

Tracy

From: Wendi Patience <wpatience@onevoicewales.wales>
Sent: 25 February 2022 15:21
To: Clerk
Subject: Membership of One Voice Wales 2022-2023 – Renewal of Membership details
Attachments: Membership Letter 2022 23.doc; Nantyglo Blaina 2022.pdf

Dear Clerk

Membership of One Voice Wales 2022-2023 Renewal of Membership details

I would be grateful if you could bring the details of this email and associated attachments to the attention of your Chair and council members as soon as possible.

The staff, National Executive Committee, Area Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Training Associates and Associate Consultants and I look forward to working with your Council during 2022/2023.

Kind regards,

Lyn

NANTYGLO & BLAINA
28 FEB 2022
TOWN COUNCIL

Wendi Patience
Administration Officer / Swyddog Gweinyddol
One Voice Wales / Un Llais Cymru
24c College Street / 24c Stryd y Coleg
Ammanford / Rhydaman
Carmarthenshire / Sir Caerfyrddin
SA18 3AF

Email: wpatience@onevoicewales.wales
Ebst: wpatience@unllaiscymru.cymru

Tel/Ffon: 01269 595400 / **07929 715990**



The principal representative body for Community and Town Councils in Wales/

Y prif gorff cynrychioli ar gyfer Cyngorau Cymuned a Thref yng Nghymru

Website/Gwefan: www.onevoicewales.org.uk



@onevoicewales

Dear Clerk

Please bring this letter to the attention of your Chair and Councillors.

Membership of One Voice Wales 2022-23

I am writing to invite your council to renew its membership to join One Voice Wales from April 2022. Once again - whilst taking account of the challenges presented by the Covid pandemic the past year has seen many positive developments to our services, many of which are outlined in this letter, which we believe add significantly to the value for money offered by One Voice Wales membership.

We continue to represent the sector in a wide variety of ways – we regularly meet with the Minister for Finance and Local Government Rebecca Evans MS and we continue to represent the sector on the **Local Government Partnership Council**. During 2021-22 we have made strong representation on the role the sector can play in supporting sustainable local services and supporting the Local Government Reform agenda amongst others. We have continued to develop even stronger working relationships with the Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the WCVA strengthening the voice of the sector within the public services family in Wales and improving working relations with the Third Sector.

One Voice Wales continues to make significant contributions to public policy developments through our representation on several Welsh Government advisory panels including the **Decarbonisation Strategy Panel, Ystadau Cymru Working Group, the External Advisory Group on Community Asset Transfer, Ministerial Towns Action Advisory Group, Welsh Government Litter Advisory Panel, Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageism, Welsh Government Diversity in Democracy Working Group, NAfW Cross Party Group on Fuel Poverty and the National Training and Advisory Group**. One Voice Wales is playing an ever-increasing role in the development resources for the sector and during the year has secured Welsh Government resources to establish the role of **Local Places for Nature Officer** in our team who has helped hundreds of councils to date on environmental projects and issues; we have secured funding from Pembrokeshire CC to establish a **Community and Town Councils Projects Officer** role – this exciting pilot project will provide an opportunity to show how our sector can collaborate more effectively at the local level; and we have secured two years of funding from Welsh Government to establish the post of **Community CPR and Defibrillator Manager** in the team who will work with Save a Life Cymru and community and town councils in developing this critically important agenda. We have also played a significant role working with Welsh Government and SLCC colleagues in the development of a **Self-Assessment Tool** for the sector which will help to drive up standards of working practice. We continue to work collaboratively with a range of other bodies including the **Local Government Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, Independent Remuneration Panel, Public Services Ombudsman and Wales Audit Office**. So, our ability to influence key stakeholder organisations continues to grow year on year.

There are exciting and challenging times ahead for Community and Town Councils in Wales and we will continue to develop our lobbying and representational roles especially in relation to the outcomes of the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**. Work has already begun with Welsh Government colleagues in developing actions to address the new requirements facing community and town councils and this will continue into our 2022/23 work programme.

Our representational role means that ***we have direct interface not only with the Minister for Finance and Local Government but other Ministers*** where our sector's remit extends. During 2021-22 we made several representations to the **Minister for Housing and Local Government** on a range of matters - on the need for greater resources for the sector, the need for digital skills and capabilities to be developed, the role community and town councils can play in town regeneration and community planning, how the sector can support the decarbonization agenda, devolution of services and asset transfer agenda and support for the sector to better engage on the green infrastructure agenda. During 2021-22 we have extended our **representational role** - One Voice Wales' many Councillors across Wales are increasingly able to provide their views on a wide range of policy areas to support our lobbying activities and **influence government and stakeholder organisations** in their decision-making. This includes representation on health trust stakeholder forums and several **Public Services Boards**. These developments have improved and further developed our representational and lobbying roles and we will seek to further develop them in 2022-23.

Some of our other accomplishments over the past 12 months include:

- There has been a healthy increase in membership numbers during the year. Over 88% (87% previous year) of all councils in membership of One Voice Wales, or 650 (639 previous year) out of the 735 Councils in Wales and this is the highest level of membership since One Voice Wales was formed. Plans are already in place to drive increases in membership in 2022-23.
- Through our new Local Places for Nature Officer post, we have enabled over £180,000 of funding to be accessed by Community and Town Councils across Wales with a further £500,000 of projects being worked up for 2022/23.

As current members are aware, we provide the following services, and we are aware from feedback from our **Members Survey 2020** by our members that all aspects of the service are highly valued.

- **Provision of free legal advice** from a team of experienced Solicitors which can save members significant time and cost compared with using local solicitors for advice (These savings can in many cases exceed the membership that is payable)
- **Quality and timely advice and support service** on topics relevant to member councils.
- **Training** for members and staff, including policy seminars and new working opportunities.
- **General information via our website including a members' area.**
- **Monthly** editions of our new '**E- Newsletter**'
- **Representation** of the sector on the Local Government Partnership Council.
- Creating **new opportunities for collaboration** with national organisations across Wales.

The training and development agenda is another area where much progress has been made during 2021-22 with the successful delivery of webinar-based training. Under the auspices of the **National Training Advisory Group**, chaired by One Voice Wales, we have continued to refine and develop and extend our training provision to the community and town council sector. Once again, the breadth of our training programmes has been extended and will be available to members throughout the year. During 2020-21 we provided over 1,400 units of training to the sector.

Furthermore, our **Consultancy Services** have been growing at a pace with many councils taking advantage of this service. We are increasingly able to provide 'One Stop Shop' solutions for our members and have supported our councils on **community planning exercises, accountancy services, technical VAT advice, HR and personnel matters including representation at Industrial Tribunals**, assisted in **policy development and health and safety** – and at **costs significantly below market rates**. We are also now able to offer consultancy support in relation to community planning and engagement. Please contact the Ammanford Office if you would like further details on how we can support you through these services.

Importantly our role as a representative body has been significantly improved with a significant growth in our membership during 2021-22 – **at year end we had 650 local councils in membership or 88% of all community and town councils**.

I hope that this summary of current and future developments has demonstrated that One Voice Wales continues to do all it can to represent the sector and provide a high-class information and support service for our members.

For your council to have a voice in the future of this vital sector of local government, and to benefit from the support provided by One Voice Wales, please return the attached Membership Form by email or to our office in Ammanford – the address is at the top of this letter.

If you have any further queries relating to membership, please contact the office on 01269 595400 / 07917 846510 or email: tgilmartin@onevoicewales.wales

I trust that your Council will give this invitation full consideration and I hope to be able to welcome you into membership shortly. I look forward to working with your council in 2022-23.

Yours sincerely,



Lyn Cadwallader
Chief Executive

ONE VOICE WALES
The Voice of Community & Town Councils

Invoice / Membership Form

Please enter all details in block letters and return original form for our records

I write to inform you that my Council has decided to join One Voice Wales for 2022/2023

Clerk to the Council

Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss (Delete as applicable)

Signed: Please print name:

Name & Address of Council - Enter any amendments clearly alongside

Mrs Tracy Hughes, Clerk/RFO
Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council
Council Offices
Blaina Institute
High Street, Blaina
NP13 3BN

Tel No's: 01495 292817 /

E-mail address: clerk@nantygloandblainatc.co.uk

Website: www.nantygloandblainatc.co.uk

Please inform us if any of the above details change

Please tick the preferred language for future correspondence:

☐ Welsh

☐ English

☐ Bilingual

Membership Fee: £1537

Based on **4271** chargeable dwellings @ **£0.360p** per dwelling
(Based on Valuation List, not Electoral Register)

Please make cheque payable to One Voice Wales
Bank details - Account number: 16689360 Sort code: 30-94-85

Please return the form to the following address:

One Voice Wales, 24c College Street, Ammanford, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3AF

e-mail: tgilmartin@onevoicewales.wales Tel: 01269 595400 Fax: 01269 598510

Fee Scheme

2022-23

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Introduction

Fee rates and fee scales

- 1 This Fee Scheme has been prepared under section 24 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 (the Act) (**Appendix 1**). The Fee Scheme, following approval by the Senedd, provides the basis on which we charge fees.
- 2 As set out in our consultation on proposed fees December 2021 and our Estimate for 2022-23, we need to make additional investment in audit quality to respond to recent UK-wide reviews¹ of audit which have potential wide-ranging implications for the whole audit profession. These various reviews reflect increasing expectations of audit and of the quality of that audit.
- 3 We also need to respond to a legal ruling which means that we can no longer require our audit staff to undertake travel to client sites in their own time. Whilst our future ways of working will significantly reduce our requirement to travel, there will still be occasions where this will be necessary to complete our audit work.
- 4 Through the identification of cost savings and audit efficiencies, we have managed to hold our fee scales at the same level since 2016, but due to the pressures mentioned above, we are having to pass on a 3.7% increase in fee rates and fee scales for 2022-23. We do, however, remain committed to minimising fees where we can do so through audit efficiencies.
- 5 Our Engagement Directors will discuss audit-specific fees with each body as we approach the next audit year.
- 6 We also plan to continue to provide access to the National Fraud Initiative and our GPX events at no cost to participating bodies.
- 7 This Fee Scheme sets out:
 - the enactments under which we charge audit fees.
 - the arrangements for setting those fees, which comprise either:

1 Competition and Markets Authority Review; Kingman Review; and Brydon Review

- fee scales that set out fee ranges for particular areas of audit work in local government; or
 - fee rates for work not covered by fee scales.
- 8 Broadly, 65% of our expenditure is funded through fees charged to audited bodies. The remaining 35% is provided from the Welsh Consolidated Fund through the budget motion passed by the Senedd.
- 9 Legislation requires that the fees we charge a body **may not exceed** the full cost of exercising at that body the function to which the fee relates. We set our audit fees based on our estimated cost base, the estimated skills mix for audit work and the estimated number of days required to complete the work. We do not and cannot make profits on our work. Our fee rates are set at a level to recover the estimated full cost but no more.
- 10 There is a tension between providing audited bodies with an up-front fee for the work to be undertaken on specific audits and having a sufficiently flexible regime that recognises the inevitability of variances. We set our audit fees based on our estimated expenditure, the estimated skills mix and the estimated number of days required to complete the work. Where the required work is significantly greater than that originally estimated, as a result of complexities experienced during the audit, we may charge a higher fee, as permitted by legislation.
- 11 We went beyond the statutory fee consultation requirements and, in November 2021, consulted all audited bodies and other stakeholders on our proposed fee rates and fee scales for 2022-23
- 12 A total of 78 different bodies were consulted. We received just four responses, suggesting that for most bodies, our fees are not a significant area of concern. Responses received told us that audited bodies:
- highly regarded the work done by our audit teams.
 - welcome the proposal to continue to provide access to the National Fraud Initiative on a nil-fee basis.
 - understood the necessity for the increase in fees although noting the impact on their own budgets.
 - had some questions about the differential increases between fees and WCF which we will respond to directly.
 - were concerned that savings on travel resulting from changes in working patterns were not fully reflected in our fees. Whilst we have allowed for a reduction in travel in both our Estimate and fees, the expectation is that some travel will be necessary to effectively deliver our audit work once the pandemic is over.

13 Our proposed fee rates for 2022-23 are set out in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1: proposed fee rates 2022-23

Grade	Rate (£ per hour) 2022-23	Rate (£ per hour) 2021-22
Engagement Director	163	162
Audit Manager	122	119
Audit Lead	100	96
Senior Auditor	84	77
Auditor	60	59
Graduate trainee	51	48
Apprentice	39	37

14 We are required to prescribe fee scales for:

- work relating to the audit of local government bodies;
- work under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009² (fire and rescue authorities only);
- work under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021; and
- data-matching work (NFI).

15 Fee scales for the audit of the 2021-22 financial accounts, together with performance audit work to be undertaken in 2022-23, are provided in **Appendix 3** in relation to unitary authorities, fire and rescue authorities, national park authorities, police and crime commissioners chief constables, town and community councils and local government pension funds. A separate fee scale is provided in relation to the NFI. Performance audit includes sustainable development examinations, improvement information audits, improvement assessments and special inspections. Not all these functions apply to all types of audited body.

16 Fee scales are a means of regulating the cost of public audit, through setting limits and by reviewing fees against those limits. Fee scales also provide a framework for auditors to assess the amount of annual audit work necessary and the fee to be charged for that work at a particular audited body.

² The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 is in a process of phased repeal as various provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 commence.

- 17 Audited bodies not covered by the statutory requirement for a fee scale have their estimated audit fees calculated in the same way as for those which are covered – that is, through applying the fee rates published in this Fee Scheme to the estimated team mix and hours of input required for the audit.
- 18 Auditors undertake grant certification work on behalf of the Auditor General. The amount of grant certification work undertaken in any year is dependent on the number of schemes subject to audit and the number of audited bodies participating in those schemes. Charges for this work are calculated using the fee rates and reflecting the size, complexity or any particular issues in respect of the grant in question.
- 19 The fee rates apply to all audit work except to the extent that the fee scales, where applicable, regulate the amount to be charged (or in the case of work done under agreements made prior to 1 April 2014, rates are in terms as agreed). If it subsequently appears that the work involved in a particular audit differs substantially from that originally envisaged, we may charge a fee which differs from that originally notified.
- 20 In the case of the provision of other administrative, professional or technical services provided, fees will be charged in accordance with the relevant agreement, subject to such amounts being capped at the full cost of providing the service.
- 21 To meet statutory responsibilities, it is sometimes necessary for auditors to carry out work which goes beyond their general duties. Additional work can include reports in the public interest, extraordinary audit, special inspections and further work in relation to electors' questions and objections, and the prevention of unlawful expenditure. Charges for this type of work will reflect the nature of the work required and are calculated by applying the fee rates published in this Fee Scheme to the team mix and hours of input required for the work.
- 22 Where specialist support or legal or other professional advice is required, this will be charged to audited bodies in addition to the cost of our audit staff.

Charging of fees

- 23 Each body's Engagement Director will explain the skills mix needed for the audit and the factors influencing the overall fee. Charging arrangements are agreed with audited bodies and may encompass one-off, periodic, regular or annual charging, as appropriate in the circumstances.
- 24 Audited bodies are expected to pay our invoices within their performance target for creditor payments, which is usually ten days. We may charge for the administrative costs incurred in pursuing late payments.
- 25 If required by audited bodies, a purchase order for the agreed audit fee should be raised in advance of invoices being sent.
- 26 On completion of audit assignments, we will assess the actual costs incurred in undertaking the assignment in comparison with the fee charged. We will refund any excess of fee over cost and, conversely, we may charge additional costs where the fee falls short. We will process refunds and additional charges in a manner which seeks to minimise administrative costs, such as through offsetting against future fees or fees for other aspects of audit activity.

Fee scales for town and community councils with annual income or expenditure under £2.5 million

Town and community councils in Wales are subject to a limited assurance audit regime.

In October 2020, the Auditor General published a paper setting out how these audits will be carried out on a three-year cycle as set out in **Exhibit 15**.

Exhibit 15 – Three-year audit cycle for town and community councils

	Group A	Group B	Group C
Year 1	Transaction testing	Limited procedures	Limited procedures
Year 2	Limited procedures	Transaction testing	Limited procedures
Year 3	Limited procedures	Limited procedures	Transaction testing

Charges for this work are based on the time taken to complete the audit at fee rate charges as set out in **Exhibit 1** on **page 6**.

In circumstances where the auditor requires further evidence to properly discharge their responsibilities, including following publication of a related public interest report, additional testing will be undertaken to address the auditor's concerns.

It is emphasised that the actual charge made to any particular body will be dependent on the time actually worked on that particular audit. The range of fees provided in **Exhibit 16** is for indicative purposes only.

Exhibit 16: estimated time charges for the audit of 2021-22 accounts of town and community councils

	Band 1 (<£10k)	Band 2 (<£25k)	Band 3 (<£50k)	Band 4 (<£100k)	Band 5 (<£500k)	Band 6 (>£500k)
Transaction audit	£145 – £175	£160 – £190	£220 – £270	£340 – £415	£605 – £725	£805 – £1,040
Limited procedures	£105 – £125	£130 – £155	£130 – £155	£200 – £240	£200 – £240	£200 – £240

Fee rates for other work in local government

Other than those types of bodies for which fee scales have been prescribed as shown above, there are a few other types of local government body where our prescription of the fee scale is a matter of converting the resource requirements into fees directly based on the costs of delivering the work or by applying the fee rates as set out in **Exhibit 1**. It remains the case that for audits of these bodies we apply a zero-based approach to audit planning.

For all types of local government body, to meet his statutory responsibilities, it is sometimes necessary for the Auditor General to carry out work which goes beyond general duties (those set out in section 17 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004 and in section 15 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015). Additional work can include reports in the public interest, extraordinary audit, special inspections and further work in relation to elector challenge and the prevention of unlawful expenditure. Charges for this type of work will reflect the nature of the work required.

Auditors may also undertake grant certification work at local government bodies on behalf of the Auditor General. The amount of grant certification work undertaken in any year is dependent on the number of schemes subject to audit and the number of audited bodies participating in those schemes. Charges for this work are made on a per-hour basis and reflect the size, complexity or any issues in respect of the grant in question as set out in **Exhibit 17**.

HANTYGLŌ & BLAINA

24 FEB 2022

TOWN COUNCIL



To:

Leaders and Chief Executives of County and County Borough Councils
Chairs and Chief Executives of National Park Authorities
Chairs and Clerks of Fire and Rescue Authorities
Chair and Chief Executive of One Voice Wales
Leader and Chief Executive of Welsh Local Government Association
Head of Democratic / Members Services of County and County
Borough Councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities
Clerks to Community & Town Councils

24 February 2022

Dear Colleague

Independent Remuneration for Wales – Annual Report 2022/2023

Attached is the finalised Annual Report in respect of 2022/2023 which is effective from 1 April. However, this year is also election for members of principal councils and community and town councils, so some of the determinations will be effective from 9th May. The effective dates are set out in the Report.

My thanks to the individuals and organisations who responded to the draft Report issued in September last year. The Panel has considered the views and comments that were expressed and have been taken into account in reaching the conclusions reflected in the Report.

The Panel has confirmed the increases in the salaries for elected members of principal councils, with consequential increases for members of National Park and Fire and Rescue Authorities. The only substantive change to the draft

Report is the inclusion of a new section on Corporate Joint Committees. I also confirm that there are no changes to the remuneration of community and town councils. However, the Panel will be issuing a Supplementary Report on options following discussions between Welsh Government officials and HMRC regarding taxation.

I would also remind all relevant authorities of the obligation to comply with the decisions of the Panel, in particular the publication of the Schedule of Member Remuneration (Annex 3) and the Publication of Remuneration (Annex 4). There has been a significant increase in the number of authorities who have not complied with these statutory requirements.

This is the final Report that I will be involved in after over 16 years as a member of the Panel. I would like to put on record my appreciation and thanks to the many members and officers of councils, NPAs and FRAs that I have been able to engage with on Panel business.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bader', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John Bader
Chair



Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Annual Report

February 2022

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

ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023

FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact on the work of the Panel in that we have been unable to meet with authorities and their representative organisations face to face. However, we have continued to hold meetings regularly and to have meaningful discussions with our stakeholders via Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

The Panel issued the draft Report for consultation at the end of September 2021 and held engagement events to support the consultation process. We received a range of views, many either supporting or making no comment about the proposed increases. Some respondents questioned the timing and the potential financial implications. The Panel examined all of the responses and has decided not to make any significant amendments to the determinations contained in the draft Report. More detail is included in the Executive Summary and main Report.

We are grateful to those organisations and individuals who took the time to express their views.

We consider that it is important that the payments to elected members of principal councils are fair and at a level that is not a disincentive to potential candidates for election. Therefore, the Panel has decided to reset the basic salaries of elected members to closer align with the average earnings in Wales. This alignment has been eroded in successive years, primarily as a result of austerity measures.

This will be my final Report as a member of the Independent Remuneration Panel as I will be standing down at the end of March. I have had the privilege of being a member of the Panel since it was established in 2008 and the Chair for the past 7 years. I wish to put on record my appreciation and thanks to all of my colleagues, past and present, for the support that I have received during the last 13 years. Also, my grateful thanks to the members of our Secretariat who have supported me and ensured the efficient functioning of the Panel.

I believe that the Panel has made a significant and beneficial influence on the value of elected members of local government in Wales at all levels and in respect of all authorities that are within its remit. It is a sad reflection that much of the public's perceptions and views of politicians is tainted by the actions of a few individuals within representative democracy. I have had an involvement with local government all my working life and during that time have met and known countless members. The vast majority work tirelessly for their communities and do so for little financial reward. I believe that 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.

This Report provides a major step forward towards achieving this objective. The Panel has consistently emphasised the fact that democracy is not cost free. However, we have to balance the fairness to elected members against the cost to the public purse. We are satisfied that this balance is achieved for 2022/2023.

I have no doubt that the Panel has had a beneficial impact on improving the worth of a local councillor and it is vital that this is not undermined by those members who decline increases in the payments for reasons of political gain. Such action undermines the worth and value of all elected members.

Finally, my thanks to all the members and officers of Welsh councils, NPAs and FRAs that I have had the pleasure of meeting and engaging with over the last 13 years.

John Bader
Chair

Panel Membership

John Bader, Chair
Saz Willey, Vice Chair
Joe Stockley
Ruth Glazzard
Helen Wilkinson

Detailed information about the members can be found on the website: [Panel website](#)

Timescale for Implementation of the Panel's Determinations

The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 requires the Panel's Annual Report to take effect from 1 April. In most years, this is in line with financial and administrative arrangements of all authorities. However, when new councils are elected some of the Panel's determinations are to be effective for the new municipal term.

On 9 May 2022, new municipal arrangements will come into effect following local government elections. This Annual Report therefore has two different effective dates as set out below:

1. For the period 1 April 2022 to 8 May 2022, all of the Determinations contained in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report 2021/2022 will continue to apply in respect of principal councils and community and town councils.
2. For national park authorities and Welsh fire and rescue authorities the determinations in Sections 7 and 8 of this Report will apply from the new financial year, 1 April 2022.
3. With effect from 9 May 2022, (the new municipal year) the determinations set out in this Report in Sections 3 and 13 will apply to principal councils and community and town councils.

13. Payments to Members of Community and Town Councils

- 13.1 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. This and the fact that not all electoral areas have councils, has made establishing remuneration arrangements more difficult to achieve than for other relevant authorities. For this reason, the Panel decided to undertake a fundamental review ready for implementation effective from the elections on 5 May 2022.
- 13.2 The Panel decided that in carrying out the review it was vital to engage comprehensively with community and town councils and representative organisations together with a commitment to consult on the proposals emanating from the review. The result of this consultation was a significant degree of support for the new proposals and therefore the Panel has decided to introduce the new Framework as set out in this section. However, this will only take effect from the 9 May 2022 following the municipal elections. For the period from 1 April to 8 May the determinations contained in the Annual Report 2021/2022 will continue to apply.
- 13.3 In order to act and carry out duties as a member of a community or town council all persons are required to make a formal declaration of acceptance of office. Following this declaration, members of community or town councils are then holders of elected office and occupy a role that is part of the Welsh local government structure. It is important to note that a person who follows this path is in a different position to those in other forms of activity, for example such as volunteering or charitable work, typically governed by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.
- 13.4 Under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, community and town councils are relevant authorities for the purpose of remuneration.
- 13.5 Consequently, individuals who have accepted office as a member of a community or town council are entitled to receive payments as determined by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. It is the duty of the proper officer of a council (usually the Council Clerk) to arrange for correct payments to be made to all individuals entitled to receive them.
- 13.6 Members should receive monies to which they are properly entitled as a matter of course.
- 13.7 An individual may decline to receive part, or all, of the payments if they so wish. This must be done in writing and is an individual matter. A community or town council member wishing to decline payments must themselves write to their proper officer to do so.

- 13.8 The Panel considers that any member who has personal support needs or caring responsibilities should be enabled to fulfil their role. Therefore, the Panel continues to make the contribution towards costs of care and personal allowance mandatory for all members of community and town councils as set out in Determination 43.
- 13.9 Each community and town council must ensure that it does not create a climate which prevents persons accessing any monies to which they are entitled that may support them to participate in local democracy. Payments should be made efficiently and promptly.
- 13.10 Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council cannot receive any payment from any community or town council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance. However, this does not preclude them from holding a senior role (Leader, Deputy Leader) without payment.
- 13.11 Table 12 sets out the actions that community and town councils must take annually in respect of each determination that follows.

Table 9: Community and Town Council Groupings

The current groups are:

Community and Town Council Group	Income or Expenditure in 2020-2021 of:
A	£200,000 and above
B	£30,000 - £199,999
C	Below £30,000

- 13.12 These are based solely on finance. We acknowledge the view of many respondents that this was restrictive and limiting. Therefore 5 Groups will be established based on the size of the council's electorate.

Table 10

Group number	Size of Electorate
Group 1	Electorate in excess of 14,000
Group 2	10,000 to 13,999
Group 3	5,000 to 9,999
Group 4	1,000 to 4,999
Group 5	Under 1,000

- 13.13 In addition, there will be a second factor for determining which group the council will be placed. Where income or expenditure permanently exceeds £200,000 a year, it will be moved upwards to the next group.

Payments towards costs and expenses

13.14 The Panel continues to mandate a payment of £150, for all councils, as a contribution to costs and expenses for members of community and town councils. We have amended the proposal in the draft to take account of responses to the consultation.

13.15 Receipts are not required for these payments.

Determination 44: Community and town councils must make available a payment to each of their members of £150 per year as a contribution to costs and expenses.

Taxation

13.16 The issue of the taxation of the £150 payment has been raised on many occasions including in response to the recent consultation. As has been made clear the Panel has no remit in respect of matters of taxation but has been kept informed of the discussions between the Welsh Government and HMRC to establish a possible exemption applying to all community and town councils. Although there has been progress, the Panel has decided that any fundamental change requires formal consultation. This will be progressed in Spring 2022.

Senior roles

13.17 The Panel recognises that specific member roles especially within the larger community and town councils, for example a committee chair, will involve greater responsibility. It is also likely that larger councils will have a greater number of committees, reflecting its level of activity. The Panel has therefore set out the determinations for senior roles in Table 11 below.

13.18 In all cases, a councillor can only have one payment of £500 regardless of how many senior roles they hold within their Council.

Determination 45: The payment for members undertaking a senior role is an annual amount of £500 as set out in Table 11.

13.19 Where a person is a member of more than one community or town council, they are eligible to receive the £150 and, if appropriate, £500 from each council of which they are a member.

Contribution towards costs of Care and Personal Assistance

13.20 The purpose of this is to enable people who have personal support needs and or caring responsibilities to carry out their duties effectively as a member of an authority. The Panel's determinations in Section 10 apply to community and town councils.

Reimbursement of travel costs and subsistence costs

- 13.21 The Panel recognises there can be significant travel and subsistence costs associated with the work of community and town council members, especially where the council area is geographically large and/or when engaging in duties outside this area. Each council has an option to pay travel and subsistence costs including travel by taxi if this is the only, or most appropriate, method of transport. Where a council does opt to pay travel and subsistence costs, the following determinations apply.

Determination 46: Community and town councils can make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties.⁷ Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances as below:

- 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles in the year.
- 25p per mile over 10,000 miles.
- 5p per mile per passenger carried on authority business.
- 24p per mile for private motor cycles.
- 20p per mile for bicycles.

Determination 47: 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:

- £28 per 24-hour period allowance for meals, including breakfast where not provided.
- £200 – London overnight.
- £95 – elsewhere overnight.
- £30 – staying with friends and/or family overnight.

Compensation for financial loss

- 13.22 The Panel has retained the facility which councils may pay as compensation to their members where they incur financial loss when attending approved duties. Members must be able to demonstrate that the financial loss has been incurred. Each council has an option to pay compensation for financial loss and where it does the following determination applies.

Determination 48: Community and town councils can pay financial loss compensation to each of their members, where such loss has occurred, for attending approved duties as follows:

- Up to £57.20 for each period not exceeding 4 hours
- Up to £114.40 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours

⁷ Where a member who is on official business or an approved duty is driven by a third party (not a member or officer of that authority), the member can claim mileage at the prescribed rates plus any parking or toll fees provided the authority is satisfied that the member has incurred these costs.

Attendance Allowance

13.23 Attendance allowance was raised in the consultation. The Panel acknowledges that in some cases this might be a valuable addition to support the work of a council. It is therefore included as an option for all councils. A number of queries were raised in respect of this proposal in responses to the Draft Report, including some opposition to its introduction. Whilst it is included in the framework, it is optional for councils and therefore those councils that do not consider it appropriate do not have to implement it. Councils can decide and set out the provisions of the scheme, paragraph 13.24 details what should be included.

Determination 49: 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.

- 13.24
- (a) As the payment for attendance is optional, the council, at its first Annual Meeting, should formally decide whether or not to make these payments.
 - (b) If the council decides in favour of attendance allowances, it must produce a scheme for formal adoption and make provision for it to be publically available.
 - (c) The mandatory maximum for each qualifying event is £30. There is no stipulated minimum.
 - (d) Payments for attendance must be in respect of official business or approved duty which are identified in the council's Standing Orders or alternatively by specific resolution. The scheme should specify for which events payments will be made.
 - (e) All members of the council will be entitled to the payment for attendance at the events specified in the scheme, but an individual member may decline

to receive payment by informing (in writing) the proper officer.

Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head

- 13.25 Civic heads are senior posts within community and town councils. In addition to chairing major meetings the civic head is the ambassador representing the council to a variety of institutions and organisations. The Panel requires that members should not have to pay themselves for any cost associated with carrying out these duties. This requirement also applies in respect of deputy civic heads.
- 13.26 The Panel recognises the wide range of provision made for civic heads in respect of transport, secretarial support, charitable giving and official clothing – we consider these to be the council's civic budgets.
- 13.27 Funding decisions in relation to these civic budgets are not matters of personal remuneration for the post holder but relate to the funding required for the tasks and duties to be carried out. Councils remain free to set civic budgets at whatever levels they deem appropriate for the levels of civic leadership they have in place.
- 13.28 For the avoidance of doubt, costs in respect of, for example, transport (physical transport or mileage costs), secretarial support, charitable giving (purchasing tickets, making donations or buying raffle tickets) and official clothing are not matters of personal remuneration for the individual holding the senior post. These should be covered by the civic budget.
- 13.29 Recognising that some mayors and chairs of community and town councils and their deputies are very active during their year of office, the Panel has determined that community and town councils can make a payment to the individuals holding these roles.
- 13.30 This is a personal payment to the individual and is entirely separate from covering the costs set out above.
- 13.31 The Panel has determined that the maximum payment to a chair or mayor of a community or town council is £1,500. The maximum payment to a deputy mayor or chair is £500.

Determination 50: 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 £150 payment for costs and expenses and the £500 senior salary if these are claimed.

Determination 51: 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 £150 payment for costs and expenses and the £500 senior salary if these are claimed.

Determination 52: The application of the Remuneration Framework by relevant Group is contained in Table 11.

Table 11

Type of payment	Requirement
Group 1	(Electorate over 14,000)
Basic Payment	Mandatory for all Members
Senior Role Payment	Mandatory for 1 member; optional for up to 7
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Costs of Care	Mandatory
Group 2	(Electorate 10,000 to 13,999)
Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Mandatory for 1 member; optional up to 5
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory
Group 3	(Electorate 5,000 to 9,999)
Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Optional up to 3 members
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory
Group 4	(Electorate 1,000 to 4,999)
Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Optional up to 3 members
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory
Group 5	(Electorate less than 1,000)
Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Optional
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subs	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory

Making Payments to Members

13.32 Table 12 sets out each of the above determinations and if a decision is required by the council in respect of each one.

- 13.33 In respect of the mandated payments, no decision is required and members should receive monies to which they are properly entitled as a matter of course.
- 13.34 Where a decision is required by the council, this should be done at the first meeting following receipt of the Annual Report.
- 13.35 A council can adopt any, or all, of the non-mandated determinations but if it does make such a decision, it must apply to all its members.
- 13.36 When payments take effect from is set out in paragraphs 13.38 to 13.40 below.
- 13.37 On receipt of the draft Annual Report the previous autumn, councils should consider the determinations for the next financial year and use this to inform budget plans.

Table 12

Determination Number	Is a decision required by council?
44 Community and town councils must make available a payment to each of their members of £150 per year as a contribution to costs and expenses, with the exception of those councils in Group 5 where the payment is optional.	No - the payment of £150 is mandated for every member unless they advise the appropriate officer that they do not want to take it in writing. This does not apply to councils in Group 5. The council must decide whether to adopt the payment and if so, it must be available for all members.
45 The payment for members undertaking a senior role is an annual amount of £500 as set out in <u>Table 11</u> .	As set out in <u>Table 11</u> .
46 Community and town councils can make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties.	Yes – the payment of travel costs is optional.
47 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.	Yes – the payment of overnight subsistence expenses is optional.
48 Community and town councils can pay financial loss compensation to each of their members, where such loss has actually occurred, for attending approved duties.	Yes – the payment of financial loss compensation is optional if claimed
49 Each council can decide to introduce an attendance	Yes – the payment of attendance allowance is optional.

Determination Number	Is a decision required by council?
allowance for members. The amount of each payment must not exceed £30. A member in receipt of financial loss will not be entitled to claim attendance allowance for the same event.	
50 Community and town councils can provide a payment to the mayor or chair of the council up to a maximum of £1,500.	Yes – the payment to a civic head is optional.
51 Community and town councils can provide a payment to the deputy mayor or deputy chair of the council up to a maximum amount of £500.	Yes – the payment to a deputy civic head is optional.
52 The application of the Remuneration Framework by relevant Group.	As set out in <u>Table 11</u> .
53 Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council (that is leader, deputy leader or executive member) cannot receive any payment from any community or town council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance.	No - Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council (that is leader, deputy leader or executive member) can only receive travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance; if they are eligible to claim, and wish to do so.

13.38 All members are eligible to be paid the £150 as set out in Determination 44 and Table 11, normally from the start of the financial year; unless they are elected later in the financial year, in which case they are eligible for a proportionate payment from that date. However, as 2022 is an election year different arrangements will be required.

- Members who are not standing for re-election or fail to be re-elected are entitled to part payment for the period 1 April to 8 May.
- Current members who are re-elected are entitled to the full payment, but it would be administratively reasonable for the payment to be deferred until the outcome of the election.
- New members are entitled to a proportionate payment

13.39 Other amounts payable to members in recognition of specific responsibilities or

as a civic head or deputy civic head as set out in Determinations 50 and 51 are payable from the date when the member takes up the role during the financial year. For the election year the same arrangements as set out in 13.38 will apply.

13.40 It is a matter for each council to make, and record, a policy decision in respect of:

- when the payment is actually made to the member;
- how many payments the total amount payable is broken down into;
- and whether and how to recover any payments made to a member who leaves or changes their role during the financial year.

13.41 Payments in respect of Determinations 45, 46, 47 and 48 are payable when the activity they relate to has taken place.

13.42 As stated in paragraph 13.7 any individual member may make a personal decision to elect to forgo part or all of the entitlement to any of these payments by giving notice in writing to the proper officer of the council.

Determination 53: Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council (that is Leader, Deputy Leader or Executive Member) cannot receive any payment from any community or town Council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance.

Publicity requirements

13.43 There is a requirement on community and town councils to publish details of all payments made to individual members in an annual Statement of Payments for each financial year. This information must be published on council noticeboards and or websites (with easy access) and provided to the Panel by email or by post no later than 30 September following the end of the previous financial year. The Panel draws attention to the requirements stipulated at [Annex 4](#). The Panel is concerned that a significant number of councils are still in breach of this requirement.

14. Compliance with Panel Requirements

The Panel's remit under the Measure

- 14.1 Section 153 of the Measure empowers the Panel to require all relevant authorities⁸ to comply with the requirements imposed by an Annual Report of the Panel and further enables the Panel to monitor the compliance of relevant authorities with the Panel's determinations.
- 14.2 A relevant authority must implement the Panel's determinations in this report from the date of its annual meeting or a date specified within the Annual Report.

Monitoring compliance

- 14.3 The Panel will monitor compliance with the determinations in this Annual Report. Whilst the Panel has no formal enforcement powers it may share information with organisations such as Audit Wales as part of the overall review of a relevant authority's governance and financial arrangements. If the Panel is not satisfied a relevant authority has complied with the Panel's determinations the Panel will inform Welsh Government ministers and may publish details of non-compliance.

The following applies to all authorities including community and town councils

- 14.4 A relevant authority must make arrangements for publication within the authority area of the total sum paid by it in the previous financial year to each member and co-opted member in respect of salary (basic, senior and civic), allowances, fees and reimbursements in a Statement of Payments (in accordance with Annex 4 that sets out the content that must be included in the Publicity Requirements). This must be published as soon as practicable and no later than 30 September following the end of the previous financial year- and must also be submitted to the Panel no later than that date.

The following requirements do not apply to community and town councils

- 14.5
- (i) A relevant authority must maintain an annual **Schedule of Member Remuneration** (IRPW Regulations 4 and 5). Guidance at Annex 3 sets out the content which must be included in the Schedule.
 - (ii) A relevant authority must make arrangements for the Schedule's publication within the authority area (IRPW Regulation 46) and send the Schedule to the Panel as soon as practicable and not later than 31 July in the year to which it applies. Annex 4 provides further details of the publicity requirements.

- (iii) Any amendments to the Schedule made during the year must be notified to the Panel as soon as possible after the amendment is made.

⁸ Interpretation of “Relevant Authority” provided in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Regulations, Part 1, ‘Interpretation’.

NANTYGLO & BLAINA TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF NANT-Y-GLO A BLAENAU

Mrs T Hughes - Town Clerk/RFO
Council Offices, Blaina Institute, High Street, Blaina NP13 3BN
Swyddfa'r r Cyngor, Y Stryd Fawr, Blaenau NP13 3BN Tel: 01495 292817
e-mail: clerk@nantygloandblainatc.co.uk

Budget Expenditure - February 2022

Introduction:

Members will be aware of the budget monitoring report for the period 1st October 2021 to 31st December 2021 and the information contained within this.

Report:

Members will have noted in that report that the current levels of expenditure for the following budgets (Miscellaneous; Events and S.137/financial grants) have either exceeded or are close to exceeding their allocated budget. Members are advised of the following:

- The total expenditure for the Miscellaneous Budget is £6,569.77 (as at 31/12/2021) with the budget set at £6,000 for 2021/22 with a reserve of £5,000 from the RFO contingency reserve account if required. Members are also informed that ongoing regular monthly expenditure will also be charged against this budget as will the invoices for the wi-fi in the chamber and the OWL meeting system (estimated £2,000+).
- The Total expenditure for the s.137/Financial Grants budget is £2,400 (as at 31/12/2021) with the budget set at £2,000 and no established reserve account. Members are also informed that ongoing payments of £200 per month are still being made to Blaenau Gwent Foodbank together with the possibility of additional grant applications being received for consideration.
- The total expenditure for the Events budget is £3,591.48 (as at 31/12/2021) with the budget set at £7,157.00 for 2021/22 with a reserve of £6,000 from an earmarked reserve account of £6,000 if required. Members are informed that outstanding invoices in respect of the installation of Christmas Lights, In Bloom awards, presentation events and the purchase of Easter Eggs will also be charged against this budget (estimated £4,000).
- The current underspend reported as at 31st December 2021 provides adequate reserves for the proposed use of reserves to fund the gap in the allocated budgets.

- It is recommended that the use of the RFO contingency reserve account be utilised to make up the shortfall in the Miscellaneous budget to a maximum of £5,000 (as per the Budget & Precept Report 2021/22 as resolved).
- It is recommended that the use of the earmarked Events Reserve Account be utilised to make up the shortfall in the Events Budget to a maximum of £6,000 (as per the Budget & Precept Report 2021/22 as resolved)
- It is recommended that the use of the RFO contingency reserve account be utilised to make up the shortfall in the s.137/Financial Grants budget to a maximum of £1,000.
- To comply fully with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations it is not recommended that Standing Orders be suspended when considering financial matters.
- Members are informed that advice from the Councils' Internal Auditor has been sought.

Recommendation:

That Members consider the report and approve the use of reserves as detailed above.

Tracy Hughes
Town Clerk /RFO
February 2022

Safety Inspections – Salem Chapel

Inspection of Salem Chapel – February 2022

MAIN CHAPEL / WEEK	3 rd	9 th	17 th	24 th	Report of any defects And action taken
Main Hall of Chapel	./	./	./	./	Dry rot detected & floor part lifted. Investigations undertaken 31/8/16. Organ supports re-enforced Sept 2016.
Fire Alarm	./	./	./	./	Inspected 19/01/2022
Emergency Lighting	./	./	./	./	Inspected 19/01/2022
Stairways to Balcony	./	./	./	./	Stair lift not working, evidence of damp on walls
Balcony	./	./	./	./	Damage to display possibly from insects/woodworm. Greater evidence of damp on walls.
Toilets	./	./	./	./	Removed due to dry rot
High Street Entrance	./	./	./	./	Black mould on walls & ceilings
Office	./	./	./	./	Broken window secured
General Condition	./	./	./	./	General deterioration evident
Fire Extinguishers	./	./	./	./	Inspected & replaced as necessary 02/12/20
Observations/ Other Comments	./	./	./	./	J Dyer opinion is fungal rot. Valuation survey carried out by J Dyer 3/11/21. Issue with alarm sounding since 15/12/21, inspected and reset possibly due to rats. R Dunham asked to lay poison.
ANNEX BUILDING					
Ground Floor	./	./	./	./	
Kitchen	./	./	./	./	Mould/rot on floor. Floor rotten through. Kitchen units coming away from wall due to severe damp in floor of kitchen. R Dunham inspected.
First Aid Box	./	./	./	./	
Seating Area	./	./	./	./	Considerably amount of new damp on interior walls to left side of premises entering from the back entrance. Extensive rotting of wooden floor.
Stairway to upper room	./	./	./	./	
Upper Room	./	./	./	./	
Rear Entrance	./	./	./	./	Paint flaking off walls
Side Door	./	./	./	./	
Observations/ Other Comments					General deterioration evident.
Statutory annual Inspections:					Dragon Fire & Security Systems (fire extinguishers) 02/12/2020. Dragon Fire & Security Systems (Intruder & fire alarms) 19/01/2022.

Signed: T Hughes

Town Clerk

Date: 08/03/22

Chairman of Finance & General Purposes Committee