



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

10th SEPTEMBER 2020

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

**INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES SUPPLEMENTARY
REPORT: THE PRINCIPLES RELATING TO THE REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS
OF CARE**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to inform members of the provision of financial support available for members with care responsibilities following a report published from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 To promote the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' (IRPW) determination in relation to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care as set out in the supplementary report from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales as attached at [Appendix A](#); and
- 2.2 To encourage the take up of the reimbursement by all Elected Members and Co-opted Members to ensure they can undertake their Council related duties.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure Members are aware of the provision of financial support available to them as set out in the approved duties for which Remuneration for Cost of Care can be claimed to enable all Members and Co-opted Members to carry out their roles effectively.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Since the inception of the IRPW in January 2008 and each of its Annual Reports there has been a section relating to Care, aiming to assist Councillors and Co-opted Members with any caring responsibilities in order to enable them to carry out their Council related duties.

5. DIVERSITY IN DEMOCRACY

- 5.1 As highlighted within the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Supplementary Report (May 2020) –‘The Principles relating to the Reimbursement of Costs of Care’ will assist those Councillors and Co-opted Members with caring responsibilities and may also encourage others to stand as candidates in the forthcoming Local Elections in May 2022.
- 5.2 The IRPW believe that *“Democracy is strengthened when the membership of Local Authorities adequately reflects the demographic and cultural make-up of the communities such Authorities serve. The Panel will always take in to account the contribution its Framework can make in encouraging the participation of those who are significantly under-represented at Local Authority level.”*
- 5.3 The IRPW has continued to champion Diversity in Local Government in Wales through its determinations. The principles which have been highlighted within the supplementary report are key to ensuring that all Members and Co-opted Members have access to the reimbursements of cost for care now and in the future.

6. THE REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS OF CARE

- 6.1 As set out in the [IRPW Annual Report 2020/2021](#), Councillors and Co-opted Members are entitled to reimbursement of their care costs, up to the maximum of £403 per month, for activities that the individual council has designated official business or an approved duty which might include preparation and travelling time. It is a matter for individual authorities to determine specific arrangements to implement this.
- 6.2 As few Members and Co-opted Members are utilising the reimbursement of costs of care provision, the IRPW have recommended that in respect of these claims the relevant local authorities should only publish the total amount reimbursed during the year. This may go some way to encourage all Members and Co-opted Members to claim these costs of care.
- 6.3 In addition to the IRPW’s requirements relating to the publication of the total costs, it has also urged each Democratic Services Committee to take steps to encourage and facilitate greater use of the Reimbursement of Costs of Care provision so that Councillors / Co-opted Members are not financially disadvantaged.
- 6.4 At its meeting held on the [18th November 2019](#) the Head of Democratic Services advised that with the support of the Democratic Services Committee

the Reimbursement of Costs of Care provision would be promoted throughout the Authority and it was agreed at the meeting that this Council would publish a global amount for costs of care on its website.

- 6.5 This approach, if supported by committee, would include communicating to all members at regular intervals the availability of this provision, including providing dedicated information as part of future Members Portal developments. Publicity material to 'promote' participation in future local government elections would also positively present the availability of this assistance.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal set out within the report is based on the principle of all Elected Members being treated equally and consistently. As a result, no Equality Impact Assessment is required for the purposes of this report.

8. LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.

- 8.1 The provision of appropriate support and resources to elected Members is critical in ensuring the interests of local people are represented, governance of local communities is undertaken and value-for-money public services are secured for local tax-payers through effective scrutiny. The continued ability to effectively fulfil these duties will make a positive contribution to the Council's Corporate Plan priorities and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Providing a Councillor / Co-opted Member meets the requirement to claim for the Reimbursement of Costs of Care, they are entitled to a payment not exceeding £403 per month. The Head of Democratic Services will follow the necessary procedure upon receiving a claim from an Elected Member/Co-opted Member for a Reimbursement of Costs of Care.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972
AS AMENDED BY
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985
RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 2020
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BACKGROUND PAPERS - Democratic Services – Support for Members

Democratic Services – 10th September 2020.



Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Supplementary Report

The Principles relating to the Reimbursement
of Costs of Care

May 2020

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Supplementary Report 2020

The Principles in respect of the Reimbursement of Costs of Care (RoCoC)

Introduction

The Panel's core principles have been a fundamental feature of its work since it was established and are contained in each Annual Report. These include:

Remuneration

1.3 The Framework provides for payment to members of relevant authorities who carry a responsibility for serving their communities. The level of payment should not act as a barrier to taking up or continuing in post. There should be no requirement that resources necessary to enable the discharge of duties are funded from the payment. The Framework provides additional payments for those who are given greater levels of responsibility.

Diversity

1.4 Democracy is strengthened when the membership of relevant authorities adequately reflects the demographic and cultural make-up of the communities such authorities serve. The Panel will always take in to account the contribution its Framework can make in encouraging the participation of those who are significantly under-represented at local authority level.

This Supplementary Report builds on these core principles and adds principles which specifically relate to costs of care. The provision of financial support for members with care responsibilities or personal needs is an important factor in improving and sustaining the diversity of membership. It is essential that there is clarity in the availability of and the access to this support.

The purpose is:

To enable all members and co-opted members of relevant authorities to carry out their duties effectively

The Relevant Authorities are:

22 Local Authorities, 735 Town and Community Councils, 3 National Park and 3 Fire and Rescue Authorities

The Minimum Authorities should do		How this could be done
1 Be clear who it is for	<p>1.1 Members with primary caring responsibilities for a child or adult and or personal support needs where these are not covered by statutory or other provision.</p> <p>1.2 For personal support. This might also include a short term or recent condition not covered by the Equality Act 2010, access to work, Personal Payments, insurance or other provision.</p>	A Confidential review of the needs of individual members annually and when circumstances change
2 Raise Awareness	2.1 Ensure potential candidates, candidates and current members are aware that RoCoC is available to them should their current or future circumstances require.	Ensure clear and easily found information is available on website and in election and appointment materials, at Shadowing and at induction and in the members' "handbook". Remind serving members via e-mail and or training. Signpost to IRPW Payments to Councillors leaflets.
3 Promote a Positive Culture	3.1 Ensure all members understand the reason for RoCoC and support and encourage others to claim where needed.	Encouragement within and across all parties of Relevant Authorities to support members to claim. Agree not to advertise or make public individual decisions not to claim.
4 Set out the approved duties for which RoCoC can be claimed	<p>4.1 Meetings – formal (those called by the Authority) and those necessary to members' work (to deal with constituency but not party issues) and personal development (training, and appraisals.)</p> <p>4.2 Travel – in connection with meetings.</p> <p>4.3 Preparation – reading and administration are part of a member's role. Some meetings and committees require large amounts of reading, analysis or drafting before or after a meeting.</p> <p>4.4 Senior salary holders with additional duties may have higher costs.</p>	<p>Approved duties are usually a matter of fact. Interpretation of the IRPW Regulations are set out in the Annual Report.</p> <p>"Any other duty approved by the authority, or any duty of class so approved, undertaken for the purpose of, or in connection with, the discharge of the functions of the authority or any of its committees."</p>

<p>5 Be as enabling as possible about the types of care that can be claimed</p>	<p>5.1 Members should not be “out of pocket” subject to the limit set in the Annual Report.</p> <p>5.2 Models of care and needs vary.</p> <p>5.3 Members may use a combination of several care options.</p> <p>5.4 Patterns of care may alter over the civic and academic year.</p> <p>5.5 Not all care is based on hourly (or part hourly) rates.</p> <p>5.6 Where a whole session must be paid for, this must be reimbursed even where the care need is only for part of a session.</p> <p>5.7 Members may need to:</p> <p>5.7.1 book and pay for sessions in advance</p> <p>5.7.2 commit to a block contract: week, month or term</p> <p>5.7.3 pay for sessions cancelled at short notice</p> <p>5.8 Where care need straddles two sessions both should be reimbursed.</p>	
<p>6 Have a simple and effective claim process</p>	<p>6.1 Members should know how to claim.</p> <p>6.2 The claim process should be clear, proportionate and auditable.</p>	<p>Check members understand how to claim and that it is easy to do so.</p> <p>Flexibility to accept paperless invoices Online form Same or similar form to travel costs claim</p>
<p>7 Comply with IRPW Publication rules</p>	<p>7.1 The IRPW Framework states:</p> <p>“In respect of the publication of the reimbursement of the costs of care, the Panel has decided that relevant authorities should only publish the total amount reimbursed during the year. It is a matter for each authority to determine its response to any Freedom of Information requests it receives. However, it is not intended that details of individual claims should be disclosed.”</p>	