

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

County Council
8th March, 2018

REPORT AUTHOR: Solicitor to the Council

SUBJECT: Payments to Co-Opted Members

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. The Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales sets the level of fees payable to all Independent and Co-Opted Members of the Council. However it is for the Council to determine if it wishes to set a maximum number of days for which an Independent or Co-Opted Member can be paid.
2. With regard to the Independent Member of the Audit Committee, the Council in January 2015 has set the maximum number of days for which the Independent Member can be paid at 25 days. However for the current financial year there have been a number of circumstances which have increased the requirement for the Independent Member to attend an increased number of meetings. The Independent Member is a member of the Audit Committee and its Vice-Chair, and also a member of the Audit Committee's Internal Audit Scrutiny Group, and the Finance Scrutiny Panel. In addition he has been appointed as the Chair of the Joint Chairs and Vice-Chairs Steering Group and consequently attends other meetings in that capacity e.g. Strategic Overview Board, Commissioning and Procurement Board.
3. The cumulative impact of this increased workload will result in the Independent Member exceeding the 25 days maximum allowed by the Council (to the end of December 2017 the total claimed was 24 days, with 4 months claims due to April 2018). However it is important to retain the valuable contribution provided by the Independent Member in the ongoing work until the end of this Council term. The Finance Section has confirmed that the additional cost can be contained within the current year's budget. It is recommended that the Council allows the 25 days maximum limit to be exceeded so that the additional cost can be paid.
4. As this is the second year where an increased workload has occurred, and as a general review of how scrutiny operates is currently being undertaken it would be appropriate to review the role and responsibilities of the Independent Member to include whether an additional Member resource is required, so that the demands made on the current Independent Member of the Audit Committee are lessened and workload shared. It is recommended that this review be undertaken.
5. It is also recommended that as long as payments can be contained within the Council's budget that any future variations to payments to Independent, Lay and Co-Opted Members be delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer to determine.
6. It is further recommended that the maximum level for the Audit Committee's Independent Member remain at 25 days as set in 2015.

7. Comments.

- 7.1 Legal – The recommendations can be supported from a legal point of view
- 7.2 Finance – The Finance Business Partner for Resources confirms that the additional costs in 2017-18 can be contained within this current year's budget and agrees with the recommendation that any future variations in payments be delegated to the Council's Section 151 Officer to determine.

8. Statutory Officer Comments.

- 8.1 The Head of Financial Services (Acting Section 151 Officer) notes the comments of the Finance Business Partner and supports the approach proposed.
- 8.2 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

Recommendation to the County Council:	Reason for Recommendation:
<p>(i) That the maximum number of 25 days for which the Independent Member of the Audit Committee may be paid from the Annual Meeting in 2017 until the end of April, 2018 can be exceeded for this Council year only.</p> <p>(ii) That the maximum number of days for which the Audit Committee Independent Member may be paid from the Annual Meeting in 2018 remain at 25 days.</p> <p>(iii) that a review of the role and responsibilities of the Independent Member of the Audit Committee be undertaken to include consideration of additional Member resource or reallocation of workload.</p> <p>(iv) that where a variation in payments to Independent, Lay and Co-Opted Members of the Council are required, that determination of such payments be delegated to the Section 151 Officer as long as the overall cost can be contained within the Council's budget.</p>	<p>To authorise an exception to the maximum number of days for which the Independent Member of the Audit Committee may be paid for 2017-18.</p>

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	N/A
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Wyn Richards
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	May 2018

Contact Officer:	Wyn Richards, Scrutiny Manager and Head of Democratic Services.
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Background Papers used to prepare Report: