

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Cabinet

Date of meeting: 14th February 2023

Title: Coroner Pay Arrangements 2023/24

Purpose of the report: Approve Coroner and Assistant Coroner pay arrangements

For: Decision

Cabinet Portfolio and Cabinet Member: Councillor Matthew Vaux, Cabinet Member for Partnerships, Housing, Legal and Governance and Public Protection

BACKGROUND

A Report on the Ceredigion Senior Coroner and Assistant Coroner pay arrangements was presented to Cabinet on 15th March 2022.

The JNC released Circular 66 regarding pay rates for the Coroner and Assistant Coroner for 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022:

The 66th circular made specific reference to a 1.5% uplift for local salaries and daily rates and sets out the following rates:

- Senior part-time Coroner - Base retention salary £21,120 pa.
- Senior part-time Coroner daily rates £465 - £528 (previously £458-£520 – a £7- £8 increase)
- Assistant Coroner daily rates £397 - £479 (previously £391-£472 – a £6 - £7 increase)

In order to reflect the guidance from JNC Circular 66, Cabinet at its 2nd November 2021 meeting, approved for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, to reflect the guidance from JNC Circular 66 (with consequent payments back-dated to 1st April 2021) pay rates as follows:

1) Senior part-time Coroner

- a) Retention Salary-
to cover out of hours service availability and retention: £21,120
(this was an increase of £312 p/a from 2021/2022 pay rates agreed by Cabinet in March 2021).
- b) Daily rate: £465 (@1.5% uplift/£7 from JNC £458 daily rate/£6 from £459 current rates) capitalised to represent annual salary (including training days) of £11,625 (£465 per day x 25 days = **£11,625**). This was an increase of £150 p/a from the 2021/2022 pay rates agreed in March 2021.

2) Assistant Coroner:

- full day rate: £397
- half day rate: £199

At the 15th of March 2022 meeting of Cabinet, the pay rates for the Coroner and Assistant Coroner were set for 2022/23 in accordance with those set out in JNC Circular 66 for 2021/22, as no further guidance had been issued by the JNC.

Current Position for 2023/24

The Council must approve the pay arrangements for the Coroner and Assistant Coroner for 2023/24 effective from the 1st of April 2023. The pay arrangements for the Coroner include salary, National Insurance, superannuation, apprenticeship levy, and allowance towards office accommodation and business support.

The Council is also required to adopt the framework in determining the future salary levels for the Ceredigion Coroner and Assistant Coroner. At the date of preparation of this Report, there has not been any further JNC circular published indicating any new agreed remuneration.

It is recommended that, for the pay rates of the Senior Coroner and Assistant Coroner for 2023/2024, since no further guidance has been received to date by the JNC, the Coroner and Assistant Coroner's pay rates remain those set for 2021/22.

Should the JNC release information regarding pay rates for the Coroner and Assistant Coroner for the period from the 1st of April 2022 to the 31st of March 2023, or from the 1st of April 2023 to the 31st of March 2024, this will be taken into account and a further report will be presented to Cabinet.

Proposals

Cabinet is asked to approve the following arrangements, effective from the 1st of April 2023 – 31st March 2024 (retaining the current arrangements):

To approve the following pay rates effective from 1st April 2023:

1) Senior part-time Coroner:

- i) Retention Salary of £21,120 p/a to cover retention/out of hours service availability from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.
- ii) Using the agreed daily rate of £465, to pay the Coroner an annual salary of £11,625 including training days from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.
Total: £32,745 per annum (plus on-costs).

- iii) Office expenses/business support allowance – £5,000 p/a - from 1st of April 2023 to 31st of March 2024.

2) Assistant Coroner: From 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 the daily rates will be:

- full day: £397; and
- half day: £199.

Wellbeing of Future Generations:	<p>Has an Integrated Impact Assessment been completed? If, not, please state why</p> <p>Summary:</p> <p>Long term:</p> <p>Collaboration:</p> <p>Involvement:</p> <p>Prevention:</p> <p>Integration:</p>	<p>No</p> <p>This report does not represent a change in policy or strategy</p>
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Recommendation(s): That Cabinet approves the following pay rates effective from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024:

1) Senior part-time Coroner:

- i. Retention Salary of £21,120 p/a to cover retention/out of hours service availability.
- ii. Using the agreed daily rate of £465, to pay the Coroner an annual salary of £11,625 including training days.
Total: £32,745 per annum (plus on-costs).
- iii. Office expenses/business support allowance – £5,000 p/a.

2) Assistant Coroner:

- The daily rates will be:
- full day: £397; and
 - half day: £199.

Reasons for decision: Compliance with relevant legislation and JNC Circulars, mitigation of challenge and safeguarding public funds.

Overview and Scrutiny: None

Policy Framework: Not applicable

Corporate Well-being Objectives: Boosting the economy, supporting businesses and enabling employment (providing an efficient coroner service)

Finance and Procurement implications: Continuation of current arrangements, potential for increased salary costs and budget implications relating to pay of Coroner and Assistant Coroner.

Legal Implications: Compliance with relevant legislation

Staffing implications: None - Coroner and Assistant Coroner are not classed as Council employees.

Property / asset implications: None

Risk(s):	Risk of legal challenge by the Coroner & Assistant Coroner if recommendations not followed.
Statutory Powers:	Coroners & Justice Act 2009: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/contents The Coroners Allowances, Fees and Expenses Regulations 2013: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1615/made ;
Background Papers:	JNC Circular 63 November 2018: https://www.coronersociety.org.uk/img/pics/pdf_1603105217-232.pdf JNC Circular 66 – Coroner’s Pay 2021/2022: https://www.local.gov.uk/jnc-circular-no66-coroners-pay-202122 Cabinet report of 16/3/2021: http://www.ceredigion.gov.uk/cpdl/Democratic_Services_Meetings_Public/Coroner%20and%20Assistant%20Coroner%20Pay%20(Dwyieithog).pdf Cabinet report of 2/11/2021: https://council.ceredigion.gov.uk/documents/s2190/Report%20to%20Cabinet%20on%20Coroner%20and%20Assistant%20Coroner%20Pay%20-%202.11.2021.pdf?LLL=0 Cabinet report of 15/3/2022: https://council.ceredigion.gov.uk/documents/s2769/Report%20Coroner%20and%20Assistant%20Coroner%20Pay%20S.pdf?LLL=0
Appendices:	None
Corporate Lead Officer:	Elin Prysor, Corporate Lead Officer – Legal & Governance (& Monitoring Officer)
Reporting Officer:	Elin Prysor
Date:	23 rd January 2023