



Date of meeting:	12 November 2024
Subject	The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales's Draft Report
Recommendation	The Democratic Services Committee is asked for comments in order to form a response to the Independent Remuneration Panel's draft report consultation.
Contact Officer:	Vera Jones, Democracy and Language Services Manager

What is the background and relevant considerations?

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales publishes a draft report every year in October. It outlines the proposal for the subsequent financial year. The draft was published at the beginning of October 2024, outlining the proposed changes for the 2025-26 financial year. There is an opportunity to respond to the recommendations by **29 November 2024**.
2. The draft changes, should they come into force, will be published by 28 February 2025 and will be effective for the 2025-26 financial year, coming into force on 1 April 2025. This will be the last report by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales before their duties transfer to Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru from 1st April 2025.

The Role of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

3. The Panel's responsibility is to set the salary levels of Wales' Councillors, and their role is fully independent. Since its establishment, the Panel has expressed regularly and firmly that local democracy and public service governance is not cost-free, and that a value must be given to them if we are to enable everyone to participate. It is important to promote a culture that encourages individuals to receive remuneration to ensure that people from all parts of society can participate confidently in our democracy.
4. In addition, the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 makes it a requirement for the Panel to consider the financial implications of its decisions. The Panel has had to seek to balance both elements in parallel every year as it makes its decisions.

The Panel's Main Decisions relevant to the Council

5. A full copy of the report in its draft form is available by clicking on the following link.

[Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: draft annual report 2025 to 2026 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

6. Note that the Panel has changed its method of reporting in recent years, by only reporting on the changes in their annual reports. This can be difficult to follow at times as it is necessary to go back to previous annual reports to fully understand the situation for some matters when 'no other changes' is reported. Although the Panel has previously noted that they will need to look at the matter again, this is likely to be a matter for the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru for the future.

Remuneration for Elected Members.

7. 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. The Panel reviews this time commitment regularly, and no changes are proposed for 2025 - 2026.
8. The Panel has decided, for the financial year running from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, that it is right to maintain the link between the basic salaries of councillors and the average salaries of their electors.
9. The basic salary will be **£19,771**. The payment for 2024/25 is £18,666.
10. All Elected Members will receive the sum noted above. Should an Elected Member decide not to receive the allowance or a percentage of the allowance, they must contact the Head of Democratic Services personally noting their decision in writing.

Senior Salaries for Elected Members

11. There has been no change to the maximum senior salaries that can be paid. 18 is the maximum number of senior salaries that can be paid to Group B authorities, which includes Cyngor Gwynedd.
12. The table below shows the details of Group B payments for 2025-26.



	The likely remuneration payment for 2025/26	Remuneration Payment for 2024/25
Basic salary (payable to every elected member)	£19,771	£18,666
Band 1: leader	£66,727	£62,998
Band 1: deputy leader	£46,709	£44,099
Band 2: executive members	£40,036	£37,799
Band 3: committee chairs (if they receive a recognition payment)	£29,657	£27,999
Band 4: the leader of the largest opposition party	£29,657	£27,999
Band 5: leaders of other political groups	£23,726	£22,406

13. In accordance with the decision by the Full Council, senior salaries are paid as follows: Leader, Deputy Leader, 8 Executive Members, Chairs of the 3 Scrutiny Committees, Chairs of the Planning, Licensing and Pensions Committees, along with the Leader of the largest opposition party. There has not been a significant change in the responsibilities for any committees to consider changing the above.

14. 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.

15. The level for 2025/26 has been set as follows:

Chairman of the Council	£29,657 (£27,999 in 2024/25)
Vice-chairman of the Council	£23,726 (£22,406 in 2024/25)

Co-opted Members

16. Since 2024/25 the Panel has introduced an hourly rate of pay as well as the full or half day basis for Co-opted members. The changes were made to reflect the changes in current work practices such as more frequent shorter on-line briefing meetings. Following considering various factors, the Head of Democratic Services, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, has made arrangements to implement the new arrangements, with co-opted members now receiving remuneration at the hourly rate.
17. The North Wales Corporate Joint Committee will also adopt these arrangements. There are no changes to the rates for 2025/26 – see below.

Role	Hourly rate payment	Payment rate up to 4 hours	Payment rate 4 hours and above
Standards Committee Chairs, and Audit Committees	£33.50	£134	£268
General members of Standards committees that also chair Standards Committees for Town and Community Councils	£29.75	£119	£238
General members of Standards Committees, Education Scrutiny Committee, Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee	£26.25	£105	£210
Town and Community Councillors that are Members of Principal Councils' Standards Committees	£26.25	£105	£210

Other costs

18. No further changes are made to the payments and benefits paid to elected members therefore all other decisions from 2024/2025 still stand and they should be applied to 2025/26.
19. It should also be noted that the report refers to matters relating to Town and Community Councils, but this is not elaborated upon in this report.

Recommendation

20. The Democratic Services Committee is asked for
- comments in order to form a response to the Independent Remuneration Panel's draft report consultation.