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County Borough Council

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Date Written	9 th November 2016
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Service Area	Democratic Services
Committee Date	21 st November 2016

To: Chair, Ladies and Gentlemen

Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Draft Annual Report

1.0 SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has published its Draft 2017/18 Annual Report for consultation which was circulated to all Councillors on 20th October 2017.
- 1.2 A moderate increase of £100 has been made to the basic salary.
- 1.3 There is no increase proposed to the maximum number of senior salaries a local authority may pay, but post holders will receive the uplift in the basic salary paid to all Councillors.
- 1.4 The report proposes new specific arrangements for long term sickness absence for senior salary holders.
- 1.5 Following concerns about the low take up of care allowance, the IRPW propose to rename it 'reimbursement of costs of care' and alter the way that payment details are published.
- 1.6 In order to meet the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, the IRPW require any representations about the draft report no later than 28th November 2016.

1.7 As the Local Government Elections are being held in May 2017, the IRPW's final determinations will come into force as follows for principal councils:

1.7.1 Basic salary holders – 5th May 2017 (subject to the member having signed the declaration of acceptance)

1.7.1 Senior salary holders – following the first annual meeting of the new Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 The content of the Draft Annual Report of the IRPW for 2017/2018 be noted.

2.2 That Democratic Services Committee considers the recommendations within the draft report and members provide comments to the Democratic Services Department for collation and return to the IRPW no later than Friday 25th November 2016.

2.3 That the Head of Democratic Services be required to provide a comprehensive report to Democratic Services Committee outlining the plans to support newly elected and returning Councillors following the 2017 local government elections.

2.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The IRPW's initial intention was for the basic salary to be aligned to the median gross earnings of full time employees resident in Wales. However, given the pressures on public expenditure they did not feel that it was possible for this alignment to be maintained so the basic salary has remained unchanged since 2014/15.

2.2 2016/17 saw the introduction of an optional two salary levels for Executive (Cabinet) Members, two salary levels for committee chairs and three levels for civic leaders. The recommendations approved by Full Council on 20th April 2016 were that:

2.2.1 As the authority operates with a Cabinet of less than the statutory maximum, the role of each Executive Member should be paid at Band 2, Level 1 to reflect the range of portfolio responsibilities they hold.

2.2.2 Each committee Chair would be paid an equivalent level of remuneration and the salary would remain the same as 2015/2016.

2.2.3 The roles of Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head continue to be paid at Level 3 within the approved range as agreed at Full Council on 23rd April 2014.

3.0 PROPOSED CHANGES FOR 2017/18

3.1 There is a 0.75% increase to the basic salary, which is the first increase in 3 years in line with the IRPW's recognition of the pressures on public expenditure. This increase takes the proposed basic salary to £13,400.

- 3.2 Senior salary post holders, committee Chairs and Civic Leaders will also receive the £100 uplift in the basic salary paid to all Councillors and will continue to be paid based on the salary levels introduced in 2016/17.
- 3.3 Family Absence Regulations for elected members were approved by the National Assembly in 2014, but absences for reasons of ill-health were not included.
- 3.4 Following instances raised with the IRPW of senior salary holders on long term sickness and the perceived unfairness in comparison with the arrangements for family absence, the Panel proposes to amend the Framework to provide specific arrangements for long term sickness for senior salary holders.
- 3.5 Following concerns about low take-up, the IRPW is proposing to rename 'Care Allowances' as 'Reimbursement of costs of care' to seek to separate it from being perceived as part of an individual councillors' salary or allowances. The IRPW also proposes changing the way such payments are published by allowing councils to either publish:
- the details of the amounts reimbursed to named members; or
 - the total amount reimbursed by the authority during the year, but not attributed to any named member.

4.0 SUPPORT FOR ELECTED MEMBERS

- 4.1 The IRPW 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.
- 4.2 The IRPW has determined that 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.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

- 5.1 There will be an increase in the basic salary for all Councillors.
- 5.2 The majority of MTCBC Councillors currently forego 2% of their salary, but this is not a requirement, so there is a likelihood that the annual increase to the budget will be higher than the small raise proposed by the IRPW.

ANN TAYLOR
HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

COUNCILLOR PHIL WILLIAMS
DEPUTY LEADER / CABINET MEMBER
FOR GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE
SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Title of Document(s)	Document(s) Date	Document Location
IRPW Draft Annual Report	February 2017	Democratic Services
Does the report contain any issue that may impact the Council's Constitution?		No

APPENDIX ONE

BASIC SALARY AND SENIOR SALARIES PAYABLE TO MEMBERS OF PRINCIPAL COUNCILS

Basic salary (payable to all elected members) £13,400

Senior salaries (inclusive of basic salary)

	Group A (Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea)	Group B (Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Newport, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham)	Group C (Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil , Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Isle of Anglesey)
Band 1 Leader Deputy Leader	£53,100 £37,100	£48,000 £33,600	£43,100 £30,100
Band 2 Executive members Level 1 Deputy Leader	£32,100 £28,900	£29,100 £26,200	£26,100 £23,500
Band 3 Committee Chairs (if remunerated)		Level 1 Level 2	£22,100 £20,100
Band 4 Leader of largest opposition group			£22,100
Band 5 Leader of other political groups (over 10%)			£17,100