



**Comisiwn y Cynulliad
Assembly Commission**

**MINUTES OF 16 OCTOBER MEETING 2.00-3.40PM,
CONFERENCE ROOM 4B**

Present:

Presiding Officer
Lorraine Barrett AM (Labour)
Peter Black AM (Liberal Democrats)
William Graham AM (Conservatives)
Chris Franks AM (Plaid Cymru)

Officials present:

Claire Clancy (Chief Executive and Clerk)
Dianne Bevan (Chief Operating Officer)
Keith Bush (Director of Legal Services)
Adrian Crompton (Director of Assembly Business)
Craig Stephenson (Head of Corporate Unit)
Aled Eirug (Constitutional Consultant)
Kevin Tumelty (Head of Security – item 2c)
John Charles (Security Manager – item 2c)
Richard Penn (Independent Commissioner for Standards – item 4)
Gareth Rogers (Head of Table Office – item 4)

Independent advisers: none present

Observers: none present

1. Introduction:

Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes of meeting – 8 July 2008

The minutes were formally agreed.

Minutes of meeting – 18 September 2008

The minutes were formally agreed.

2. Corporate Issues:

**Paper 2A – Finance Committee’s consideration of the Assembly
Commission’s Budget for 2009/10**



The witness transcript and the Report of the Finance Committee on the Commission's draft budget were considered by the Commission. It was agreed that information on the potential savings on energy costs in the Senedd together with the paper on the efficiency of the building would be made available before the Plenary debate on 22 October.

Action: Dianne Bevan to arrange.

Paper 2B – Equality Scheme

The Commission considered the Equality Scheme, the associated action plan and the strategic equality statement following public and stakeholder consultation over the summer. The Scheme outlined the Commission's strategic approach to the delivery and promotion of equality of opportunity across the equality strands in terms of its responsibilities as an employer and service provider. Progress and outcomes would be monitored by the Assembly's Equality of Opportunity Committee as well as the Equalities and Human Rights Commission. It was noted that Lorraine Barrett and Claire Clancy would be appearing before the Assembly's Equality Committee in December. In response to a number of issues raised, assurance was received that the action plan would be progressed by the Equality Team in partnership with relevant service areas and external partners as appropriate. The Commission agreed the recommendations in the paper noting that it would be published in November.

Paper 2C – Security Strategy

Kevin Tumelty provided a presentation on the future security of the Assembly estate following a review he had undertaken since his appointment. Commissioners welcomed his approach and agreed that it was important to ensure an appropriate balance between the right to legitimate protest and to protect the safety and security of the institution and those working in or visiting it. It was agreed that Keith Bush would explore the provisions of Section 128 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 and advise further on its relevance to the organisation, and that the Commission would receive a further paper on the way in which security guidelines could operate in this context.

Action: Keith Bush

Paper 2D – Consideration of correspondence from Nick Bourne AM to the Presiding Officer

Commissioners considered Nick Bourne's correspondence about withholding the funding of advertising to ITV and the Trinity Mirror Group given concerns about their coverage of Welsh affairs. Concern was expressed about setting a precedent by agreeing such action and the Presiding Officer suggested that that the editorial content of the media was entirely separate from any advertising that might be placed and the Commission agreed that the needs



of a job would dictate the appropriate media for its advertisement. A response should be drafted for the Presiding Officer's consideration.

Action: External Communications to draft a reply

Assembly Estate

Commissioners indicated that they would welcome the chance to consider the purchase of the freehold of the Assembly estate in Cardiff Bay if opportunity arose, in order to realise significant long term savings and afford the Commission greater control over these key assets.

Action: Dianne Bevan

3. Management Board Report to the Assembly Commission

Claire Clancy introduced the report and drew attention to the appointment of Steve O'Donoghue, Head of Assembly Resources and Connie Robertson, Head of Estates and ICT. They would both be joining Non Gwilym to form Dianne Bevan's senior management team in the Operations Directorate.

A concern was raised about the positioning of the National Assembly stand at the Royal Welsh Show in Builth Wells. It was noted that Non Gwilym was looking into the issues.

4. Presentation by Richard Penn, Independent Standards Commissioner

The Presiding Officer welcomed Richard Penn and Gareth Rogers who had been invited to discuss the role of the Independent Commissioner on Standards. Richard explained the changes in the role and enhanced remit since his appointment in March 2000. The core of his work was to investigate complaints, advise the Committee on Standards of Conduct and to advise Members on principles relating to the Register of Members' Interests – all of which had positively contributed to the reputation of the organisation. Commissioners thanked the Commissioner for fulfilling his duties and providing insight into his role.

5. Matters to note

The Commission noted the correspondence from Peter Black to Helen Mary Jones, Chair of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Secretariat