



Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Legacy Report

February 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This legacy report has been produced to aid in the transition of functions from the existing Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP) to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC). This report has been published on our website in line with our stated aims and objectives on transparency to stakeholders and the public. It includes all relevant information on the work to date of the IRP and the areas of interest identified for future consideration.
- 1.2. The IRP (the Panel) was established in 2008 but took its current statutory form in 2011 through Part 8 (s141 to s160) of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011. Its purpose is to determine payments to Councillors and related holders of public office in a manner that is independent of political interference, through open processes that provide transparent rationale and produce fair outcomes to both recipients of the payments and council taxpayers who funded them.
- 1.3. The Panel is responsible for determining the level of payments to elected members of councils, town and community councils, national park authorities and fire and rescue authorities in Wales. The Panel also reviews changes to chief executive remuneration for Principal Councils and Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) in their Pay Policy Statement.
- 1.4. The Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act gained royal assent on 24 June 2024, renaming, and repurposing the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales as the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC). This reflects the broader role the Commission will have as a result of changes in legislation.
- 1.5. The Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Act received royal assent on 9 September 2024 and will transfer the functions of the IRP to DBCC.
- 1.6. The function currently undertaken by the Panel will transfer to the DBCC and the Panel dissolved with effect from 1 April 2025.
- 1.7. The transfer of functions will exclude the remuneration of Local Authority Chief Executives. DBCC will be given a new function which will enable it to set a 'parachute payment' scheme for councillors.

2. History

- 2.1 Prior to the IRP, under the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 ('the 1989 Act') local authorities were already required to agree a scheme of allowances. The Local Government Act 2000 ('the 2000 Act') enabled local authorities to create independent remuneration panels or, in the case of Wales, a single national remuneration panel.
- 2.2 Under the newly devolved arrangements the Welsh Assembly Government was given power (transferred to Welsh Ministers through the provisions of the Government of Wales Act 2006) to introduce, for the first time, an entitlement to pensions for elected members of county and county borough councils ('councillors'). Further, it gave the Welsh Assembly Government powers on councillors' allowances and gratuities.
- 2.3 The reform of allowances for community and town councillors was also made possible under the 2000 Act, as were changes to the existing regime for travel and subsistence and other expenses for all councillors, including members of Fire and Rescue Authorities.
- 2.4 Following the introduction of the 2000 Act, the Assembly Minister for Finance, Local Government and Communities commissioned the Institute of Local Government (INLOGOV) at the University of Birmingham to investigate councillors' remuneration and it produced a report in 2001 entitled 'Recognising Councillors' Worth to their Communities' which provided the starting point for later legislation by the National Assembly.
- 2.5 The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of County and County Borough Councils and National Park Authorities) (Wales) Regulations 2002 (the 2002 Regulations) revoked much of the previous legislation. The 2002 Regulations set out the rules for allowances in county and county borough councils, as well as National Park Authorities (NPAs). The maximum amounts payable were not prescribed in the 2002 Regulations. Instead, the Welsh Assembly Government published Statutory Guidance which recommended that allowances were tied to Members of the National Assembly for Wales (AMs) rates.
- 2.6 The Welsh Independent Remuneration Panel (WIRP) was established under the 2003 Regulations for a temporary period of six months. Following the report from the WIRP - and having reviewed the existing regime - the Minister decided that it would be preferable to establish a permanent independent panel to decide on appropriate levels of allowances for councillors via a systematic review rather than have a system by which allowances were, in part, tied to those of Assembly Members.
- 2.7 The introduction of The Local Authorities (Allowances for Members) (Wales) Regulations 2007 ('the 2007 Regulations'), replaced most of the extant legislation and included a number of 'tidying' provisions. The 2007 Regulations provided for the establishment of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

- 2.8 The objective of an independent panel was to determine councillors pay free from political interference, from both Councillors who would directly benefit but also the Welsh Government. Payment for political office is always potentially controversial and often diverts attention from more important tasks facing decision makers.
- 2.9 The Panel's work is detailed in Section 5 Key Determinations and Milestones.
- 2.10 The Welsh Government commissioned a 10-year review of the Panel by Stephen Hughes. The purpose was to consider and assess any changes that may be required to the Panel's functions and operations, whether the Panel continued to represent value for money and whether the governance arrangements remained appropriate. This was published in October 2021 and a link to the review can be found here: [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: 10 year review | GOV.WALES](#)
- 2.11 There were seven recommendations which suggested in summary the following:
- The IRP builds a strategic narrative based on models of Councillor value and affordability underpinned by research evidence.
 - The IRP changes the way it communicates its decisions to bespoke them for different stakeholders.
 - The IRP develop a public engagement strategy.
 - The IRP is hosted by an arm's length body with synergies with local government that can provide missing legal, technical and policy support, and undertakes an effectiveness review to re-purpose the budget and ways of working to increase the Panel's capacity.
- 2.12 In addition to the recommendations the report included considerable commentary on the detail of the Panel's work and its relationship with stakeholders.
- 2.13 In response to the recommendations the Panel:
- submitted their Strategy to the Minister for Finance and Local Government which identified its key goals and ambitions.
 - set out their evidence paper and asked the Secretariat to provide annual data.
 - changed the latest annual report to an update of changes and have commissioned work on its website to support the slimmer version of the annual report.
 - responded positively to the Electoral and Administration White Paper and the Chair of the IRP, Frances Duffy to take part of the transition

planning group to transfer of functions from the existing IRP to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC).

- implemented the recommendations of the Effectiveness Review of the Panel which was a commitment of the 10 Year Review.

3. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

3.1. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales.

3.2. The Act was given royal assent on 29 April 2015 and came into force on 1 April 2016.

3.3. The Act gives a legally-binding common purpose – the 7 well-being goals – for national government, local government, local health boards and other specified public bodies. It details the ways in which specified public bodies must work and work together to improve the well-being of Wales.

3.4. Well-being goals are:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language
- A globally responsible Wales

4. Sustainable Development principle - 5 ways of working

4.1. The IRP is not one of the public bodies specified in the Act, however, has adhered to the principles of sustainable development set out in the Act.

4.2. **Collaboration:** Communication and engagement our immediate stakeholders throughout the year. Each year the IRP engaged with members of the bodies for which it sets remuneration levels, officers within those organisations and clerks. The IRP also engaged with relevant membership bodies including Welsh Local Government Association, One Voice Wales, Audit Wales, and the Society for Local Council Clerks.

4.3. The Panel publishes a Draft Report in October followed by an eight-week consultation where members of the public are encouraged to and provide valuable feedback. The IRP also considers feedback from the publishing of the Annual Report in the previous year.

4.4. **Integration:** The IRP publishes a summary of our monthly meetings on the website, information on our Determinations which includes Guidance on how all

decisions should be applied. Individual queries were sent to the IRP are processed by the Secretariat and Panel as appropriate.

- 4.5. **Involvement:** The aim of the IRP is to support local democracy and giving communities their voice, through setting up an appropriate and fair remuneration framework, which encouraged inclusion and participation.
- 4.6. One of the goals of the IRP is that the determinations should supported elected members from a diverse range of backgrounds, and levels of remuneration should not act as a barrier to participation.
- 4.7. The Panel introduced reimbursement for cost of care (for all elected members) and a working from home and ICT allowance (community and town councillors) aimed at removing potential barriers relating to caring responsibilities and home working enabling elected members to participate in local democracy.
- 4.8. The Panel has monitored, where it could, the impact of its determinations on improving diversity within local democracy, and with the support of Welsh Government, sought views on the association between remuneration and diversity within local democracy.
- 4.9. **Long-term:** The other goals of the IRP are that the determinations should ensure that levels of remuneration are fair, reasonable, represent value for money for the taxpayer, and are set within the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales.
- 4.10. **Prevention:** The Panel continually review the outcomes and impacts of their determinations

5. Key Determinations and Milestones

- 5.1. The Panel started from the principle that councillors' remuneration should be linked to the average pay of their constituents. In 2009 the Panel reset the Basic Allowance maximum, and Senior Responsibility Allowances (SRAs) to align with the median annual gross salary for full-time employees resident in Wales for 2009 using ASHE. The duties of a councillor, on average took the equivalent of three working days. The Basic Allowance was calculated to be equal to three-fifths of the median gross full time salary in Wales.
- 5.2. The Panel considered the different workload of senior councillors – Committee chairs, Council leaders, Cabinet members etc. and in 2009 introduced a framework for SRAs. This recognised that some roles were full time and so the remuneration should reflect this. The Panel also wanted to ensure some level of parity across Wales and so banded Principal Authorities according to size and fixed the remuneration for SRAs within these Bands.
- 5.3. However, pressures on public finances in subsequent years meant that the link with average Welsh earnings was not maintained. During those years, the Panel acknowledged the increasing erosion of relative levels of remuneration.

In 2022 the Panel agreed it was important to its aims of supporting local democracy to realign with ASHE. This resulted in very large (some 16%) increases. Since then, in consultation with Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), the Panel has ensured that the link with ASHE is kept up to date to avoid the necessity of infrequent large increases.

- 5.4. The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (The Measure) extended the remit of the Panel to payments made to members and co-opted members of local authorities, National Park authorities, Welsh fire and rescue authorities. The Panel decided to establish a link between levels of payments available to both members of National Park authorities and Welsh fire and rescue authorities with those available to local councils.
- 5.5. The Measure also extended the remit of the Panel to payments made to members and co-opted members of Community and Town Councils (CTCs). The Panel provided a remuneration framework for CTCs that reflect the variation across the 732 councils in Wales and carried out a major review in 2021.
- 5.6. The Panel considers members should not be out of pocket for carrying out their duties and have determined that CTC members should be reimbursed for extra cost for working from home and consumables. The Panel is aware that councillors may decline payments but has emphasised that each CTC must ensure that it does not create a climate where accepting payments is discouraged.
- 5.7. The Welsh Government policy of increasing the diversity and access to elected roles is a principle that the Panel has always been mindful of when making its determinations. Over the years the Panel has introduced numerous additional benefits, such as ensuring all councillors had access to needed IT equipment, that all could claim reasonable travel and subsistence expenses and more recently that those with caring responsibilities could be reimbursed for the costs of care needed when carrying out their roles and responsibilities.
- 5.8. With the view to contribute wherever possible to enhancing diversity in local government in Wales, the Panel provided material on remuneration for prospective candidates. In addition to the leaflets the Panel produced a short film in 2020 '[Ever thought about being a Welsh councillor?](#)'
- 5.9. The Panel has also engaged with stakeholders throughout its remit. This has included holding and one to one meetings, seminars, publishing summary of meetings on our website and changing the format of the Annual Report to make it more accessible.
- 5.10. A timeline of the Key Determinations and Milestones of the Panel can be found at Annex 1.

Annual Reports and a list of the current determinations can be found on the [website](#).

6. Areas of Interest for the Future

- 6.1. The Panel have identified areas of interest where further consideration may be needed in the future:

Maintaining the link to ASHE

- 6.2. After the 2022 realignment, the Panel agreed it was preferable to maintain this link. The Panel recommends that this benchmark should be reviewed once in every electoral cycle to ensure it remains the best available public benchmark. The Panel also is of the view that the review should also include an assessment of the members' workload.
- 6.3. In 2024 the Panel determined that the relevant local officer should have the flexibility when agreeing the remuneration of co-opted members to principal Authorities , NPAs and FRAs, to decide when it will be appropriate to apply a day or a half day rate and when to use an hourly rate where it is sensible to aggregate a number of short meetings .As this is a new Determination , the Panel recommends that this is reviewed within the next 2 years to measure its impact.

Senior Salaries

- 6.4. The need for a review of the methodology for calculating Senior Salaries within principal councils has gained impetus given the development of CJs and how complex senior roles have become.
- 6.5. The Panel, with the DBCC, have identified tasks that will enable the DBCC to undertake a review of the framework and methodology for determining the remuneration of senior roles within Principal Councils in order to inform determinations for 2026/2027.
- 6.6. The Panel has noted given the development of CJs, the increase in numbers of co-opted members and the changing nature of working patterns this is an area that should be monitored in the future and will impact on senior roles.

Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

- 6.7. The Panel recognises that there is a wide variation in geography, scope, and scale across the large number of community and town councils in Wales, from small community councils with relatively minimal expenditure and few meetings to large town councils with significant assets and responsibilities. The current groups based on the size of the council's electorate and the additional factor of where income or expenditure permanently exceeds £200,000 a year, reflects this.
- 6.8. The Panel's remit under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 enables the Panel to monitor the compliance of relevant authorities with the Panel's determinations and does this by asking all CTCs to submit an annual Statement of Payments made (which should also be published by them on their websites). An ongoing area of concern is the compliance of the annual reporting to the

Panel by CTCs. This is particularly the case with the smallest of the CTCs, those in Band 5. Last year, out of the 427 Councils in this group, almost 75% of them either made no return at all or submitted a nil Return. The Panel appreciates the work of all CTCs and has participated and sponsored the One Voice Wales awards for the work of all Councils including the very smallest. However, the Panel does question whether the administrative and compliance burden on these small councils is commensurate with the benefits of this remuneration and compliance regime, when so many simply opt out. The Panel has made efforts to simplify reporting and compliance and provided a new template to be used from 2024. This allowed Councils to aggregate the basic payments made to councillors and not report them individually in the hope this may encourage individual councillors to take up payments due and to simplify the process for the Clerks. The Panel recommends that this issue continues to be monitored and the current system for banding and remuneration reviewed in the light of the Welsh Government's responses to the Democratic Health Task Force and the Senedd Committee Enquiry.

Coopted Members

- 6.9. Following feedback on our [Annual Report 2023](#) the Panel took evidence from the correspondents on the impact of both the increase in numbers of co-opted members and the changing nature of working patterns. This showed that the current arrangement of either a half day rate for anything up to 4 hours and a full day rate for anything over, was insufficiently flexible to reflect the patterns of working now more normally in place, mainly due to more online or hybrid working. The Panel agreed in 2024 that flexibility should be given and that decisions on whether an hourly or daily rate might be appropriate are to be made locally.

Engagement

- 6.10. The Panel recommends that consideration of the frequency and quality of engagement is monitored. Including a diversity of thought can help to avoid group think and contribute to standard of evidence provided by the stakeholders.
- 6.11. Following feedback from stakeholders, the Panel recommends that the timing of the Annual Report publication is reviewed. Stakeholders have requested a longer period to incorporate the determinations before the start of the next financial year.

Youth Representation

- 6.12. The current legislation (the Local Government (Wales) 2011 Measure) allows for CTCs to appoint up to two youth representatives to the council. It also is clear that youth representatives are not members of the council and therefore are not within the remit of the Panel to make determinations for.

6.13. The Panel is aware that this is an area of ongoing interest for the Democratic Health Group and developments on this matter should be considered in the future.

7. Transition

- 7.1. The new functions of the DBCC does come with significant potential reputational and delivery risk and the DBCC would greatly benefit from continuity in governance and expertise as it gets to a point where the new functions become 'business as usual.'
- 7.2. The agreed plan for the transition and board succession is as follows:
- 7.3. Chair of the IRP, Frances Duffy, to be directly appointed as a Commissioner with a start date of 1 April 2025 for a period of one year. Frances will chair the remuneration sub-committee as well as participate as a full Commissioner.
- 7.4. Existing Chair of the DBCC and Panel member, Beverly Smith to remain in place until the end of her appointment in January 2026, providing continuity of skills and experience as Commission chair and IRP panel member.
- 7.5. Commissioner and Panel member Dianne Bevan to remain in place until the end of her appointment in May 2026, providing continuity of skills and experience as lead commissioner and IRP panel member.
- 7.6. The DBCC will have the current Panel chair and two Panel members as Commissioners to provide continuity on the remuneration work prior to the large piece of remuneration research and engagement work that needs to be undertaken prior to the next local government elections. New Commissioners will be able to gain experience in remuneration and review work alongside the experienced Commissioners.
- 7.7. The Commission has appointed staff to work as the secretariat to the remuneration sub-committee who are working with the Panel to gain knowledge and experience of the work area from the Panel and Welsh Government secretariat.

8. Summary

- 8.1 The Panel was established to be an independent body free from political interference. It has worked collaboratively with key stakeholders engaged in promoting participation in local democracy. The Panel has consistently emphasised the fact that democracy is not cost free. However, we have had to balance the fairness to elected members against the cost to the public purse and are satisfied that we have achieved this.
- 8.2 The vast majority of elected members of local government in Wales work tirelessly for their communities and do so for little financial reward. All in society should have the opportunity to stand for election if they wish to and there

should be no financial barriers to preclude this. The Panel shares Welsh Government's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, including the socio-economic duty. The Panel believes that fairly remunerated successful candidates may lead to a greater diversity of individuals applying and putting themselves forward for selection and election.

- 8.3 People's lifestyles and expectations have changed in the last decade with increased requirements and expectations for a flexible approach to support people with family and care pressures to participate and contribute at work and in public life, through job sharing, flexibility and family leave. The Panel's framework for financial support in respect of care reflects this.
- 8.4 We would like to thank all of the Panel members current and past for their service, the Secretariat who have supported the Panel and ensured its efficient functioning and all stakeholders for their valuable contributions. The Panel would also like to thank the DBCC for their collaboration over the transition period. We look forward to seeing the continuation of supporting local democracy and giving communities their voice, through setting up an appropriate and fair remuneration framework, which encourages inclusion.

Annex 1

Key Determinations and Milestones

2008

The Panel was established in 2008. In its Initial Report determinations for the following were made:

- **Basic Allowance**
- **Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)**
- **Care Allowances**
- **Travelling and Subsistence Allowances**
- **Cooptee Allowances**
- **Pensions**
- **Other Relevant Matters**

More information of these determinations can be found in the Annual report 2008.

2009

Basic Allowance

The Panel made 3 significant determinations regarding the Basic Allowance:

- **The Basic Allowance shall be reset at a maximum of £13,868 per annum, representing the equivalent of three days work on the basis of the median annual gross earnings of all full-time employees in Wales for 2009.**
- **The *public service discount* is redefined as any hours of council-related activity contributed by a councillor in excess of the equivalent of three working days in any week. These hours are not recompensed within the Basic Allowance.**
- **The Basic Allowance no longer incorporates a sum to meet a councillor's IT and office costs.**

Special Responsibility Allowances (SRAs)

The Panel received a great deal of evidence supporting differential SRAs for leaders in different sized councils. There was a widely expressed view that the differential between the highest and lowest SRAs paid to leaders across Wales was too great. **The Panel decided to reduce in the number of population groups in the framework from four to three.**

More information can be found at Annual Report 2009.

2010

‘Moving Forward: Proposals Beyond 2010’ published - in which the Panel examined the framework of councillors’ allowances and made proposals for future development, some of which the Panel could implement and some of which would require the approval of the proposed Local Government (Wales) Measure.

2011

Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011

The powers under Section 142 to decide payments to members of relevant authorities enabled the Panel move beyond its previous powers which were limited to setting maximum amounts for member payments.

The Panel decided to use these new powers and, for the municipal year following the local government elections in 2012, to prescribe the actual level of payments members.

Section 144 extended the remit of the Panel to include National Park Authorities (NPAs) and Welsh Fire and Rescue Authorities (FRAs)

The Panel decided to establish a link between levels of payments available to both members of NPAs and Welsh FRAs with those available to local councils.

Section 144 also extended the remit of the Panel to include Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel advised the Legislation Committee that it would require a considerable investment of time and effort on its part to devise a remuneration framework which could be seen to be both fair and equitable, and which would give proper regard to the number and variety of community and town councils in Wales. Until then allowances for community and town councils will continue to be payable under the Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of Community Councils) (Wales) Regulations 2003.

See [Local Government \(Wales\) Measure 2011](#) for the legislation and Annual Report 2011 for further information.

2012

Payments to members of Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel wanted to ensure that any decisions made in respect of these councils was fair and equitable and would have proper regard for the variation across the 735 councils in Wales. The Panel provided Regulations relating to community and town councils that replaced the Local Authorities (Allowances for Members of Community Councils) (Wales) Regulations 2003.

The Panel made some initial determinations whilst it continued its programme of evidence.

Community and town councils may continue to make payments to their members in respect of travel costs and subsistence for attending approved duties outside the area of the council.

Community and town councils may continue to pay an Attendance Allowance and Financial Loss Allowance to their members for attending approved duties outside the area of the council.

Community and town councils are authorised to provide a Civic Allowance to the Mayor or Chair and Deputy Mayor or Chair of the council of an amount that each council deems appropriate to undertake the functions of that office. Each community and town council is permitted to make a payment to its members of a maximum amount of £100 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc.

Pensions

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 provided power to the Panel to make determinations on pension entitlement for members of local authorities. In 2012 The Panel determined that all elected members of principal councils were entitled to join the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

2013

The Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (“the 2013 Act”)

The 2013 Act inserted section 143A into the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (“the Measure”) to extend the remit of the Panel to include certain functions in relation to the salaries of ‘heads of paid service’ of qualifying relevant authorities. See [Local Government \(Democracy\) \(Wales\) Act 2013](#) for the legislation.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JOSC)

The Panel issued a supplementary report in July 2013 setting out the arrangements for the remuneration of chairs of Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-committees.

2014

Entitlement to family absence

The Panel considered the implications for the remuneration of such members who are given absence under the terms set out in the Regulations and issued a Supplementary Report in March 2014.

See Annual Report 2014 for further information.

Specific or Additional Senior Salaries

In response to requests for greater flexibility such as including other roles for which senior salaries could be paid within the Remuneration Framework the Panel determined to include a provision for development posts.

See Annual Report 2014 for further information.

2015

Local Government (Wales) Act 2015

Section 143A was temporarily modified and only applied between 25 January 2016 and 31 March 2020.

Section 39 temporarily extended the remit of the Panel under section 143A to include functions in relation to the salaries of chief officers of principal local authorities (county and county borough councils) in addition to heads of paid service.

See [Local Government \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) for the legislation.

First Remit Letter by The Minister for Public Services

The Panel was provided with a 'remit' letter in March 2015. The Minister drew the Panel's attention to the desire of Welsh Government to reduce the cost of politics to the public purse and pointed to a number of aspects of the current remuneration framework for consideration. The Minister also asked the Panel to consider whether the rates of payment to leaders and executive members is justified when compared with those paid in similarly sized councils in other parts of the UK.

2018

Job Sharing Arrangements

The Panel in response to some council's request of the possibility of operating some senior salary posts on a "job share" arrangement made the following determinations:

- **For members of an executive: Each "sharer" will be paid 50% of the appropriate salary of the Population Group.**
- **The statutory maximum for cabinets cannot be exceeded so both job sharers will count toward the maximum.**
- **Under the Measure, it is the number of persons in receipt of a senior salary, not the number of senior salary posts that count towards the cap. Therefore, for all job share arrangements the senior salary cap will be increased subject to the statutory maximum of 50% of the council's membership.**

- **The Panel must be informed of the details of any job share arrangements.**

Payments to members of Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel proposed 3 groups based on the level of income or expenditure, whichever is the highest, in the previous financial year, is most appropriate.

The Panel made determinations on the following:

- **Payments towards costs and expenses**
- **Senior roles**
- **Reimbursement of travel costs and subsistence costs**
- **Reimbursement of the costs of care**
- **Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head Honoraria**

See [Annual Report 2018](#) for more details.

2020

To encourage wider democratic participation the Panel amended its publication of remuneration requirements (annex 4 [Annual Report 2022](#). Relevant authorities must only report their Reimbursement of Costs of Care payments as a total figure and must not identify individual claims.

Supplementary Report - The Principles relating to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care (RoCoC) May 2020

The Panel published a Supplementary Report that set out specific principles relating to the provision of financial support for care and support needs. RoCoC is retitled as Contribution towards Costs of Care and Personal Assistance (CPA)
Please see [Supplementary Report 2020](#) for more information.

Production of a short film ‘Ever thought about being a Welsh councillor?’

With the view to contribute wherever possible to enhancing diversity in local government in Wales the Panel provided material on remuneration for prospective candidates.

2021

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“the 2021 Act”)

The 2021 Act further amended section 143A by replacing references to “head of paid service” with “chief executive”, in effect providing that the Panel could make recommendations to a qualifying relevant authority about matters relating to the remuneration of the authority’s chief executive.

See [Local Government and Elections \(Wales\) Act 2021](#) for the legislation.

Corporate Joint Committees (“CJCs”) are established by regulations made under the 2021 Act in Wales. Section 3 of the Corporate Joint Committees (General) (No. 2) (Wales) Regulations 2021 requires CJCs to appoint a chief executive. Section 143A was further amended by those Regulations so that the definition of “chief executive” in section 143A(7) also covers chief executives appointed by CJCs. See [The Corporate Joint Committees \(General\) \(No. 2\) \(Wales\) Regulations 2021](#) for the legislation.

See [local-government-regulations-guidance-for-the-independent-remuneration-panel.pdf](#) for further detail.

CPA provisions of 2020 Supplementary Report adopted into [Annual Report 2021](#).

2022

Re-establishment of the link between principal councillor remuneration and Annual Survey of Hourly Earnings (ASHE) in Wales

The Panel had previously highlighted that since 2009, remuneration of elected members of local government in Wales had not kept pace with measures of inflation or other possible comparators due mainly to austerity and pressure on public finances. The effect was that members of principal councils had been significantly undervalued over time.

The Panel believed the local elections in May 2022 was the right time to re-establish the link between principal councillor remuneration and average earnings in Wales using ASHE. Elected members of the 22 principal councils to receive, proportionately, the same overall average pay that a Welsh constituent received in 2020. Payments for members of NPAs and Welsh FRAs also increased as a result of the uplift for elected members of principal councils. See [Annual Report 2022 - 2023](#) for further detail.

Payments to members of Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel changed the CTC Groupings from three groups based in income or expenditure to five groups based on size of electorate.

In addition, where a CTC’s income or expenditure permanently exceeds £200,000 a year, it will be moved up to the next group.

See [Annual Report 2022 - 2023](#) for further detail.

2023

Change to format of the Annual Report

The Panel decided to significantly reduce the size of the annual report to make it easier to navigate. See [Annual Report 2023 - 2024](#) (Section 1: Introduction) for further detail.

The Panel published their Three Year Strategy Plan, Annual Research and Evidence Papers and Communications and Engagement Strategy. See [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: strategy 2023 to 2025 | GOV.WALES](#) for further details. Summaries of meetings began to be published on the Panel's [website](#).

Contribution to costs and expenses of members of Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel recognise that all members of community and town councils necessarily spend time working from home on council business and as a result, members have extra domestic costs and also need office consumables.

The Panel determined that CTCs must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power, and broadband) of working from home. The Panel also determined CTCs must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

The Panel considers members should not be out of pocket for carrying out their duties. However, an individual retains the option to decline to receive part, or all, of the payments if they so wish. See [Annual Report 2023 - 2024](#) (Determination 4) for further detail.

2024

Change to reporting requirements Community and Town Councils (CTCs)

The Panel looked at the reporting requirements for CTCs in 2024. The Panel agreed to change the requirement to report and publish the details of each councillor in receipt of the mandatory payment for working from home, the flat rate consumables allowance and travel and subsistence claims. The Panel determined that the CTCs to make an annual return summarising the payments. See [Annual Report 2024 - 2025](#) for further detail.

Change to Co-opted Members

Following feedback on the [Annual Report 2023](#) the Panel took evidence from the correspondents on the impact of both the increase in numbers of co-opted members and the changing nature of working patterns. This showed that the current

arrangement of either a half day rate for anything up to 4 hours and a full day rate for anything over, was insufficiently flexible to reflect the move to more online and or hybrid working.

The Panel agreed flexibility should be given and that decisions on whether an hourly or daily rate might be appropriate are to be made locally. See [Annual Report 2024 - 2025](#) for further detail.

Changes to IRP website

The Panel in response to feedback from stakeholders updated the links on the website and created a new link to a page setting out all the current Determinations that should be applied and updated every year when the Final Annual Report is issued. This was done to make the site easier to navigate and to aid finding the right Determination to deal with a specific issue.

Coopted Members of CJs

Following investigation and consultation, the Panel published a Supplementary Report. This provided CJC lay members are paid and receive support on the same basis as co-opted members of other relevant authorities. See Supplementary Report July 2024. [Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: review of remuneration for lay members of corporate joint committees \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)