

<u>BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL</u>	
Report to	The Chair & Members of the Democratic Services Committee
Report Subject	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2018/19
Report Author	Richard Bridge, Head of Exchequer Rhian Hayden, Head of Financial Services
Report date	12th March 2018
Directorate	Resources
Executive Portfolio	Leader / Corporate Services
Date of meeting	29 March 2018
Date signed off by Monitoring Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Section 151 Officer	N/A
Date signed off by Chair	14th March 2018
Key words	Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales 2018/19

Report Information Summary

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	To inform Members of the proposals contained within the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales for 2018/19.
2.	Scope of the Report
2.1	The report considers the main proposals included within the 2018/19 report (Appendix 1) of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (the Panel) as they relate to Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.
3.	Contribution to the National Well-Being Goals
	n/a
4.	Recommendation(s) / Endorsement by other groups, e.g. CLT/Committees/Other groups
4.1	n/a
5.	Recommendation/s for Consideration
5.1	<p>It is recommended that the Democratic Services Committee:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) consider the determinations within the IRPW report for 2018/19 2) agree and recommend to Council the preferred option for the publication of the costs of care either :- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Detailing the amounts reimbursed to named members; or b) Reporting the total amount reimbursed by the Authority during the year but not attributed to any named member.

Why this topic is a priority for the Council?							
Single Integrated Plan (SIP)	Council's Well-being Objectives	Performance Management Improvement Framework (PMIF)	Operating Model	Transforming Blaenau Gwent (TBG Programme)	Relevant legislation	Other (please state)	
			X		X		
Reporting Pathway							
Directorate Management Team (DMT)	Corporate Leadership Team (CLT)	Audit	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny	Executive	Council	Other (please state)
	20.3.18		29/3/18			26.4.18	

Main Report

1.	Background and Context
1.1	The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 extended the responsibilities of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (the Panel) and its powers under Section 142 to decide (prescribe) payments to members of relevant authorities.
1.2	On an annual basis the Panel publish its report on Members remuneration. The annual report for 2018/19 (attached at Appendix 1) details the determinations for the upcoming year.
2.	Performance Evidence and Information
2.1	During 2017, the Panel visited all 22 principal councils across Wales providing an opportunity to discuss issues with a cross section of members and officers. The conclusions from these discussions have where possible been incorporated in the Panel's determinations.
2.2	<p>Basic & Senior Salaries</p> <p>The Panel originally determined (in its 2009 report) that the payment of the basic salary would be aligned to the median gross earnings of all full time employees resident in Wales. Given the pressures on public expenditure it has not been possible for this alignment to be maintained however although public sector funding continues to be constrained the Panel considers that an increase to the basic salary is justified and has determined that effective from April 2018, the basic salary for members of principal councils shall increase by £200 per annum (an increase of 1.49%).</p> <p>The Panel has determined that the limit on the number of senior salaries payable will remain in place (for Blaenau Gwent CBC this is 17) and that the rate payable for senior salaries shall not change for 2018/19 except to reflect the increase in the basic salary element.</p>
2.3	<p>Executive</p> <p>Although many Councils operate with a cabinet of 10 (the statutory maximum) others choose to have a smaller cabinet and the range of individual portfolios is much greater. The Panel's previous determinations contained flexibility for each council to decide the appropriate range of portfolios to meet local needs</p>

<p>2.4</p>	<p>and to adjust payments within the Executive to reflect responsibility.</p> <p>As a result of the strong views expressed during the visits that the Panel should be prescriptive in respect of executive member salaries this provision has been amended and for 2018/19 there will be one salary level for executive members - £26,300.</p> <p>Chairs of Committee Previously the Panel introduced two levels of remuneration for chairs of committees (if remunerated) with it being a matter for individual councils to decide at which level a chair is paid to reflect the appropriate responsibility attached to the specific post.</p> <p>The Panel has recognised the overwhelming support for its determinations to be prescriptive and has therefore removed the two tier arrangements and has determined that where chairs of committee are paid, the remuneration for 2018/19 will be £22,300.</p>																																	
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Payment of basic & senior salaries for 2018/19 are therefore:-</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1144 1401 1760"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>2017/18</u> £</th> <th style="text-align: center;"><u>2018/19</u> £</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Basic Salary</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13,400</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13,600</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"><i>Senior Salaries:</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leader</td> <td style="text-align: center;">43,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">43,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Deputy Leader</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Executive Members - Level 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">26,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Executive Members - Level 2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">23,500</td> <td style="text-align: center;">n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chairs – Level 1</td> <td style="text-align: center;">22,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">22,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Committee Chairs – Level 2</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">n/a</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leader of Largest Opposition Group</td> <td style="text-align: center;">22,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">22,300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leader of other political groups</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17,100</td> <td style="text-align: center;">17,300</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		<u>2017/18</u> £	<u>2018/19</u> £	Basic Salary	13,400	13,600	<i>Senior Salaries:</i>			Leader	43,100	43,300	Deputy Leader	30,100	30,300	Executive Members - Level 1	26,100	26,300	Executive Members - Level 2	23,500	n/a	Committee Chairs – Level 1	22,100	22,300	Committee Chairs – Level 2	20,100	n/a	Leader of Largest Opposition Group	22,100	22,300	Leader of other political groups	17,100	17,300
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<p>2.6</p>	<p>Leader of Largest Opposition Group The Panel remains of the view that a council must make a senior salary available to the leader of the largest opposition group and has determined that this role should be remunerated at £22,300.</p>																																	

2.7	Civic Heads and Deputies The Panel has made no change to the determinations in respect of Civic salaries.
2.8	Presiding Member The Panel has made no change to the determinations in respect of Presiding Member.
2.9	Specific or additional senior salaries Councils can apply for specific or additional salaries that do not fall within the current Remuneration Framework or which could not be accommodated within the maximum number of senior salaries.
2.10	Job Share Arrangements Some councils have also raised the possibility of operating some senior salary posts on a 'job share' arrangement. The Panel is supportive of this principle and have determined that:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For members of an executive each 'share' will be paid 50% of the appropriate salary.• The Statutory maximum for cabinets cannot be exceeded and both job sharers will count towards the maximum.• It is the number of persons in receipt of a senior salary, not the number of senior salary posts that count towards the cap• The Panel must be informed of the details of any job share arrangements
2.11	Supporting the Work of Elected members The Panel has reiterated its determination that the support provided should take account of the specific needs of individual members. It is considered necessary for each elected member to have ready use of telephone and e-mail services, and to have electronic access to appropriate information via an internet connection (it is not considered appropriate that such facilities are only available within Council offices within office hours). It is further determined that support should be without cost to the individual members. The functions of the Democratic Services Committees include a requirement to review the level of support provided to members

2.12

to carry out their duties, bringing forward proposals to full council as to what is considered to be reasonable.

Reimbursement of Mileage, Other Travel & Subsistence Costs

The Panel has determined that there will be no change to mileage rates which members are entitled to claim.

The Subsistence rates will be as follows, these rates are in line with Welsh Government Rates:-

£28 per day	Day allowance for meals, including breakfast, where not provided in the overnight charge
£200 per night	London (an increase from £150)
£95 per night	Elsewhere
£30 per night	Stay with friends / family (increase from £25)

Recommended practice is that overnight accommodation should usually be reserved and paid for on behalf of members by the Authority, in which case the authority may set its own reasonable limits. – we would not normally divert from these levels

2.13

Reimbursement of Costs of Care

There is no change to the reimbursement of Costs of Care, this remains at a maximum of £403 per month upon production of receipts from the carer.

The Panel urge Democratic Services Committees to encourage greater use of this element of the framework so that members concerned are not financially disadvantaged.

It is clear from feedback to the Panel that few members are utilising this provision and some members remain reluctant to claim all that they are entitled because of concerns about the potential adverse publicity it can attract. Therefore in respect of the publication of care costs the Panel has decided to provide authorities with two options:

- i) the details of the amounts reimbursed to named members:
- ii) the total amount reimbursed by the authority during the year but not attributed to any named member.

It is for the authority to decide which of these options it considers

<p>2.14</p> <p>2.15</p> <p>2.16</p>	<p>appropriate.</p> <p>Entitlement to Family Absence There is no change to this entitlement. An elected member is entitled to retain a basic salary when taking family absence. (maternity paternity adoption etc) When a senior salary holder is eligible for family absence, he/she will continue to receive the salary for the duration of the absence. It is matter for the authority to decide whether or not to make a substitute appointment.</p> <p>Sickness Absence for Senior Salary Holders The Family Absence Regulations are very specific relating to entitlement, absence for reasons of ill health is not included.</p> <p>The Panel has considered this and is amending the framework to provide specific arrangements for long term sickness of Senior salary holders.</p> <p>A senior salary holder on long term sickness can, if the authority decides, continue to receive remuneration for the post held (the maximum length of sickness absence is proposed as 26 weeks or until the individual's term of office ends).</p> <p>It will be a decision for the Council whether to make a substitute appointment but the substitute will be eligible to be paid the senior salary appropriate to the post.</p> <p>If the paid substitution results in the authority exceeding the maximum number of senior salaries payable an addition will be allowed for the duration of the substitution. The Panel must be informed within 14 days of the decision and the authority's Schedule of Remuneration amended accordingly.</p> <p>Payments to Co-opted Members The Panel has determined that a daily/half daily fee remains appropriate remuneration for the role undertaken by co-opted members of the Council as follows:-</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1872 1401 2002"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1872 970 1912">Chairs of Standards and Audit</td> <td data-bbox="970 1872 1401 1912">£256 (4 hours & over)</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1912 970 1953">Committees</td> <td data-bbox="970 1912 1401 1953">£128 (up to 4 hours)</td> </tr> </table>	Chairs of Standards and Audit	£256 (4 hours & over)	Committees	£128 (up to 4 hours)
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	<p>Ordinary members of standards committees who also chair standards committees for community & town councils</p>	<p>£226 (4 hours & over) £113 (up to 4 hours)</p>
	<p>Ordinary members of standards committees, education scrutiny committee, crime & disorder scrutiny committee and audit committee</p>	<p>£198 (4 hours & over) £99 (up to 4 hours)</p>
<p>Reasonable time for pre-meeting preparation is eligible to be included in claims made by co-opted members, the extent of which can be determined by the appropriate officer in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Travelling time to and from the place of the meeting can be included in the claims for payments made by the co-opted member (up to the daily rate).</p> <p>The appropriate officer within the authority can determine in advance whether the meeting is programmed for a full day and the meeting will be paid on this basis even if the meeting finishes before four hours has elapsed.</p> <p>Meetings eligible for the payment of fees include other committees and working groups (including task & finish groups), pre meetings with officers, training and attendance at conferences or any other formal meeting to which co-opted members are requested to attend.</p> <p>The Council can decide on the maximum number of days in any one year for which co-opted members may be paid. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has previously decided that 10 days is the maximum.</p>		
<p>3. Risk Implications</p>		
<p>3.1</p>	<p>Failure to comply with the Panel’s determinations will result in reputational damage for the Council. This is mitigated by Democratic Services Committee and Council considering and agreeing the determinations</p>	

4.	Financial Implications
4.1	Salaries for all members will increase by £200 per member per annum.
4.2	In addition during 2017/18 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council agreed that Executive Members and Committee Chairs (where paid) would be remunerated at Level 2, the lower of the two rates prescribed by the Panel.
4.3	Removal of this salary level and replacing with the higher rate will impact upon the costs.
4.4	Based upon current arrangements and adjusting for the annual increase and the higher salary rate for executive members & committee chairs the additional costs are estimated to be £33,000. It is anticipated that this additional cost can be absorbed within the agreed 2018/19 budget.
5.	Staffing/Workforce Development Implications
5.1	There are no direct staffing implications from this report.
6.	Options for Consideration
6.1	Democratic Services Committee to consider the IRPW determinations for 2018/2019 prior to consideration by full Council.
6.2	Democratic Services Committee consider and recommend to Council the preferred option for the publication of the costs of care either:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Detailing the amounts reimbursed to named members; or ii) Reporting the total amount reimbursed by the Authority during the year but not attributed to any named member.
7.	Impact Assessment Against Proposals / Options
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement The determinations of the IRPW contribute where possible to enhancing diversity in Welsh local government.
7.2	Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) N/A

8.	Conclusion
8.1	The Panel has determined that there will be an increase of £200 per annum to the basic salary for members for 2018/19.
8.2	As a result of the strong views expressed to the Panel during their visits to the 22 principal councils the Panel has removed the flexibility within the remuneration framework, relating to the remuneration levels for Executive positions and Committee Chairs and now prescribe the salary levels to be paid. This will have a financial impact.
8.3	The current arrangements for other costs e.g. mileage, cost of care, payments to co-opted members etc. have been retained.
8.4	The Panel has provided authorities with two options for the publication of the reimbursement of the cost of care either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="368 936 1318 974">i) details of the amounts reimbursed to named members<li data-bbox="368 1021 1331 1104">ii) the total amount reimbursed by the authority during the year but not attributed to any named member.
8.5	The Panel has amended the framework to provide specific arrangements for long term sickness of Senior salary holders.