

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2021

- PRESENT:** Councillor Robert Llewelyn Jones (Chair)
- Councillors Richard Griffiths, Vaughan Hughes, Robert G Parry, OBE, FRAgS, Dylan Rees, Dafydd Roberts
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Head of Democratic Services
Human Resources Training Manager (MW)
Human Resources Training Officer (CD)
Committee Officer (SC)
- APOLOGIES:** Councillors John Griffith, J Arwel Roberts
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1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2. MINUTES

The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 November 2020 were confirmed as correct.

3. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021/22

Submitted – an update report by the Head of Democratic Services on the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRPW)'s final Annual Report published on 25 February 2021, setting out the type and levels of payments that authorities may or must make available to their Members and co-opted members.

The Head of Democratic Services reported that the main changes that are relevant to this Council will be effective from 1 April 2021, and are outlined below:-

- The basic salary for elected members will be increased by £150 to £14,368;
- Senior salaries (payments to members of the Executive, Chairs of Committees and the Leader of the opposition) will be increased at the same rate as the basic salary (1.06%);
- Salaries for civic heads and their deputies will be increased - Chairs of Committees will receive £23,161 (Band 3), and Vice-Chairs will receive £18,108 (Band 5);
- Payments to co-opted members will be increased by £12 per day;
- Formal care costs (registered with Care Inspectorate Wales) will be reimbursed in full;

- Informal (unregistered) care costs will be reimbursed to a maximum rate equivalent to the Real Living Wage, at the time the costs are incurred.

RESOLVED to note the determinations within the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report for 2021/22.

4. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Submitted – an update report by the HR Training Manager on training delivery for the financial year 2019/20.

The HR Training Manager reported that due to the pandemic, very few training sessions had been offered to Elected Members during the last quarter of 2019/20. The intention is to compile a revised Member Training and Development Plan, which would incorporate any relevant training opportunities that have not been achieved during 2019/20, up to the 2022 elections.

The HR Training Manager reported that subject matters highlighted by WLGA and officers from within the Council had been incorporate within the draft Development Plan, in addition to feedback from individual Members' Personal Development Reviews.

It was noted that E-Learning modules accessed by the Authority's Learning Pool platform continue to be available. It was highlighted that the modules provide flexibility for online training, and are available virtually.

Reference was made to the development and publication of a bilingual Elected Members' Bulletin, which aims to provide current information on training events and development opportunities for Members. Dependent on the deemed value and feedback received, it was proposed that potentially a Bulletin could be produced and distributed on a quarterly basis.

Discussion focused on the training needs of individual Members, as follows:-

- A request was made for training sessions to be convened face to face as group sessions on MS Teams or Zoom rather than accessing E-Learning online courses individually. The HR Training Manager to discuss with the Head of Democratic Services.
- Members highlighted Mental Health issues for Adults and Safeguarding as potential topics for inclusion within the Development Plan. The HR Training Manager explained that a specific section for Elected Members is to be developed on the Learning Pool platform which will allow access to training information/modules, and which will also include information on health and wellbeing, replicating what's currently available for staff.
- It was suggested that face to face online training sessions be recorded in future to provide flexibility and playback options. Members generally felt that information presented personally is easier to absorb, and questions could be raised and answered during discussions. The HR Training Manager stated that this would be subject to training providers agreeing to allow recording of their sessions.

- A request was made for a progress report to be presented to this Committee's next meeting, detailing anonymised statistical data on the uptake of mandatory training sessions.

Members were urged to submit their individual training needs by the end of March, so that any requirements could be included in the Development Plan to be submitted to the County Council in May 2021.

RESOLVED that:-

- **Members provide input on their training needs in addition to mandatory training by the end of March 2021.**
- **The Head of Democratic Service to discuss arrangements for convening face to face training sessions with the HR Training Manager.**
- **The HR Training Manager to prepare and forward a questionnaire/monkey survey to Members, together with a checklist of available training courses.**
- **The Head of Democratic Services and HR Training Manager to prepare a report on the level of training undertaken for mandatory courses.**
- **To submit the Draft Member Training and Development Plan for 2021/22 to Full Council for approval in May 2021.**

The meeting concluded at 2.45 pm

**COUNCILLOR ROBERT LL JONES
CHAIR**