceeding 50% of the Council membership. Specific approval of Welsh Government is required in such circumstances.

- When an authority agrees a paid substitution for family absence, the Panel must be informed, within 14 days of the date of the decision, of the details, including the particular post and the duration of the substitution.
- The schedule of remuneration must be amended to reflect the implication of the family absence.

### **Pension provision**

- 4.9 The Local Government (Wales) (Measure) 2011 provides a power to the Panel to make determinations on pension entitlement for elected members of principal councils.
- 4.10 The Panel has determined that the entitlement to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) shall apply to all eligible elected members of principal councils.

March 2015