

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	4 April, 2017
SUBJECT	MEMBER REMUNERATION
PURPOSE	Update Committee members on member remuneration matters and seek recommendations for the new Council.
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BACKGROUND

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' annual report has been published (February 2017). The requirements of the report are to be implemented for the 2017/18 financial year. Members of the Committee will remember responding to the Panel's draft consultation over the winter months.
2. By now, the final report has been published. Here is the link to the page where the Independent Panel report can be found.
<http://gov.wales/docs/ds/jlg/publications/localgov/170223-annual-report-en.pdf>
3. Here are the main points:-
 - a) 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 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" to replace "care allowance", and allowing optional approaches to the publication of reimbursement of costs of care by individual Authorities in the hope of encouraging individual members to access all the available support (without the negative publicity).

THE MATTER UNDER CONSIDERATION

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.

5. However, 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 receive Senior salaries. The Panel has examined the schedules for 2016/17 and has established that no principal Council has introduced differential payments within Cabinets or to Chairs of Committees. 20 Authorities paid members of executives at Level 1, and 2 at Level 2, and 20 Authorities paid Committee Chairs at Level 1, and 2 at Level 2.
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 Democratic Services Committee recommended basing the payments at Level 1, and that was the decision of the Full Council. 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 have made a deliberate effort to share 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.
8. In addition to the consideration about the levels, the committee is reminded that there is a limit to the number of Senior salaries which the authority may pay. The limit is 18, and following previous Council discussions, they are currently paid to :-
 - Leader
 - Deputy Leader
 - 8 other Cabinet Members
 - Leader of the largest opposition groupThe 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

9. The Committee's views are sought in order to submit a recommendation to the full Council on what should be paid during the new Council's first year, and recommending

that a review of the workloads of the Chairs who currently receive a Senior salary should be undertaken during the first year in order to assess whether the decision for the Senior salary holders or the level of payment needs to be reviewed.