

# DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

Friday, 9 March 2018

**PRESENT:** Councillor R. James (Chair)

**Councillors:**

T.J. Jones, W.T. Evans and D. Thomas

**The following Officers were in attendance:**

G. Morgan, Head of Democratic Services

H. Daniels, Corporate Development Advisor

M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer

**Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, 10.00 am - 10.30 am**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S. Najmi.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of personal interest.

**3. MINUTES - 29TH NOVEMBER 2017**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Democratic Services Committee held on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017 be signed as a correct record subject to it being noted that Councillor Dai Thomas had tendered his apology for the meeting.

**4. EVALUATION OF MEMBER INDUCTION PROGRAMME 2017/18**

The Committee considered a report which provided an overview of feedback from the Focus groups held to evaluate the Member Induction Programme and in particular what had worked well with the 2017 Member Induction programme and what could have been done better. The feedback, including that received from various scrutiny committees, the Democratic Services Unit, Group Leaders and Deputy Leaders and priorities identified by senior council officers had helped formulate the draft Member Development Plan 2018/19 [see minute 5 below].

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

**5. MEMBER ANNUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2018/19**

Following on from the evaluation of the Member Induction Programme 2017/18 [minute 4 above refers] the Committee considered the draft Member Development Plan 2018/19 which outlined the proposed development opportunities to be made available to members during the period March 2018 – April 2019 and beyond where appropriate. It was noted that the Plan would not be static and it could be amended at any time to accommodate members and officers circumstances. It was pointed out, in response to a query, that where a new member was elected due to a bi-election an individual plan and mentoring could be arranged for the successful candidate though the individual's own political group, where applicable, would also be expected to provide support. The Committee expressed hope that new members would take full advantage of the Member Development Plan. The Corporate Development Advisor agreed to provide more information on the various individual Welsh Language Skills sessions proposed.

**RESOLVED that the draft Plan be endorsed.**

## **6. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) ANNUAL REPORT (FEBRUARY, 2018)**

The Committee considered a report detailing the determinations and recommendations contained in the IRPW's Annual Report [February, 2018] with a view to making recommendations to Council for inclusion within the Councillors' and Co-opted Members' Salaries and Allowances Scheme for 2018/19. The IRPW's Report contained 53 determinations with the majority of determinations being unchanged from the 2017 Report.

In setting the level of salaries and allowances for 2018/19 the IRPW had decided that there would be an increase of 1.49% 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. In addition the two tier arrangement for executive members and for committee chairs had been removed.

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 2018/19 municipal year and the publication of reimbursement of costs of care.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL**

**6.1 that it notes that the IRPW has determined to increase the basic salary in 2018/19 for elected members of principal local authorities to £13,600;**

**6.2 that it notes that the IRPW has removed the two tier arrangement for executive member and committee chair salaries;**

**6.3 that existing arrangements be maintained in 2018/19 in respect of :-**

- the salary paid to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council (currently level 2);**
- rates of reimbursement for subsistence costs and the current practice of all overnight accommodation for**

members being arranged through the Democratic Services Unit;

- 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 2018/19 municipal year and to pay a salary;
- payment of Co-opted Members' Fees being capped at 10 full day (of 20 half day) meetings;

6.4 to publish details of the amounts reimbursed to named members for reimbursement of care costs [option 1];

6.5 to accept the remaining IRPW recommendations and determinations for 2018 and incorporate them within the Council's existing Councillors' and Co-opted Members' Allowances Scheme for 2018/19;

#### **FURTHER RESOLVED**

6.6 to note that the Constitutional Review Working Group [CRWG] had accepted the Committee's recommendation that attendance by the Chair of Council, Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the relevant Scrutiny Chair at meetings of the Executive Board be included as an approved duty in the Councillors and Co-opted Members' Salaries and Allowances Scheme 2018/19 onwards, and that a recommendation in this regard would be made to Council.

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**