

Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Remote - Hybrid

Committee Room 5, Tŷ Hywel and via Microsoft Teams

Meeting date: Wednesday 7 and Thursday, 8 July 2021

Meeting time: 9.30 – 16.30

IRB(04-21)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Dr Elizabeth Haywood (Chair); Michael Redhouse; Jane Roberts; Hugh Widdis;
Secretariat:	Lleu Williams, Clerk; Huw Gapper, Clerk; Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerk; Anna Daniel, Senior Adviser to the Board; Craig Griffiths, Legal Adviser to the Board; Joanna Adams, Members Business Support; Tom Jackson, Strategic Transformation, Senedd Commission; David Lakin, Strategic Transformation, Senedd Commission; Siwan Davies, Director of Senedd Business, Senedd Commission; Huw Williams, Chief Legal Adviser, Senedd Commission Laurian Hubbard, Head of Engagement, Senedd Commission Laura Williams, Head of Communications, Senedd Commission
Others in attendance	Meirion Thomas, External Facilitator for the strategy planning;

(for strategy planning items)	David Hanson, preferred candidate for Board member vacancy
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1 Session 1: Strategy planning (9.30 - 11.00)

Chair's Introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Board expressed their deepest sympathy and condolence to the family of Carys Evans, previous Clerk to the Board, on the news of her passing. The Board agreed to inform previous Board members in order to give them an opportunity to express their condolences also.
- 1.3 The Chair introduced and welcomed David Hanson to the meeting. The Chair explained that, following recent interviews with candidates for the Board member vacancy, David was the preferred candidate. The Board noted that the Commission will need to formally approve David's appointment and all necessary vetting and clearance checks will need to be made. The intention will be for David to join the Board as a full member for the September meeting. The Chair explained that David would attend for the strategy planning work undertaken by the Board but would leave during the formal Board meeting.
- 1.4 The Chair introduced and welcomed Meirion Thomas to the meeting. Meirion was appointed as external facilitator to the Board in undertaking its consideration and development of its strategy.
- 1.5 The remainder of the agenda, aside from matters outlined below, was set aside for the Board's strategy planning.

2 Session 2: Strategy planning (11.30 - 13.00)

3 Session 3: Drop-in with Members (15:00 - 16:30)

4 Session 4: Strategy planning (10.00 - 10.30)

5 Session 5: Strategy planning (11:00 - 12:00)

6 Session 6: Strategy planning (13:00 - 14:00)

7 Session 7: Board meeting (14:30 - 16:00)

- 1.6 The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting of 27 May 2021.
- 1.7 The Board discussed issues raised by Members during the drop in session the day before.
- 1.8 The Board considered an update on support provided to Members in relation to Covid-19 and noted the planned Welsh Government's review of restrictions, due on 14 July.

- 1.9 The Board considered feedback it had received regarding supporting the opening and re-opening of offices. The Board agreed to draw attention to the Return to Offices Covid-19 Fund and how Members can access it.
- 1.10 The Board also considered the matter of larger, more significant structural changes to office layouts, and whether they would fall within the scope of the Return to Offices Covid-19 Fund. It was appreciated that some Members may be experiencing particular problems in ensuring their offices are "Covid-secure". The Board noted that it is likely that there will be constraints on Members' ability to undertake such changes as leaseholders. The Board was of the view that, in line with the Welsh Government's approach of taking "reasonable measures", Members' Risk Assessments will need to consider various options to work as flexibly as possible within the context of the structural limitations of their offices. It was noted that if Members require expert advice and opinion for their risk assessments then these services can be funded from the Office and Constituent Liaison Fund.
- 1.11 The Board agreed that it would be useful to have first-hand evidence from Members, especially in relation to the support they may need for opening or re-opening offices in a "Covid-safe" manner. To that end, the Board agreed to review the support provisions available to Members in relation to Covid at the September meeting and to invite Members to share information for the Board to consider.
- 1.12 The Board considered an update on engagement with Members over the forthcoming summer recess and ahead of its September meeting. The Board also agreed to hold drop in sessions with Members on a more regular basis, once a term.
- 1.13 The Board noted an update on the launch of its new website.
- 1.14 The Board agreed its forward work programme until January 2022.

Actions: The secretariat to:

- arrange publication of the May minutes;
- provide information for the Board to review the provisions available to Members and offices, in relation to Covid-19;
- seek evidence from Members in relation to support for Covid-19;
- finalise the programme of visits with Members and their offices;
- arrange future drop in session with Members, the next one in the autumn term;
- arrange the Representative meetings for the September meeting;
- provide the Board with links to the final versions of the new website and arrange for it to be made live when ready.

Paper 3 – Committee Chair Pay

- 1.15 The Board considered an update from Siwan Davies, Director of Senedd Business on the establishment of Committees, as agreed by the Senedd over the last few weeks. The context behind decisions made by the Business Committee in relation to Committee remits and the Committee timetable were also provided to the Board.
- 1.16 The Board noted legal advice from Huw Williams, Chief Legal Adviser, on the application of the Determination and its ability to give effect to its decisions on the salaries payable to additional office holders from the date of their appointments.
- 1.17 The Board determined that given the remit and responsibilities of Committee Chairs, and the importance of the role of all Senedd Committees in holding the Government to account and discharging the Senedd's functions, all Chairs elected on 29 June will be entitled to the higher rate of £13,741 per annum. The Board agreed that pay would be payable from the date of election as chair, being 29 June.
- 1.18 The Board also agreed to retain the two rates of Committee Chair pay as set out in the Determination for future use if required over the course of this Senedd term.

Action: The secretariat to:

- write to all Committee Chairs to notify them of the Board's decision;
- write to the Chair of Business Committee to outline the Board's decisions;
- inform MBS of the decision, to allow for the necessary arrangements to be made for payment to Chairs.

Paper 4 – Annual Report

- 1.19 The Board considered and agreed its annual report for the past financial year, and agreed that it would sign-off the final breakdown of costs by email once they became available.

Actions: The secretariat to:

- arrange translation and prepare the report for publication, with a view to laying before the Senedd at the end of July;
- make arrangements for former Board members to agree the breakdown of their costs from their time on the Board, ahead of publication.

8 Session 8: Strategy planning - wrap up and conclusions (16:15 - 16:30)