

MEETING	DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
DATE	9 APRIL 2019
SUBJECT	FINANCIAL REMUNERATION FOR ELECTED MEMBERS
PURPOSE	To provide information from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report to elected members
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BACKGROUND

1. The annual report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales has been published (February 2019). Committee Members discussed and submitted a response to the draft consultation by the Panel at its meeting on 25th October 2018. The Panel's annual report will be implemented for the 2019/20 financial year.

[Annual Report 2019-20](#)

- 1.2 The main points from the report are as follows:
 - Increase of £268 in the basic salary for all elected Members (increasing from £13,600 to £13,868 - equivalent to 1.97%) from April 2019. In its report, the Panel explains its reasoning, noting that *"backbench members' salaries have remained relatively static over the last 9 years and, in real terms, have fallen significantly."*
 - An increase in the salaries of the Leader, Deputy Leader and Executive Members by £800 (inclusive of the £268 increase in basic salary). The Panel notes *"Despite a slight increasing trend in senior salary levels since 2012, which has been lower than any measure of inflation, the senior salaries remain lower than they were ten years ago."*
 - The other senior salaries payable will receive the increase as per the basic salary increase as follows:
 - Chairs of Committees (£22,568)
 - Leader of the Largest Opposition Group (£22,568)
 - The civic salaries have also been set at £22,568 for Civic Head and £17,568 for deputy Civic Head.
- 1.3 As is reported annually, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales decides the salary level for all Elected Members in Wales in an independent manner.

- 1.4 If an elected Member should decide not to accept the salary, then he/she must declare in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, see clause 3.19 which notes as follows:

“The prescribed salary and expenses must be paid in full to each member unless an individual has independently and voluntarily opted in writing to the authority’s proper officer to forego all or any element of the payment. It is fundamental there is transparency in this process so any possible suggestion that members are put under pressure to forego some of the salaries is avoided.”

Reimbursement of the cost of Care

- 1.5 The Panel once again this year wishes to encourage Elected Members who are entitled to claim the reimbursement of the cost of care.

It is noted “From the discussions during our visits to the principal councils it is clear that very few members are utilising the provision in the framework to reimburse the costs of care. It appears that some members are still reluctant to claim all they are entitled to support them in their role, because of concerns about the adverse publicity this can attract (see Annex 4 for the publication options). We urge Democratic Services Committees to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of this element of our framework so that members concerned are not financially disadvantaged.”

RECOMMENDATION

3. Members are requested to note the above information.