Cyngor Tref Trallwng Welshpool Town Council

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Document / Report #29

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1. Purpose

1. To set out the background, legal position and duties imposed on the Council by the Independent Renumeration Panel for Wales (IRPW) in respect of councillor allowances and expenses for 2025/2026.

2. Background

1. The IRPW ("the Panel") was established by Section 141 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 ("2011 Measure"). The Panel is responsible for setting mandatory payments to members of local authorities across Wales. The Panel is independent from the Council and the Welsh Government.
2. The Town Council is required by Section 142 of the 2011 Measure to make payments to councillors in line with the determinations from the Panel.
3. The Panel makes annual determinations through the publication of it's annual report. The annual report for the 2025/2026 financial year was published on the 24th February 2025. A copy of the report is available on the gov.wales website.
4. Councillor allowances may be regarded as a political choice, however the Council is required to ensure that it does *"not create a climate which prevents persons accessing any monies in which they are entitled that may support them to participate in local democracy"*.
5. The Council is required to publish by the 30th September the payments which each member received during the preceeding financial year.
6. More information about the 'grouping' to which the Council is in can be found at the end of the report.

3. Advice

1. Determinations are copied below for reference and the Council is required to make a formal decision on the Determinations not mandated in addition to agree the number of positions to receive the payment of senior role payment in recognition of specific responsibilities (Determination 4).

1. **Members of Community and Town Councils will be paid £156 a year (equivalent to £3 per week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power and broadband) of working from home. [Mandatory] (Determination 7 of 2024)**
2. **Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively must enable members to claim full reimbursement of the cost of their office consumables [Mandatory] (Determination 7 of 2024)**
3. The payment for up to 3 members undertaking a senior role is an annual amount of £500. This is in addition to the £156 payment for costs and expenses. (Determination 4 of 2023)
4. Community and town councils can decide to make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties. Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances. (Determination 46 of 2022)
5. If a community or town council resolves that a particular duty requires an overnight stay, it can authorise reimbursement of subsistence expenses to its members at the maximum rates set out below on the basis of receipted claims. (Determination 47 of 2022)
6. Community and town councils can pay financial loss compensation to each of their members, where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties (Determination 7 of 2023)
7. Each council can decide to introduce an attendance allowance for members. The amount of each payment must not exceed £30. A member in receipt of financial loss compensation will not be entitled to claim attendance allowance for the same event. (Determination 49 of 2022)
8. Community and town councils can provide a payment to the mayor or chair of the council up to a maximum of £1,500. This is in addition to the £156 contribution to the cost of working from home and the fixed sum of £52 for office consumables. (Determination 50 of 2022 as uprated by the 2023 report)
9. Community and town councils can provide a payment to the deputy mayor or deputy chair of the council up to a maximum of £500. This is in addition to the £156 contribution to the cost of working from home and the fixed sum of £52 for office consumables. (Determination 51 of 2022 as uprated by 2023 report)
10. **The Council must contribute towards costs of Care and Personal Assistance to enable personal support needs and or caring responsibilities to carry out their duties effectively as a member of an authority. The Panel's determinations on Contribution towards costs of Care and Personal Assistance apply to Community and Town Councils. [Mandatory] (Determination 51 of 2018)**

2. The payments are considered taxable income and thus are subject to income tax. Each member is responsible for their own tax affairs and is not the responsibility of the Council.

4. Resource & Legal Implications

1. There is no established budget for councillor allowances, besides the Mayor & Senior Allowance which has £1500. Any decisions made would require a transfer from General Reserves and the creation of a budget line and/or virement to top-up an existing line.
2. The Council is required by Section 142 of the 2011 Measure to comply with the requirements of the Panel's determinations set out in their annual report. Failure to do so would leave the Council open to a legal challenge. Members are reminded that they can withdraw from some, or

all, payments which they are entitled to by writing to the Proper Officer in writing to signify this withdrawal. This withdrawal should be re-confirmed each financial year.

5. Recommendation

1. The Council is required to:
    1. Determine to either pay £52 to each councillor in respect of cost of office consumables **OR** allow councillors full reimbursment for the cost of their office consumables. [Mandatory] (Determination 7 of 2024)
    2. Determine the number of councillor positions (no more than 3) to recieve senior salary payment of £500 for specific responsibilities. (Determination 4 of 2023)
    3. Determine if a payment in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties be agreed. (Determination 46 of 2022)
    4. Determine if reimburshment of subsistence expenses where an overnight stay has been approved, be agreed. (Determination 47 of 2022)
    5. Determine if payment of financial loss compensation for attending approved duties to be agreed. (Determination 7 of 2023)
    6. Determine if payment of an attendance allowance be agreed. (Determination 49 of 2022)
    7. Determine if payment to Town Mayor up to a maximum of £1500 be agreed. (Determination 50 of 2022 as uprated by 2023 report)
    8. Determine if payment to Deputy Mayor up to a maximum of £500 be agreed. (Determination 51 of 2022 as uprated by 2023 report)

6. Decision

1. To determine the above for the financial year 2025/26.

Annual Report - Council Grouping

Welshpool Town Council has 4714 electors as of 1st April 2025. This would place the Council in Group 4 (1,000 to 4,999). However, as the Council has expenditure over £200,000 a year, it is moved up a group to Group 3.

If the number of electors grow to above 4,999 then the Council would find itself in Group 2 which requires mandatory payment of certain senior allowances.

Type of payment	Group	Requirement
Extra costs payment	3	Mandatory for all members
Senior role	3	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor of chair	3	Optional - up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy mayor or deputy chair	3	Optional - up to a maximum of £500
Attendance allowance	3	Optional
Financial loss	3	Optional
Travel and subsistence	3	Optional
Costs of care or personal assistance	3	Mandatory