

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 14 March 2017

PRESENT: Councillor T. Davies (Chair);

Councillors:

W.T. Evans, D. Price and H.B. Shepardson

The following Officers were in attendance:

L.R. Jones, Head of Administration and Law;
N. Daniel, Performance & Information Manager;
G. Morgan, Democratic Services Manager;
D. Richards, H.R Projects Manager;
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer.

Democratic Services Committee Room, County Hall, Carmarthen 10.00am-11.45 am

1. APOLOGIES / OTHER MATTERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J.D. James.

Councillor Terry Davies referred to the fact that this would be his last meeting of the Committee, prior to the forthcoming elections, and he thanked Members for all their help during his term of office as Chairman. Members paid tribute to Councillor Davies's leadership.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 28th November 2016 be signed as a correct record.

4. MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2017

The Committee considered a draft Member Induction Programme 2017. The 12-month programme, which had taken on board feedback from recent focus groups incorporating existing councillors, would support new and returning members following the Elections in May 2017.

RESOLVED that the draft induction programme be endorsed.

5. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) ANNUAL REPORT (FEBRUARY, 2017)

The Committee considered a report detailing the determinations and recommendations contained in the IRPW's Annual Report [February, 2017] with a view to making recommendations to Council for inclusion within the Councillors' and Co-opted Members' Salaries and Allowances Scheme for 2017/18. The IRPW's Report contained 51 determinations with the majority of determinations being unchanged from the 2016 Report.

In setting the level of salaries and allowances for 2017/18 the IRPW had decided that there would be a modest increase of approximately 0.75% in the basic annual salary for elected members. No increase was proposed for senior salaries but these post holders would receive the uplift in the basic salary element. Arrangements had also been introduced to recognise the implications of long term sickness of senior salary holders. In addition the Panel, mindful that there had been limited take up across all of the organisations of the Care Allowances, had decided to allow optional approaches to publication of costs of care. The Panel had also decided to use the term 'reimbursement of costs of care' to replace care allowance.

The Committee's views were sought on the issue of payments to Executive Members, Chairs of Committees, Civic Heads and Deputies, Subsistence and Accommodation Allowances, Remuneration of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs, payment of Co-opted Members' Fees for the 2017/18 municipal year and the publication of reimbursement of costs of care.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL

- 5.1 that it notes that the IRPW has determined that the basic salary for elected member of principal local authorities shall increase to £13,400 for 2017/18;**
- 5.2 that the status quo remain with regard to the level of senior salary paid to Executive Members for 2017/18 [Level 1];**
- 5.3 that the status quo remain with regard to the level of senior salary paid to Committee Chairs for 2017/18 [Level 1];**
- 5.4 that the status quo remain with regard to the salary paid to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council for 2017/18 [Level 2];**
- 5.5 that the rates of reimbursement for subsistence costs for 2017/18 be agreed as follows:-**
 - £200.00 per night for London;**
 - £95 per night elsewhere;**
 - £25 per night for staying with friends and family;**

That the status quo remain for day allowance, and the current practice of all overnight accommodation for members being arranged through the Democratic Services Unit;
- 5.6 to continue with the current practice of noting arrangements for Joint Overview Scrutiny Committees with other Authorities and including these Committees within the Council's scheme in the event the Council decides to establish Joint Committees during the 2017/18 municipal year and to pay a salary;**
- 5.7 that payment of Co-opted Members' Fees remain capped for 2017/18 at the current level of 10 full day (of 20 half day) meetings;**

- 5.8 to publish details of the amounts reimbursed to named members for reimbursement of care costs [option 1];
- 5.9 to accept the remaining IRPW recommendations and determinations for 2017 and incorporate them within the Council's existing Councillors' and Co-opted Members' Allowances Scheme for 2017/18.

6. MEMBERS ICT PROVISION

The Committee considered a report detailing proposals to provide an improved, more cost effective, sustainable and efficient ICT service to Members following the Local Government elections on May 5th 2017.

RESOLVED that the Democratic Services Committee support the report and recommendations contained therein, namely:-

- 6.1 that new elected Members source and utilise their own broadband and be given a Communication allowance of £20 per month;
- 6.2 that current Members who are re-elected be allowed to continue with current standard broadband provision or choose to source their own possible superfast broadband and receive the £20 communication allowance;
- 6.3 that no new printers be provided and Members be permitted to utilise printing facilities at Council offices;
- 6.4 That Members' device preferences be ascertained by ICT - options to include Lenovo Mix Tablet, Lenovo Laptop, i-pad - the single device would have a Data Sim card;
- 6.5 that Executive Board Members move to one device and the provision of a i-phone.

CHAIR

DATE