

<b>Isle of Anglesey County Council</b>	
<b>Committee:</b>	Democratic Services Committee
<b>Date:</b>	29 November 2023
<b>Title of report:</b>	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – Draft Annual Report for 2024-2025
<b>Report by:</b>	Dyfan Sion Head of Democratic Services
<b>Purpose of report:</b>	To consider the Panel's draft proposals for 2024 to 2025 and respond to the consultation

## 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
- Community and Town 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 Panel will be consulting until 8 December on its draft proposals for 2024 to 2025, together with six other specific questions – see [appendix 1](#).

The final annual report will be published by 28 February 2024 for implementation from April 2024.

## 2.0 The Panel's draft 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 draft proposals for 2024-2025:

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

The Panel is seeking views on their proposal to uplift remuneration based on the average earnings of constituents – see consultation [question 1](#) in appendix 1.

There are no further changes to the payments and allowances paid to elected members.

### 2.2 Payments to co-opted members

Currently, co-opted members should be remunerated on a day or half day basis, but 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.

Consideration was given to moving to an hourly rate instead. This would better reflect the new ways of working and the hours actually worked. However, the Panel recognised that this may not always be appropriate, especially to cover in person meetings scheduled to last several hours.

The Panel therefore proposes 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.

<b>Rôl</b>	<b>Fesul awr</b>	<b>Hyd at 4 awr</b>	<b>4 awr a throsodd</b>
Chairs of standards and audit committees	<b>£33.50</b>	£134	£268
Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for town and community councils	<b>£29.75</b>	£119	£238
Ordinary members of standards committees, education scrutiny committees, crime and disorder scrutiny committees and audit committees	<b>£26.25</b>	£105	£210
Town and community council members sitting on principal council standards committees.	<b>£26.25</b>	£105	£210

Consultation [question 2](#) refers to the above proposal.

### **2.3 Other payments**

There have been no other changes to payments, therefore the 2023-2024 determinations still stand with regard to the following :

- Travel and subsistence
- Care and personal assistance
- Sickness absence
- Corporate joint committees
- Assistants to the Executive
- Additional salaries and job-sharing arrangements

### **3.0 Encouraging sustainable travel**

The Panel is aware that there are schemes in many bodies in Wales which encourage sustainable travel. They have advised that, if possible, elected members should be encouraged to participate in these schemes.

Consultation [question 3](#) asks for examples of good practice or other ideas as to how the Panel can use its powers to encourage more sustainable travel among members.

#### 4.0 Awareness of entitlements

The Panel has seen evidence of a lack of awareness amongst local elected members of the payments to which they are entitled. They would like to find out if this is a significant issue. Consultation [question 4](#) therefore includes a series of questions aimed at individual members.

#### 5.0 Publishing information about payments

##### 5.1 **Town and community councils**

At present, all councils must complete annual statements of payments made to individual members, for submission to the Panel and publication on their websites.

For costs of care and personal assistance, it is sufficient for all organisations to list the totals paid and the total number of recipients. This year, the Panel feels it would be appropriate to extend this to the mandatory payments made to town and community council members. This would ensure the right balance between public accountability and the privacy of individuals. The Panel also hopes that this will encourage everyone to claim the payments to which they are entitled.

##### 5.2 **Principal councils, national park authorities and fire and rescue authorities**

The Panel is thinking of allowing consolidation of the travel and subsistence expenses of the above bodies in future reports.

The Panel is interested in hearing views on the above proposals – see [question 5](#) and [question 6](#).

#### 6.0 Recommendation

The Committee is requested to:

- consider the Panel's draft determinations for 2024-2025 and the six additional consultation questions
- authorise officers to respond to the consultation in accordance with the Committee's deliberations

Background paper: Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual report, 2024-2025:

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

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

The Panel is fully aware of the current constraints on public funding and the impact its decisions will have on the budgets of Principal Authorities. The Panel is also mindful of our Aims and Objectives to provide a fair and reasonable remuneration package to support elected members and to encourage diversity of representation. We therefore propose to uplift their remuneration based on the average earnings of their constituents.

**Do you think that the Panel has struck the right balance between affordability and adequate remuneration for representatives? If not, do you have other suggestions?**

Yes

No

No Opinion


Any additional comments

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**Question 2 - Local flexibility for payments to co-opted individuals**

The Panel has received evidence that it would be more cost effective and fairer to provide for flexibility in paying those who are co-opted to serve on committees of Principal Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities.

The Panel has therefore proposed 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 few short meetings.

**Do you agree with this proposal? If not, do you have any suggested alternatives?**

Yes

No

No Opinion


Any additional comments

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**Question 3 - Encouraging sustainable travel**

The Panel would like to ensure that we support environmental sustainability in our decisions about remuneration. We are aware that there are schemes in many bodies in Wales which encourage sustainable travel and we have advised that, if possible, elected members should be encouraged to participate in these schemes.

**Do you have any examples of good practice or other ideas of ways in which we might use our powers to encourage more sustainable travel among members?**

Yes

No

No Opinion


Any additional comments

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**Question 4 - Awareness of the entitlements of representatives**

The Panel has seen evidence of a lack of awareness amongst local elected members of the payments to which they are entitled. We would like to find out if this is a significant issue, and if so, we will aim to raise awareness further, targeted at areas where this may be a problem.

**Please identify which type of body you serve (select all that apply):**

Principal Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community or Town Council	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fire and Rescue Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Park Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your status?

Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Co-opted Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Did you know that you may be entitled to some of or all the following?**

- Remuneration for your role

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Pension (Principal Councils only)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>



- Reimbursement of expenses

Yes   
No

- Reimbursement for caring responsibilities

Yes   
No

- Family absence payments (Principal Councils only)

Yes   
No

**What steps does your council or authority take to make its elected members and co-opted members aware of their entitlements?**

**Question 5 - Publication of consolidated sums for Community and Town Councils**

Community and Town Councils are required to submit an annual statement of payments to the Panel by 30 September each year, and also publish this on their website. The Panel have provided a template return for clerks to use. The Panel have discussed and considered changing the requirements for Community and Town Councils when submitting their statement of payment returns. The Panel’s aim is to simplify administration and encourage Councils to ensure all mandatory payments are made to individual members.

The Panel proposes that from September 2024, the returns need only show the total amounts paid in respect of the mandatory payments mentioned above. That is the £156 contribution to the costs of working from home, the £52 set rate consumables allowance and the travel and subsistence expenses paid.

This brings these in line with the reporting of the costs of care and personal assistance allowances.

**Do you agree that these figures may be published as a global total rather than individually?**

Yes

No

No View

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

What are the reasons for your view?

**Question 6 - Publication of consolidated sums for other bodies**

In future reports, we are thinking of allowing consolidation of the travel and subsistence expenses of members of principal councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities and would be interested in your views.

**Do you agree that these figures may be published as a global total rather than individually?**

Yes

No

No View


What are the reasons for your view?