

Report

Council

Part 1

Date: 23 April 2024

Subject **Members Schedule of Remuneration 2024/25**

Purpose To approve the Members Schedule of Remuneration for 2024/25.

Author Head of Law and Standards.

Ward All

Summary The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP) is the body tasked with setting the remuneration levels for councils in Wales. The IRP makes determinations in relation to basic and senior salaries, and also the rates and conditions for expenses paid by public authorities.

The IRP has published its Annual Report for 24/25. The IRP has determined that the basic annual salaries for elected members should be re-based at £18,666 to continue to ensure that remuneration is linked to average salary levels. This represents a 6.06% increase in the basic salary. Senior salaries are also increased and re-set in line with relevant comparators.

The increases in basic salaries will take effect from 1st April 2024 and backdated payments will be made to members. Any changes to additional remuneration for senior salaries will be payable as from the date of appointment of the post-holders at the Council AGM on 21st May 2024. The names of the relevant senior salary holders will be added to the Schedule before it is published.

Council is now required to formally approve and adopt the Members Schedule of Remuneration for 24/25 as set out in Appendix 1.

Proposal **That Council approves and adopts the Members Schedule of Remuneration 24/25 as set out in Appendix 1.**

Action by Head of Law and Standards

Timetable To publish and submit the schedule of remuneration for 2024-25 by 31 July 2024.

This report was prepared after consultation with:

- Democratic Services Committee
- Head of Finance
- Head of People Policy & Transformation.

Signed

Background

The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP) is the body tasked with setting the remuneration levels for councils in Wales. The Panel makes determinations in relation to basic and senior salaries, and also the rates and conditions for expenses paid by public authorities. The IRP's determinations for payments to be made to elected members as from 1st April 2024 are set out in the latest Annual Report, which was published in February 2024.

Summary of Proposed Changes

In summary, the IRP has determined that the basic annual salaries for elected members should be re-based at £18,666 in order to retain a link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. The basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of all Wales 2022 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office of National Statistics, which was the latest figure available at drafting. Senior salaries are also increased and re-set in line with relevant comparators.

All other Determinations for 2023 to 2024 will still stand and should be applied in 2024 to 2025, including those covering co-opted members.

The increases in basic salaries will take effect as from 1st April 2024. Any changes to additional remuneration for senior salaries will be payable as from the date of appointment of the post-holders at the Council AGM on 21st May 2024.

Revised Schedule of Remuneration

The attached Schedule of Remuneration at Appendix 1 has been updated with the IRP's changes. The Council is required to publish the revised schedule and submit this to IRP by 31st July 2024. Council is asked to approve the revised schedule, which will be updated with post holder names following the meeting of Full Council on 23 August 2024, before being published and submitted to IRP in line with the deadline.

Consultation

The IRP's draft report was shared with the Democratic Services Committee as part of the consultation process.

Financial Summary (Capital and Revenue)

The determination to increase basic and senior salaries incurs an increased cost and the relevant budget for 2024/25 for this was increased to take account of this. This is an increase that the Council must deliver to meet the IRP's determinations.

Links to Council Policies and Priorities

There is no direct link to Newport's individual policies or plans as this is a national issue about payments to Councillors.

Proposed Action

That Council approves and adopts the Members Schedule of Remuneration 24/25, as set out in Appendix 1.

Comments of Chief Financial Officer

Provision was made within the 24/25 budget for the anticipated basic and special responsibility allowance increase based on an advance copy of the review board findings. As always, there is a degree of uncertainty in the actual costs which is affected by a number of things; for example, how many roles attracting senior salaries will be in place, how many members join the LG pension Scheme, which members claim travel and other expenses and make use of the other allowances available to support them in their duties. These expenses/allowances have been very minimal in the past and the Council is required to report these annually on the Council's website for each member.

Comments of Monitoring Officer

There are no specific legal issues arising from the Report. The IRP has statutory power under Section 147 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 to set Members Allowances. Democratic Services Committee have previously expressed the opinion that the amounts of basic and senior salaries should be prescribed by the IRP and not left to the discretion of individual councils. The latest IRP Report and prescribed scheme removes most discretionary elements but there is still some element of local discretion.

The basic salary for all Members is increased to £18,666, which is an increase of slightly more than £1,000 compared with 2023/24. The IRP has re-based the level of allowances to take account of inflationary increases and increases in average salaries in Wales. Senior salaries have also been increased on the same basis by an equivalent amount. Allowances for co-opted members and rates for travel and subsistence remain the same.

The only remaining discretionary element of the Members Allowances Scheme is in relation to the whether the Council decides to pay civic salaries to the Presiding Member, Mayor and Deputy Mayor and senior salaries to Chairs of Committees. The Council has previously determined to pay these discretionary allowances and the amounts are, therefore, fixed at £27,999 for the Mayor, Presiding Member and committee chairs and £22,406 for the Deputy Mayor.

Further details of the IRP's determination are set out in the annual report document embedded below.

Council, is therefore, required to formally approve and adopt the proposed Scheme of Remuneration for the financial year 2024/25. There is no requirement for any Member to declare a personal interest, as there is a general dispensation for the approval of Members allowances.

Comments of Head of People Policy and Transformation

This report seeks Council to approve the members schedule of remuneration for 2024/25. This basic allowance for members recommended in the report has been determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. There are no specific issues in the response in relation to the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-27 or the Well-being of Future Generations Act, although those appointed to Cabinet posts in particular will need to consider the principles of the Act as part of any decision-making process.

There are no staffing or specific HR or equalities issues arising from the report, while a Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment wasn't required to be completed as this affects elected members only.

Fairness and Equality Impact Assessment:

No FEIA was undertaken as the report affects elected members only.

Background Papers

IRP Annual Report 2024/25



IRP

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[Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: annual report 2024 to 2025 \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Dated: 27 March 2024