

Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Meeting date: Thursday, 26 May 2022

Virtual via MS Teams

Meeting time: 9.15 – 15:30

IRB(03-22)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Dr Elizabeth Haywood (Chair) Rt Hon Sir David Hanson Michael Redhouse Dame Jane Roberts
Secretariat:	Huw Gapper, Clerk; Joanna Adams, Second Clerk; Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerk; Anna Daniel, Senior Adviser to the Board; Craig Griffiths, Legal Adviser to the Board; Bethan Davies, Head of Member Support and Engagement; David Lakin, Committee Support Officer; Martin Jennings, Research Team Leader, Financial Scrutiny Unit; Kate Rabaiotti, Legal Services
Witnesses	Phil Boshier, Research Service Ed Williams, Director of Senedd Resources, Senedd Commission Michelle Hagerty, Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Lorna Foreman, Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Mairi Pearson, Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Erin Borthwick, Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body Gareth Watts, Head of Governance and Assurance

1 Chair's introduction (9.15 - 9.20)

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies were received from Hugh Widdis.

1.3 The Board noted that Llinos Madeley, Clerk to the Board has moved to another position in the Senedd Commission. The Board wished to pass on their thanks to Llinos for her hard work and for the positive changes she made during her time as Clerk. The Board wished Llinos all the very best for her future career.

1.4 The Board reflected on the Representative Group meetings, both Member and Support Staff, that had been held the previous day.

1.5 The Board agreed the minutes of the 10 March meeting.

Action:

- The Secretariat to prepare an update letter to Members following the meeting and draft a letter of thanks to Llinos Madeley.
- Publish minutes of the 10 March meeting.

2 Item for decision: Pensions (9.20 - 9.50)

2.1 The Board considered and agreed changes to the Rules on the Members' Pension Scheme to reflect the McCloud and Sargeant judgments and to avoid potentially discriminatory provisions:

2.2 The following changes were also approved to reflect changes to the Rules previously agreed by the Board:

- amend Rules 30.3 and 30.4, relating to contributions by participating office holders who are members of the Career Average Revalued Earnings section of the Scheme (Remuneration Board decision on 15 August 2016);
- a number of changes to comply with age discrimination requirements in respect of Members aged 75 or over (Remuneration Board decision on 19 September 2019);
- amendment to the Rules to allow for an ill health pension to be fully exchanged for a cash lump sum in cases of short life expectancy of less than 12 months (Remuneration Board decision on 21 November 2019);
- updated language to reflect the name changes introduced by the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Act 2020, for example Welsh Parliament or Senedd Cymru as opposed to the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration Board decision on 9 July 2020);

- changes to the timeframe for Scheme valuations under Rules 19.2, to allow for disruption caused by COVID-19 (Remuneration Board decision on 9 July 2020); and
- amendments to reflect the decision to change the definition of "partner" to comply with the Brewster judgment (Remuneration Board decision on 30 September 2021).

2.3 The Board agreed that subject to one correction being made to remove gender-specific language the revised rules will be presented to the Pension Board.

2.4 A comparison of the Members' support staff pension scheme with other comparable public and private sector pension schemes was considered by the Board, including the civil service pension scheme and the legal restrictions concerning which public sector employees can join the scheme.

2.5 The Board was provided with information on the contributions required of employees, contributions made by employers and the benefits provided by various schemes.

2.6 The Board agreed that the support staff pension scheme was of comparable value to other schemes reviewed and did not consider it necessary to make changes at this time.

Action: The Secretariat to:

- Make arrangements for the changes to the Members' Pension Rules to be made and for the Chair to approve the rules as amended.
- Present the final version of the revised rules to the Pension Board.

3 Item for decision: Board Mid-term Effectiveness Review (9.50 - 10.20)

3.1 The Board considered a scoping paper on a mid-term review of its effectiveness as presented by the Senedd Commission's Head of Governance and Assurance, Gareth Watts.

3.2 The broad scope of the review as proposed was approved. It was agreed that the terms of reference of the review should include reference to the pandemic and its impact on the Board's work. The review should also consider the frequency and effectiveness of communication between the Board's Chair and secretariat.

Action: The Head of Governance and Assurance to:

- Amend the scoping paper to include the additions agreed by the Board and develop the paper into a plan for the review.
- Present the review plan to the Board in July for approval.

4 Item for decision: Thematic Review - Ways of working (10.30 - 12.00)

- 4.1 The Board received a presentation from the Senedd Commission's Director of Resources, Ed Williams, on the Commission's work in response to changes in Members' and staff ways of working.
- 4.2 The Board provided feedback on the scope of the Commission's review of ways of working for consideration by the Director of Resources and discussed the implications of changes to Member and their support staff ways of working for the Determination.
- 4.3 It was agreed that the Board and Senedd Commission should work together in engaging with Members and their staff to understand their preferred ways of working in future, to avoid duplication and make the best use of resources. The Board suggested such engagement should cover Members' preferences in terms of their use of Tŷ Hywel as well as preferences for working in their constituencies / regions.
- 4.4 The Board suggested changes to paper 5 - the terms of reference of its review of ways of working, and agreed to receive a further paper on the review in its July meeting.

5 Item for discussion: Scottish Parliament reviews (13:00 - 14:15)

- 5.1 The Board received a presentation from officials from the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB) on work undertaken by the SPCB on changes to the ways of working of MSPs and their staff and also on the staff cost provision for MSPs.
- 5.2 The Board considered what aspects of the staffing support for Members of the Senedd may need to be reviewed for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd and also for the Seventh Senedd.

6 Item for decision: Consideration of Exceptional Expense (14.15 - 14.30)

- 6.1 The Board agreed its view on an application for an Exceptional Expense and will write to the Member with the outcome of the Board's decision.

7 Item for discussion: Update paper (14.30 - 15.15)

- 7.1 The Board noted updates on:
- the Annual review of the Determination;
 - the Board's forward work programme;
 - the resourcing of the Board;
 - the Board's Member engagement programme;
 - Senedd reform;
 - the home working allowance;
 - energy costs;

- correspondence from the Chief Executive and Clerk (Members' security arrangements and childcare provision); and
- the Board's finances.

7.2 The Board agreed to schedule its next formal meeting for Thursday 7 July, in Cardiff.