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ISLE OF ANGLESEY
COUNTY COUNCIL

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RHYBUDD O GYFARFOD	NOTICE OF MEETING
PWYLLGOR GWASANAETHAU DEMOCRATAIDD	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DYDD MERCHER, 20 MAWRTH 2024 am 2.00 o'r gloch	WEDNESDAY, 20 MARCH 2024 at 2.00 pm
CYFARFOD HYBRID – YN YSTAFELL BWYLLGOR 1 AC YN RHITHWIR	HYBRID MEETING – IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1 AND VIRTUALLY
Swyddog Pwyllgor	Shirley Cooke 01248 752514 Committee Officer

AELODAU / MEMBERS

Cynghorwyr / Councillors:-

Plaid Cymru / The Party of Wales

Non Dafydd, Carwyn E Jones, Llio A Owen, Dylan Rees, Alwen Pennant Watkin (Is-Gadeirydd/Vice-Chair)

Annibynnwyr Môn / Anglesey Independents

Jeff Evans, Aled Morris Jones

Y Grŵp Annibynnol / The Independent Group

Gwilym O Jones

Plaid Lafur Cymru / Wales Labour Party

Keith Roberts (Cadeirydd/Chair)

A G E N D A

1 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of interest from a Member or Officer in respect of any item of business.

2 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 10)

To submit for confirmation, the draft minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 29 November 2023.

3 **INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES – ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024/2025** (Pages 11 - 14)

To submit a report by the Head of Democracy.

4 **DEMOCRATIC SERVICES UPDATE** (Pages 15 - 18)

To submit a report by the Head of Democracy.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2023

- PRESENT:** Councillor Keith Roberts (Chair)
- Councillors Non Dafydd, Jeff Evans, Carwyn E Jones, Gwilym O Jones, Llio A Owen, Dylan Rees
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Head of Democracy
Legal Services Manager/Deputy Monitoring Officer (for Item 4)
Solicitor (Corporate Governance) (MY) (for Item 3)
Human Resources Training Officer (AJ) (for Item 5)
Committee Officer (SC)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor Alwen P Watkin
Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As the Vice-chair was not in attendance, the Chair asked the Committee to nominate a Vice-chair for today's meeting, and Councillor Gwilym Jones was elected.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillors Jeff Evans and Dylan Rees declared a personal interest in Item 3 on the agenda (Paragraph 4.11.9), as they represent the Council on outside bodies for the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service and North Wales Police Authority

2. MINUTES

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 June 2023 were presented and confirmed as correct.

Matters arising from the minutes: -

In relation to some members not submitting annual reports, the Head of Democracy responded that he has raised this matter in Group Leaders' meetings and the Standards Committee has also raised the issue. He reported that no further annual reports have been received for the period 2022/23 but stated that the percentage of reports submitted has increased since last year. It was noted that he will continue to work with members and Group Leaders on the process of presenting annual reports for this year, but reminded the Committee that it is not a statutory requirement.

3. THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION

Submitted – a report by the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer on the County Council's Constitution, which was adopted in 2001 and frequently updated and revised since to reflect changing legal requirements or new local arrangements. The most recent update was on 27 October 2023.

The Solicitor (Corporate Governance) reported that Welsh Government has provided funding to the WLGA to commission a new Model Constitution for use in all local authorities in Wales. She stated that Enclosure 1 contains a draft version of Sections 1 – 4 of the proposed new Constitution and Enclosure 2 highlights matters that the Monitoring Officer has recognised as new or different, which need to be drawn to the Committee's attention. It was noted that in the new Constitution, the language is clearer, the order and numbering of documents is easier to follow and are more accessible to the public.

The Solicitor (Corporate Governance) sought the Committee's views on Sections 1 - 4 of the new Constitution. She reported that another section of the new Model will be brought before the Committee in March 2024. She stated that responses to all Sections will be combined into one report, which will be presented to Full Council for approval at a later date.

The Committee considered the draft new Model Constitution and responded as follows, in relation to the matters identified as those requiring the Committee's resolution in Appendix 2: -

1. (2.2) Definitions in the Constitution

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

2. (2.4) Duty to Monitor and Review the Constitution

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

3. (2.6.1) Approval

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

4. (3.1.2) Information Available to Councillors of the Council

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

5. (4.6.25)

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

6. (4.10.1.1)

Discussion focused on whether the proposal should be amended further regarding the Leader having to identify members of the Cabinet and their responsibilities in

writing within 7 days. The Committee felt that this arrangement might not be feasible within the specified time constraints and asked for this political issue to be reviewed.

RESOLVED that the Solicitor (Corporate Governance) seeks clarification on the consequences, should this arrangement be adopted and there was political stalemate.

7. (4.10.1.3 (f))

Clarification was sought on the time limit for announcements from Group Leaders to be presented to the Chair in advance of a meeting.

RESOLVED that announcements from Group Leaders must be approved by the Chair in advance of the meeting. The Committee agreed that a minimum of 24 hours would be a reasonable period to inform the Chair of any announcement prior to a meeting.

8. (4.11.9)

Members of the Committee representing the North Wales Fire and Rescue and North Wales Police Authorities clarified that money received towards the Police is a precept within the Council Tax, whilst the Fire Service places a levy on local authorities, which is included in the overall Council Tax. The Committee agreed that both stakeholders should present update reports to the County Council, rather than councillors feeding back from outside bodies.

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report in respect of the North Wales Police and North Wales Fire Service, and for other outside bodies to provide feedback only when the Council needs to make a decision or respond to a consultation.

9. (4.11.13)

RESOLVED to accept to retain the status quo noted as Option A in Appendix 2 of the report.

10. (4.11.14(b))

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

11. (4.13.2)

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

12. (4.16.4) Notice of Questions

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

13. (4.16.5) Maximum Number of Questions

A member raised a question as to the wording of 'Any questions remaining unanswered 'shall' be resubmitted to the Chief Executive for the next County Council meeting.' Clarity was sought on the wording, which suggests that questions will be placed automatically on the next agenda. The Solicitor (Corporate Governance) agreed to look at this matter further.

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report, subject to the Solicitor (Corporate Governance) reviewing the wording.

14. (4.16.7) Contents of Questions

Discussion focused on the Monitoring Officer's comments that the Council can have a policy on almost anything, therefore 'why would it not be fair to ask a question of fact?'

RESOLVED to accept the Monitoring Officer's proposal to reject Sections (b) and (c) as noted in Appendix 2 of the report.

15. (4.16.8(c))

RESOLVED that where a verbal response cannot be given, a written response shall be added to the minutes of the meeting in due course. Separate publication of the response was not agreed. The Committee also resolved that such responses should be made in accordance with corporate response times.

16. (4.17.4) Motion to Remove the Leader

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

17. (4.17.5) One Motion per Councillor

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

18. (4.19) State of County Debate

RESOLVED to maintain the status quo i.e. the Leader's Annual Report noted as Option 1 in Appendix 2 of the report.

19. (4.22.1) Signing the Minutes

RESOLVED to accept the proposed change to 'authenticate' the minutes.

20. (4.22.2) No requirement to Sign Minutes of Previous Meeting at Extraordinary Meeting

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

21. (4.23) Record of Attendance

RESOLVED to agree with the proposal of the Chief Executive as noted in the report i.e. to create one electronic Register.

22. (4.26.3) Clearance of Online Meeting Platform

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

23. (4.27) Filming and Use of Social Media during Meetings

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

24. (4.28) Electronic Broadcast of Meetings

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes noted in the report.

25. (4.31) Appointment of Substitute Members on Council Bodies

RESOLVED to accept the proposed changes as noted in the report, and not in accordance with the Chief Executive's suggestion noted in Appendix 2 of the report.

The Solicitor (Corporate Governance) asked the Committee for permission to change the numbering in the 'Contents' pages of Appendix 1, to which the Committee agreed.

4. THE COUNCIL'S INDEMNITIES POLICY

Submitted – a report by the Legal Services Manager on reviewing and endorsing the Council's current Indemnities Policy, adopted in 2011, which was last reviewed in 2021.

The Legal Services Manager reported that the Indemnities Policy dates back to 2006, when the Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) (Wales) Order 2006 became legislation and local authorities were permitted to offer indemnities (and insurance) to members and officers when discharging their duties.

The Legal Services Manager reported that the County Council's insurance policy shares the same role as the Indemnities Policy in most areas, but in addition offers protection to compensate members in cases where the Code of Conduct has been breached, as the Code is outside the scope of the insurance policy. He stated that the insurance company set the terms and conditions of insurance and decide whether a claim for an indemnity under the policy be accepted or refused. It was noted that the County Council's Indemnities Policy was amended in 2013 to include a cap of £20,000 on any claim under the Order. The Indemnities Policy will be reviewed at the beginning of 2024.

The Legal Services Manager reported that the Council has an Indemnities Sub-Committee in place to determine applications for indemnities in accordance with the Policy. A request for an indemnity would be at the discretion of the Sub-Committee, who could grant one subject to terms and conditions, or could refuse the

application. The Legal Services Manager stated that there is no right of appeal beyond the Sub-Committee, and if an individual was found guilty and subjected to a sanction, there would be a requirement to repay any money received. Where a sanction less than a suspension is imposed, it is up to the Standards Committee to decide whether any money should be repaid.

Members expressed concern that the cap of £20,000 on claims has not been reviewed since 2013. The Legal Services Manager responded that there is no mechanism in place to review the maximum payment, but stated that should a case arise, the Sub-Committee could review the cap, provided that there would be a genuine reason to do so.

RESOLVED:-

- **To note the Policy and its purpose to implement the powers granted to the Council by the Order.**
- **That the Committee requests the review considers increasing the £20,000 cap on claims, as it is over 10 years since the cap was imposed.**

5. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

The Human Resources Training Officer gave an update on the Elected Member Training and Development Plan for 2023/24.

The HR Training Officer reported that the Training Plan for 2023/24 in Appendix 1 continues to be shared in categories ie mandatory training; general training; Health and Wellbeing; Training on Request; E-Learning Modules that are available on the E-Learning Platform Learning Pool. She stated that from April 2023, 27 training and development sessions have been offered to elected members to date.

Reference was made to Appendix 2 of the report, which highlights the number of members who have accepted invitations to attend training and how many attended the sessions. It was noted that to date, every member has completed training on the Code of Conduct, 15 have attended Health and Safety training (additional training is scheduled for February 2024); 29 have completed Data Protection and 29 have completed Safeguarding. The Officer stated that corporate training and Cyber Security sessions will be available to members and staff in due course.

The Head of Democracy reported that good collaboration continues between the Human Resources Training Team and Democratic Services. The Training Team share quarterly updates on training with the Head of Democracy, which is shared with Group Leaders. He further stated that there is now greater emphasis on Health, Welfare and Corporate training, which offers an element of personal safety as well.

The HR Training Officer reported that training delivery is taking place in the classroom, though the option of online training is still being considered. She stated that the Training Plan is continually evolving to include any changes in legislation etc. It was noted that where possible, Welsh medium training is being sought with English translation.

A member expressed concern that although 35 invitations had been sent out for the session on menopause awareness, no elected members attended. The HR Training Officer responded that this session has been very popular with staff and will be included in next year's programme.

RESOLVED to note the content of the report.

6. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) – DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024-25

Submitted – a report by the Head of Democracy on the IRPW's draft proposals for 2024-25.

The Head of Democracy reported that the Council has until 8 December to respond to the IRPW's consultation on the draft proposals, together with 6 other specific questions. He requested that the Committee consider and comment on the draft proposals and authorise officers to respond in line with the Committee's deliberations.

The Committee responded as follows: -

Question 1 - Uplift of remuneration using the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)

The Head of Democracy reported that the proposed payments to elected members would increase by 6%, adding £50,000 to the cost, compared to the previous year. He stated that senior officers, including the Section 151 Officer have accepted the proposed changes.

Question 2 - Local flexibility for payment to co-opted individuals

The Head of Democracy reported that the IRP proposes to provide local flexibility for relevant officers to pay co-opted members an hourly rate rather than the current half or full day's pay. He stated that the Standards Committee support the change, on condition that the extra work does not place an administrative burden on officers. It was noted that financial remuneration for independent members has not increased since 2021/22 in line with other areas.

Question 3 – Encouraging sustainable travel

The Head of Democracy reported that the IRP has requested examples of good practice in terms of how the County Council encourages and supports sustainable travel. He stated that the Council is committed to sustainable travel and participates by e.g. providing bike storage facilities; promoting the bike to work scheme; maps are being drawn up for members of the public to show how they can travel to the headquarters using public transport.

Question 4 – Awareness of the entitlements of representatives

The Head of Democracy reported that the IRP is seeking evidence of steps taken by the Authority to ensure that elected and co-opted members are aware of the allowances and expenditure they are entitled to claim. He reported that the Council will share evidence of how it promotes awareness of entitlements e.g. the IRP's final report will be presented to the full Council. It was also noted that the IRP'S proposals are discussed in formal meetings twice a year, as well as in briefings in specific meetings. The Council also has a page on its website explaining the entitlements of representatives.

Question 5 – Publication of consolidated sums for Community and Town Councils

The Head of Democracy reported that as this question relates to Community and Town Councils, the Council does not intend to respond to this question.

Question 6 – Publication of consolidated sums for other bodies

The Head of Democracy reported that the IRP are reviewing whether to consolidate some sums which are published according to individual members of principal councils. He stated that the Panel proposes to combine travel expenses and working from home costs to only show the total amounts paid, in the hope of encourage more members to claim.

A member raised concern that consolidating expenses and allowances might relay the wrong impression and suggested that expenses continue to be shown separately. The Head of Democracy responded that the intention of this proposal is to combine some of those additional costs, with members' allowances being shown separately. He reported that he would ask for confirmation regarding this matter as part of the Council's response.

RESOLVED that the Head of Democracy writes to the IRP with the Committee's comments on the draft proposals, as noted below: -

Question 1 - To accept the proposals;

Question 2 - To accept the proposals and include the comments noted;

Question 3 – To accept the proposals and provide examples of good practice currently undertaken by the Council;

Question 4 – To accept the proposals and include comments noted on how the Council raises awareness of the entitlements of representatives;

Question 5 - N/A

Question 6 – To accept the proposal and request confirmation as to whether members' allowances and expenses would be shown separately.

The meeting concluded at 12:20 pm

**COUNCILLOR KEITH ROBERTS
CHAIR**

Isle of Anglesey County Council	
Committee:	Democratic Services Committee
Date:	20 March 2024
Title of report:	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Annual Report for 2024 to 2025
Report by:	Head of Democratic Services
Purpose of report:	To report on the Panel's final determinations for 2024 to 2025

1.0 Background

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) is responsible for setting the levels and arrangements for the remuneration of members of the following organisations:

- Principal councils – county and county borough councils
- Town and community councils
- National park authorities
- Fire and rescue authorities
- Corporate joint committees

The Panel is an independent body and is able to make decisions about:

- the salary structure within which members are remunerated
- the type and nature of allowances to be paid to members
- whether payments are mandatory or allow a level of local flexibility
- arrangements in respect of family absence
- arrangements for monitoring compliance with the Panel's decisions

The organisations listed above are required, by law, to implement the decisions it makes.

The draft annual report was submitted to this Committee at its meeting on 29 November 2023. The final report was published on 27 February 2023 and will be effective from April 2024.

2.0 The Panel's final determinations for 2024-2025

2.1 Payments to elected members

The following table lists the 15 post holders entitled to receive senior and civic salaries in 2023-2024 (as determined by the full Council on 23 May 2023) and compares current salaries with the salaries payable from April 2024:

Schedule of Member Remuneration	2023-2024	2024-2025
Basic salary for all members, included in all senior and civic salaries below	£17,600	£18,666
Band 1:		
Leader	£56,100	£59,498
Deputy Leader	£39,270	£41,649
Band 2:		
Executive Members	£33,660	£35,699
Band 3:		
Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee	£26,400	£27,999
Chair of the Partnership and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee	£26,400	£27,999
Chair of the Planning and Orders Committee	£26,400	£27,999
Chair of the Council	£26,400	£27,999
Band 4:		
Leader of the largest opposition group	£26,400	£27,999
Band 5:		
Vice-Chair of the Council	£21,340	£22,406

2.2 Senior and Civic Salaries

The maximum number of senior salaries payable (“the cap”) will remain in place in 2024-25, ie a total of 17 for Anglesey, including civic salaries.

The full Council will be required to confirm the number of senior salaries payable in 2024-25 at its meeting in May 2024.

2.3 Payments to co-opted members

Currently, co-opted members should be remunerated on a day or half day basis. However, the Panel has noted a move towards more frequent use of online meetings and/or training courses. These are often short and committees tend to meet more regularly.

The Panel has therefore determined that there should be local flexibility for the relevant officer to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or half day rate, or to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings.

The Panel also intends to provide examples of good practice, as guidance.

Role	Hourly rate	Up to 4 hours	4 hours and over
Chairs of standards and audit committees	£33.50	£134	£268
Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for town and community councils	£29.75	£119	£238
Ordinary members of standards committees, education scrutiny committees, crime and disorder scrutiny committees and audit committees	£26.25	£105	£210

2.3 Other payments

As there are no further changes to payments, previous determinations will still stand. All current determinations are published on the Panel's website.

3.0 Recommendation

The Committee is requested to note the determinations within the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' annual report for 2024 to 2025 (February 2024)

Background paper: the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual report, 2024 to 2025 (February 2024):

[Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2024 to 2025 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

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ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL	
Committee:	Democratic Services Committee
Date:	20 March 2024
Title of report:	Democratic Services Update
Purpose of report:	To update the Committee on the work of the service in relation to member support and governance.
Author:	Dyfan Sion, Head of Democratic Services

Background

1. Reports were presented to the Committee in 2023 on a number of matters relating to governance and member support, including member training, member annual reports, and the hybrid meetings protocol.
2. With the civic year coming to an end, this report provides an update on those matters and an explanation of the arrangements for the year ahead.

Protocol for Hybrid Meetings

3. The Protocol was revised during summer 2023 in order to combine two documents and to provide clear and current guidance to members of Council committees. During the process of developing the new protocol, we consulted with the Democratic Committee, Group Leaders and the Standards Committee.
4. The aim of the Protocol is to support and complement the guidance and procedures contained in the Council's Constitution, by providing additional information on hybrid meeting arrangements. It also aims to support the Member Code of Conduct by explaining the expectations on Members when they take part in remote meetings.
5. The Protocol was shared with members in October and was published on the Council's intranet. Following this, the statement at the start of each committee meeting which is read by the Chair was also revised to reflect the main changes / messages in the Protocol. For example, it highlights the requirement for

members attending remotely to keep their cameras on during meetings and to inform the Chair if they need to leave the meeting.

6. It is almost six months since the new Protocol was shared and it seems to be well embedded in Council committee arrangements. We are currently reviewing the Protocol to consider whether it needs further reform or to raise awareness among members. We would welcome any comments from Committee members as we do so.

Elected members' Annual Reports

7. Considerable effort was made in 2023 to encourage and facilitate annual reports by elected members on their work during the year. The reports are not a statutory requirement, but they are a useful way of informing constituents about the work members do on behalf of the Council and the community.
8. Twenty-six reports were received from members for the period 22/23. That was a significant increase on 21/22. All reports have been published on the Council's website.
9. We will send a reminder to members about the process and schedule for 23/24 soon and share a modified template. Following comments in this Committee and from other members, we have tried to simplify the template and use links to information already on the Council's website.

Member register of interests

10. The register of interests of each elected member has been published on the Council's website.
11. A message was sent by democratic services to all members in September reminding them to check the information and review it regularly to ensure it is up to date. Members were also reminded to register any changes in circumstances within 28 working days.
12. The Standards Committee has been reviewing the registers recently and we will continue to remind members of the need to keep them up to date.

Annual Development Review

13. It's good practice for all members to be offered an annual development conversation with the leader of their political group or another person with the appropriate skills. The conversations should take place before the end of April

so that any comments about training requirements can be considered in developing the member training plan for 24/25.

14. A template was recently shared with group leaders with a suggested structure for the conversation. It includes questions about members' skills, knowledge and well-being.

Member Training and Development

15. The following training has been offered to members over 33 sessions throughout the year:

Training	Number attended
Fraud and corruption awareness for Elected Members	17
Code of Conduct	6
Data Protection	14
Introduction to Climate Change	21
Complaints	11
Safeguarding awareness	15
Chairing skills	4
Safe Leadership and Personal Safety	11
Dealing with the Press	3
Gypsies and Travellers Cultural awareness	13
1-1 IT skills	7
Principles of Effective Scrutiny	1
Trauma Informed Island	5
Anti - Racism	21
Personal Safety for Councillors	1
Progressive Community Leadership Training	14
Council Constitution	1

16. Further training sessions on Risk Management, Strengthening Leadership and Rent Smart Wales have been organised before the end of March.

17. There are still some members who have not attended all the required mandatory courses:

Training	Number
Safeguarding	6
Data Protection	6
Health and Safety	9
Equalities	4
Cyber Awareness	2

18. We have established a process of submitting quarterly reports to group leaders on the training of their group members. That is intended to improve the information available about any training gaps, particularly mandatory training.

19. The training team will present a draft member training programme for 24/25 at the Democratic Services Committee meeting in June. By then the plan will have been developed considering any issues raised from members' annual development meetings. We also welcome the Committee's views on any training that should be prioritised.

Recommendation

20. For the Committee to note the content of the report and provide comments on any of the issues raised.