



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 7 November 2022**

Time: **11.00 - 12.30**

Minutes: SC(6)2022(7)

Commission
Members:

Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS (Chair)
Rhun ap Iorwerth MS
Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Joyce Watson MS

Officials present:

Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk
Siwan Davies, Director of Senedd Business
Arwyn Jones, Director of Communications and Engagement
Ed Williams, Director of Senedd Resources
Nia Morgan, Director of Finance
Lowri Williams, Head of Human Resources and Inclusion
Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support

Others in
attendance:

1 Introduction

1.a Introduction and apologies

Apologies were received from Ken Skates, MS.

1.b Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.c Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 26 September were agreed.

2 Response to Finance Committee re Budget

Commissioners were updated on the progress of the 2023-24 Senedd Commission Budget following scrutiny by the Finance Committee on 5 October.

Commissioners agreed the Commission response to the recommendations raised in the Finance Committee Report, noted the report, and approved the Final Budget for 2023-24 to be laid ahead of the Budget Motion to be debated in plenary on 16 November 2022.

In doing so Commissioners agreed that the 2023-24 Final Commission Budget, include additional wording ("and interest received on working balances") and that reference to this change be included in the response letter to the Finance Committee report on the Draft Commission Budget for 2023-24. This was to reflect the impact of increases in the Bank of England base rate.

They also noted a letter to Finance Committee, providing further information following the scrutiny session.

3 Ways of Working - N Wales office

As part of the Ways of Working Programme, Commissioners considered a business case for providing the facilities currently available to staff and Members at the Commission's Colwyn Bay office through a co-location licence agreement with the Welsh Government at its Sarn Mynach (Llandudno Junction) office.

The business case set out the case for change; scope, objectives, business needs and deliverables; and shortlist options along with their costings and evaluation.

Commissioners discussed their desire to ensure staff are looked after, and implications for other users of the offices, including Members and the public. They also considered the importance of the Commission having offices outside Cardiff, and being able to offer Senedd jobs in other parts of Wales. They concluded that the independence of the office from the Welsh Government should be made clear, including through appropriate branding, and that there should be communication about the change, along with enhanced information about ways the spaces may be used. An update would be provided following more detailed negotiations.

Commissioners agreed to exercise the break clause in the North Wales Office (Prince's Park) lease and move the Commission's North Wales office. The new location would provide self-contained workspace and hybrid meeting room) with storeroom and a tea-point as well as access to a range of communal facilities.

Subject to legal and professional estate services advice it is expected the move would occur in June 2023.

4 Senedd Reform

Commissioners considered an invitation from the Business Committee to provide views on particular recommendations of the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform, particularly in relation to Recommendation 6 on the number of Commissioners.

Commissioners agreed to write to the Committee to express their view that, on balance there was no strong obvious need to move from the status quo as Senedd reform is not anticipated to change the statutory functions of the Senedd Commission at the current time. However, they reflected that, as the work of the Senedd continues to evolve in future years, there may be emerging themes which require the Commission's attention and the issue of capacity may need to be revisited.

If a greater need were to emerge, we would not envisage that as being beyond one additional member, to make a Commission of six, inclusive of the Llywydd.

5 Framework for International Engagement

Commissioners welcomed an updated framework for the delivery of Commission support for international parliamentary activity in the Sixth Senedd. It would enable the Commission to demonstrate how it is working towards the achievement of identified outcomes, showcasing the strengths of the Senedd and Commission and linking directly to policy, procedural and corporate interests.

Commissioners discussed international activity as part of a Member's role and recognised Members need to be aware of Determination provisions in addition to the Commission support provided for various activities. They agreed the Framework, which would be made public on the Senedd website.

6 Security update

Commissioners were provided with an update on the Members Office and Home Security Project being undertaken by the Security team.

Commissioners welcomed progress since the project commenced and information about future options and requirements in relation to Members safety and security. They discussed the importance of Members taking steps to benefit the security of their staff and constituents who use Members' offices.

Commissioners agreed to reinforce the significance of the services of the security team, particularly with regard to home security, to members of their groups.

7 Papers to note:

7.a Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

Commissioners noted the routine summary of recruitment decisions provided to each Commission meeting.

7.b Letter to PAPAC with additional information

Commissioners noted a letter which would provide further information to PAPAC following scrutiny of the Commission annual report and accounts 2021-22.

In particular Commissioners discussed the assistance programmes offered to Commission staff and agreed to keep a watchful eye on the position. They also reflected on other employment such as Members' own support staff and Commission contractors.

8 Any other business

In the period since the last meeting Commissioners had taken one decision relating to the appointment of Independent Advisors to the Commission, including for membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) and the Remuneration Committee.