

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2022

- PRESENT:** Councillor Keith Roberts (Chair)
- Councillors Non Dafydd, Jeff Evans, Carwyn E Jones, Gwilym O Jones, Llio A Owen, Dylan Rees
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer
Committee Officer (SC)
- APOLOGIES:** None
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1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

None received.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 October 2022 were presented, and confirmed as correct.

3. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES – DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2023/24

Submitted – a report by the Director of Function (Council Business)/Monitoring Officer on the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW)'s draft proposals for 2023/24, which sets out the type and levels of payments that local authorities make available to their members. Following a consultation process, the final version of the IRPW's Annual Report will be published in February 2023, and presented to full Council for adoption.

A schedule of the proposed changes to the remuneration levels for the members' basic salary together with senior and civic salaries was presented in the report. It was noted that the Panel has capped the number of senior salaries at 17.

The Monitoring Officer reported that the Panel has set five specific questions in this year's consultation. Members of the Committee were requested to provide a response (R) to each of the following questions (Q):-

- Q1 - Does the Committee agree that the basic salary element should be referenced to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) 2021 data?
- Q2 - Should the Panel build a review on the workload of elected members into its future work plan, and build the evidence base to support decisions?
- Q3 - Should the Panel include the "consumables" element as expenses of members of town and community councils?

- Q4 - What would be the Committee's preferred means to access the IRPW's information and guidance? Has this Committee experienced any challenges accessing information on the IRP's website? How can this be made easier?
- Q5 - The Panel intends to undertake a series of engagement with all relevant stakeholders over the next year, as part of its development of its forward planning and building of its evidence and research strategy. How can the Panel shape this engagement?

In terms of engagement, the Committee felt that more needs to be done to encourage young people to take an interest in Local Government matters.

RESOLVED:-

- **To accept the IRPW's proposed remuneration levels for 2023/24 for the members' basic salary and senior and civic salaries, as presented in the report.**
- R1 - To accept the Panel's reference to the ASHE 2021 data to determine the basic salary element for members. The Committee also agreed with the Panel's proposed increase of 4.76% to the basic salary for members.**
- R2 - To support the Panel's proposal to contact elected members to review their workload, and collate current data for future Determinations, and, build this review into its future work plan, and build the evidence base to support decisions.**
- R3 - To accept the Panel's proposal to pay the additional "consumables" costs to members of town and community councils; £156 per year towards expenses of working from home, and £52 per year for the costs of stationery.**
- R4 - To accept the following options with regard to accessing Information and guidance from the IRPW:-**
 - 1. Summary report with links to detailed guidance;**
 - 2. Easy to use guidance notes;**
 - 3. Frequently asked questions.**
- R5 - To accept that meetings continue to be held virtually, and that that elected members, lay members and representatives of town and community councils and One Voice Wales should be part of the engagement process.**

The meeting concluded at 14.35 pm

**COUNCILLOR KEITH ROBERTS
CHAIR**