

Date of meeting:	16 March 2023
Subject	Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales
Recommendation	The Democratic Services Committee is asked for a recommendation for 2023/24 Senior Salaries for submission to the Full Council on 4 May 2023.
Contact Officer:	Vera Jones, Democratic and Language Services Manager

What is the background and relevant considerations?

1. A report was presented to a meeting of this committee on 17 November 2022 outlining the content of the draft report by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. Also, it was reported on the intention to review the senior salaries that are paid in Cyngor Gwynedd. The two elements are further reported upon below.

a) The Panel's Main Decisions

2. A full copy of the report is available by clicking on the following link.

[Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2023 to 2024 | GOV.WALES](#)

Remuneration for elected Members

3. As reported annually, the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales independently sets the salary levels for all Councillors in Wales.
4. The basic salary will be **£17,600**.
5. The basic salary, which is paid to every elected member, is remuneration for the responsibility of representing the community and participating in the scrutiny and regulatory work and the functions associated with local governance. This is based on an amount that equates to three full days a week. This will be reviewed by the Panel during the next year.
6. If an Elected Member decides to surrender the salary, it is necessary for him/her to declare so in writing to the Head of Democratic Services. The guidance can be seen in paragraph 3.21 of the 2022/23 annual report and remains relevant to this year:

"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."



Senior Salaries for Elected Members

7. Although the boundaries changed in some authorities and the number of Councillors also changed as a consequence of that, the Panel has decided not to change the number of senior salaries that can be determined in the individual authorities. 18 is the maximum number of senior salaries that can be paid to Group B authorities, which includes Cyngor Gwynedd.
8. The table below shows the details of Group B payments for 2023-24.

	Remuneration Payment
Basic salary (payable to every elected member)	£17,600
Band 1: leader	£59,400
Band 2: deputy leader	£41,580
Band 2: executive members	£35,640
Band 3: committee chairs (if they receive a recognition payment)	£26,400
Band 4: the leader of the largest opposition party	£26,400
Band 5: leaders of other political groups	£21,340

9. The posts of the civic head and the deputy civic head have not been included in the cap. The civic heads are senior posts in councils and they are different to political or executive leadership. As well as chairing important meetings, the civic head is the 'first citizen' and the authority's 'ambassador', who represents the council in its dealings with all types of organisations and bodies.
10. Paying the remuneration for these roles is a decision for the Council. The level for 2023/24 has been set as follows:

Civic Head	£26,400
Deputy Civic Head	£21,340

Other costs

11. No further changes are made to the payments and benefits paid to elected members and so every other Decision from 2022 to 2023 still stand and they should be applied to 2023-24, including those that encompass:
 - travelling and subsistence
 - care and personal support
 - sickness absence
 - corporate joint-committees
 - executive assistants
 - additional salaries and job-share arrangements
 - Co-opted Members



Reviewing the Responsibilities of Committee Chairs

12. This committee was requested to review the senior salaries that are paid for 2023/24. This was as a result of the changes with the appointment of a Lay Member as Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee, leaving 17 of the 18 senior salaries earmarked for 2022/23.
13. The most sensible way of reviewing the responsibilities of Committee Chairs is to seek to assess the work pressures arising in the specific role. This was done by asking the officers with responsibility for the Council's main committees to outline the responsibilities/demands on Chairs and consult with the Chairs. The result of the work can be seen in **Appendix A**.
14. In light of information included regarding work pressures, it is recommended to adopt the following list of higher salaries for 2023/24.
 - Leader
 - Deputy Leader
 - Up to 8 other Cabinet members
 - The Leader of the largest Opposition party*
 - Committee Chairs:
 - o Scrutiny Committees (x3)
 - o Planning Committee
 - o Licensing Committee (the Central and General Licensing committees count as one Committee)
 - o Pensions Committee
 - Civic head (Chair of the Council)
 - Deputy civic head (Vice-chair of the Council)

* (this is a specific requirement by the Panel - it is not optional)
15. It is also noted that the requirements of the Panel note a duty by the Council to pay remuneration to the Chair of the Governance and Audit Committee in accordance with Panel terms.

Recommendation

16. The Democratic Services Committee is requested to recommend the higher salaries list for 2023/24 and for the future (as seen in para. 14) to the Full Council.