

MEETING	Full Council
DATE	18 May, 2017
SUBJECT	MEMBER REMUNERATION
PURPOSE	Decide on the Senior salaries for the year 2017/18
AUTHOR	Geraint Owen, Head of Democratic Services

BACKGROUND

1. Salaries payable to elected members is set by a national body, The Independent Remuneration Panel. The Panel's annual report has been published in February, 2017. The requirements of the report are to be implemented for the 2017/18 financial year. Below is the link to the page where the Independent Panel report can be found.
<http://gov.wales/docs/dsilg/publications/localgov/170223-annual-report-en.pdf>
3. The main points of the report include:-
 - a) An increase of £100 in the basic salary for all members (raising from £13,300 to £13,400)
 - b) Senior salaries are not increased, but these post holders will receive the increase in the basic salary element.
 - c) Each individual Council to decide on setting Cabinet Members on one of two levels, Level 1, (£29,100) or Level 2 (£26,100)
 - ch) Each individual Council to decide on setting Committee Chairs on one of two level, Level 1, (£22,100) or Level 2 (£20,100)
 - d) Arrangements are now available for financial remuneration to cover cases of long term sickness absence of senior salary holders (in line with regulations relating to Family Absence of elected members)
 - dd) The term "reimbursement of costs of care" is to be used to replace "care allowance", allowing optional approaches for the publication of the information by individual Authorities. This is done to encourage individual members to access all the support available, without the negative publicity.
4. The decisions of the Independent Remuneration Panel bind Councils to make the payments set by them. The only practical way of not making those payments is for an individual member to state, in writing to the Head of Democratic Services, that they will not accept part or all of the payments.

THE MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION

5. The Panel's reports states that a year has passed since the introduction of two levels of salary for members of Councils' Executives and Committee Chairs of principal Authorities who merit the receipt of senior salaries. The Panel established that no Council has used the flexibility available to them to reflect differential responsibilities of

portfolios within Cabinets or to Chairs of Committees by introducing differential payments in 2016/17.

6. As this has only been in place for one year, the Panel is retaining this facility for flexibility to reflect variations in the levels of responsibility in the remuneration applied to specific senior posts.
7. Whilst discussing the matter last year, the Council decided to establish the Senior salaries at Level 1 for Cabinet Members and Chairs of some committees. In order to make a decision the members considered that the allocation of Cabinet Members duties was to ensure consistency and balanced workloads. Members also considered possible complications which could arise should there be more than one salary level for Cabinet Members, leading to difficulties in moving responsibilities from one Cabinet Member to another. The geographical nature of the county was also considered, that along with the challenge of providing services across the second largest county in Wales - a factor that should be considered for Cabinet Members and Chairs of the Committees. In the same way, the requirement for members to travel across Gwynedd was also taken into consideration, bearing in mind that it can take approximately two and a half hours to travel from the North to the South of the County.
8. Whilst considering which Committee Chairs were to receive Senior salaries, the workload for the Chairs was again considered, along with the frequency of official and unofficial meetings, the geographical nature of the county and the need to travel to meetings etc. The Democratic Services Committee has discussed the Senior salaries for 2017/18 and their recommendations can be seen below. In order to come to a conclusion, they considered the probable workload for 2017/18 and a reduction in the workload for the Chairs named on the list is not envisaged. Indeed, it is probable that the requirements for some of the Chairs will increase eg Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees.
9. In making the decision this year, the Council should consider not only at which level to set these posts but also whether there is any difference in the responsibilities shouldered in different posts. With regard to the levels of responsibility shouldered by different Cabinet Members, it should be noted that as a Council, we will make a deliberate effort to allocate out Cabinet responsibilities as equally as possible. The Council will also need to consider whether there is a difference in the responsibilities shouldered by the committee chairs noted below and, indeed, the chairs of some other committees who do not receive special remuneration, such as the Employment Appeals Committee, Language Committee and Democratic Services Committee.
10. In addition to the consideration about the levels, the Council is reminded that there is a limit to the number of senior salaries which the authority may pay. The limit for Gwynedd is 18, and following previous Council discussions, they are currently paid to :-
 - Leader

- Deputy Leader
- 8 other Cabinet Members
- Leader of the largest opposition group

The following Chairs:

- Scrutiny Committees (x3)
- Audit Committee
- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Pensions Committee

Due to the latest assesment of responsibilities, all Cabinet Members are currently paid at Level 1 and all Committee Chairs noted above receive Level 1 payment.

RECOMMENDATION

11. The Democratic Services Committee discussed the matters during their meeting in April and recommend as follows:
 - Senior Salaries to be paid to the 18 roles noted in paragraph 10 above.
 - Senior Salaries for Cabinet members and Chairs of Committees (identified in paragraph 10 above) should remain at Level 1 for the first year of the new Council.
 - A review of the workload of all Committee chairs should be held in a year to determine if the decission should be revised or the salary level changed.