

# DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

## 29<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2024

### INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

#### Recommendations / key decisions required:

1. To consider and comment on the determinations made by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales in their draft Annual Report for 2025/26.
2. To authorise the Chair of the Committee to submit a response to the IRPW on behalf of the Committee.

#### Reasons:

The Democratic Services Committee is consulted, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, on the implementation of reports issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

Cabinet Decision Required	NO
Council Decision Required	NO

#### CABINET MEMBER PORTFOLIO

Cllr Darren Price – Leader/Cllr Alun Lenny – Cabinet Member for Resources

Directorate	Designations:	Tel Nos./E Mail Addresses:
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRPW) DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Each year the Independent Remuneration for Wales (IRPW) determines the rates of payment which are made to elected and co-opted Members of Welsh Local Authorities for the following year and has powers to make recommendations on proposed variations to the remuneration of Chief Executives and Chief Officers of Principal Councils in Wales.

Following an independent ten-year review of the Panel in 2021, the Panel's functions will transfer over to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) on 1 April 2025. This is as a result of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act being passed in July 2024. The Act expands the role and remit of the DBCC across aspects of a healthy Welsh democracy, including setting the remuneration for members of the following bodies across Wales:

- Principal Councils
- Town and Community Councils
- Corporate Joint Committees
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- National Park Authorities

The IRPW final Draft Annual Report was published on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and details its proposals on the payment of remuneration and allowances from 1st April 2025. The IRPW is required to take into account the representations which it receives on the draft before issuing its final version of the report in February.

In respect of Principal Councils, for 2025/2026 the Panel has determined that the basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of the Average Hourly Earnings in Wales (ASHE) 2022, the latest figure available at drafting. The Panel proposes that the annual Basic Salary in 2025 - 26 for elected members of principal councils in Wales shall be increased from £18,666 to £19,771.

This uplift will also apply to the role element of Bands 1, 2, 3 and 4. Where a Band 5 is paid, there is no increase to the role element (if applied) as this remains temporarily frozen. The increase in the basic salary will apply. In terms of co-opted member payments there is no change in rates and the hourly rate for meetings introduced as part of a supplementary report remains.

No further changes are made to the payments and benefits paid to elected members of Principal Authorities therefore all other decisions from 2023/2024 still stand and they should be applied to 2024/25.

It should also be noted that the report refers to matters relating to National Park Authorities; Fire and Rescue Authorities and Town and Community Councils, but this is not elaborated upon in this report.

The proposed determinations for 2024/25 are as follows:

<u>Role</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed IRPW determinations for 2025/26</u>
Basic		£19,771
Band 1 - Leader	£62,998	£66,727
Band 1 - Deputy Leader	£44,099	£46,709
Band 2 - Cabinet Members (Executive)	£37,799	£40,036
Band 3 - Committee Chairs	£27,999	£29,657
Band 4 - Leader of the Largest Opposition Group	£27,999	£29,657
Band 5 Leader of other political groups (not paid in Carmarthenshire)	£22,406	£23,726
Civic Head	£27,999	£29,657
Deputy Civic Head	£22,406	£23,726
Presiding Member	£27,999	£29,657
Deputy Presiding Member	£18,666	£19,771

The Democratic Services Committee is asked to consider the report and the consultation document and provide comments in order to form a response to the Independent Remuneration Panel's draft report consultation.

**DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED?**

Appendix 1 – Copy of the IRPW Draft Annual Report for 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Consultation Document

# IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors/Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report:

Signed: **Steve P. Murphy** Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
<b>NONE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>	<b>NONE</b>

## 1. Legal

The Democratic Services Committee is consulted, in accordance with its Terms of Reference, on the implementation of reports issued by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

When the Panel's Annual Report is issued, Principal Councils must comply with the statutory requirements and apply all the relevant determinations. The Proper Officer of the Council must put in place mechanisms for all eligible Council Members to receive payments as determined by the Panel. There are currently no options relating to levels of remuneration by principal councils that require a decision by full Council. Levels of payments to which Members are entitled cannot be varied by a vote of a Principal Council.

## 2. Finance

The increase in member salaries creates a budget pressure of approximately £100k, which would need to be built into the 2025/26 budget setting process.

This arises due to the difference between the IRPW recommendations and the 2025/26 pay award assumption of 3%

# CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken place and the outcomes are as detailed below.

Signed: Steve P. Murphy Head of Law, Governance and Civil Services

## 1. Scrutiny Committee

Not Applicable

## 2. Local Member(s)

Not Applicable

## 3. Community / Town Council

The draft report has been circulated by the IRPW to all Fire and Rescue Authorities, National Park Authorities and Town & Community Councils, for their observations.

## 4. Relevant Partners

Not Applicable

## 5. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations

Not Applicable

## Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information

List of Background Papers used in of the preparation this report:

**THESE ARE DETAILED BELOW:**

Title of Document	File Ref No.	Locations that the papers are available for public inspection
IRPW Draft Report		<a href="https://www.gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales-draft-annual-report-2024-2025">https://www.gov.wales/independent-remuneration-panel-wales-draft-annual-report-2024-2025</a>
Local Government Wales Measure		<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/contents/enacted">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/mwa/2011/4/contents/enacted</a>