

Assembly Commission

Venue: **Conference Room 4B - Tŷ Hywel**

Date: **Monday, 4 November 2019**

Time: **12.30 - 14.35**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(5)2019(7)

Commission
Members:

Elin Jones AM (Chair)
Suzy Davies AM
Siân Gwenllïan AM
David J Rowlands AM
Joyce Watson AM

Officials present:

Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly
Siwan Davies, Director of Assembly Business
Arwyn Jones, Director of Communications and Engagement
Nia Morgan, Director of Finance
Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation
Gareth Price, Head of Communications
Manon George, Research Service
Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support
Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office
Elin Roberts, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd

Others in
attendance:

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and apologies

No apologies had been received.

1.2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 23 September were agreed.

There were two matters of follow up. Commissioners were informed of feedback received in relation to proposals for taking Assembly business to a location outside Cardiff, and on proposed changes to the way Members' Office related costs funded centrally by Commission are managed. The second was discussed further at Item 6.

2 Commission budget 2020-21 - Response to Finance Committee report

Commissioners were updated on the progress of the Assembly Commission Budget for 2020-21 through its scrutiny process. They accepted adjustments that had been made to provide information about costs relating to the Standards Commissioner more clearly. They also agreed that further adjustment should be made to reflect the recent Annual Survey for Hours and Earnings (ASHE) estimates published by the Office for National Statistics, and used in the Determination.

Commissioners noted the timetable for budget activity during November 2019, and agreed their response to the recommendations raised in the Finance Committee Report and their Final Budget for 2020-21, subject to the adjustment above being reflected in both.

3 Communication and Engagement

3.1 Approach to awareness raising for Senedd and Elections Bill and 2021 election

Commissioners considered proposals for a common communication and engagement approach to support three core areas of activity until May 2021 - Name Change, Votes at 16 and the Welsh General Election 2021.

Commissioners supported the approach in general, acknowledging that specifics would be influenced further by progress of the Bill through stage 3 and 4. They also discussed the relationship to work that would be done by the Committee on Assembly Electoral Reform, and that additional work to understand better the key audiences and their needs would be of benefit.

3.2 Citizens' Assembly report

Commissioners received a presentation outlining the process and results of the citizens' assembly, which had taken place in July.

They considered the three overarching recommendations that had resulted from the event: Citizens' assemblies; Co-creation; and Specialist Platforms, and their relationship to existing engagement mechanisms provided by the Commission.

Commissioners agreed to share the report's findings with committee chairs, who could best make use of them; and to seek feedback from them and committee members on appetite for the recommended mechanisms.

They agreed to support in principle broadening the engagement mechanisms available, within the context of ensuring clarity about their purpose and that there would be cost and timing implications if the Assembly wishes the Commission to take forward the recommendations.

Commissioners also agreed to share the report with Business Committee for information and to feedback to participants in the Citizens' Assembly, in due course.

4 Assembly Reform - Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill update

Commissioners were brought up to date with several matters relating to the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill, following Stage 2 proceedings and ahead of Stage 3. They discussed amendments to the timing of the franchise change for 16/17 year olds, and issues around disqualification for dual mandates, in pursuance of clarity recommended by the CLA committee of the Fourth Assembly.

Commissioners discussed the nuances of the amending process, and that the Bill now covered matters which were not within the Commission's original design of the Bill due to amendments agreed at Stage 2.

The Llywydd will reflect the discussion in the Stage 3 debate.

Commissioners noted the letter sent by the Llywydd to party leaders, Business Managers, Commissioners, Members who tabled amendments.

5 Brexit update

Commissioners noted that preparations for various scenarios relating to Brexit on both the business and the corporate services side of Commission activity were continuing.

6 Remuneration Board review of Determination

Commissioners considered two issues which had been highlighted for their attention by the Chair of the Remuneration Board in relation to the Board's consultation arising from its Review of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly.

Commissioners noted the letter from the Remuneration Board and agreed that the Llywydd should respond confirming they would consider Outplacement services as part of the planning for the 2021 election; and supporting in principle the Remuneration Board's proposed approach to clarifying support for Members with disabilities within the Determination. In doing this, Commissioners wished to highlight the full scope of the Commission's Equalities and Access Fund.

In returning to the matter of Members' Office related costs funded centrally by Commission, Commissioners noted feedback from groups and agreed to take forward the proposals considered at their September meeting:

- that the Remuneration Board be consulted about encompassing the Lyreco stationery provision/costs within the Determination in future;

- that the provision of pre-paid stationery, postage & bulk mailing and printing be retained by the Assembly Commission; that monitoring continue and routine publication of costs identifiable to individual Members be published from May 2021, to improve transparency; and
- pursuing alternative approaches to some services, to reduce cost and provide value for money.

An update would be provided to the Remuneration Board.

7 Employment Practices Liability Insurance (EPLI) for Members

Commissioners agreed to invite the Remuneration Board to consider the matter of appropriate provision of Employment Practices Liability Insurance for Assembly Members.

8 Papers to note:

8.1 EB update (RAD decisions grid)

Commissioners noted the routine update of recent RAD decisions by Executive Board.

8.2 AM Pension scheme - statement of investment principles

Commissioners noted the changes to the Statement of Investment Principles (SIP) made by the AM Pension Board, in line with new disclosure requirements.

9 Any other business

- The Llywydd informed Commissioners that they would be provided with information relating to the report of the Commission on Justice in Wales in due course.
- Commissioners were informed that a recent appeal in relation to an employment tribunal had been dismissed.

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.