

# Senedd Commission



Venue: **Remote - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 11 July 2022**

Time: **12.30 - 13.35**

Minutes: SC(6)2022(5)

Commission  
Members:

**Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS (Chair)**  
**Rhun ap Iorwerth MS**  
**Janet Finch-Saunders MS**  
**Ken Skates 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**  
**Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation**  
**Nia Morgan, Director of Finance**  
**Matthew Richards, Head of the Legal Service**  
**Lowri Williams, Head of Human Resources and Inclusion**  
**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support**  
**Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office**

Others in  
attendance:

**Robert (Bob) Evans, Independent Advisor**  
**Sarah Pinch, Independent Advisor**

## 1 Introduction

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

Bob Evans, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and Sarah Pinch, Chair of the Remuneration, Engagement and Workforce Advisory Committee were welcomed to the meeting.

#### 1.b Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 1.c Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of 20 June were agreed.

## **2 ARAC / REWAC Annual Reports**

### 2.a ARAC Annual Report

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee's Terms of Reference require the Committee Chair to attend a Commission meeting each year to present the Commission and the Accounting Officer with an Annual Report.

Bob Evans, Chair of ARAC, presented the Committee's Annual Report, including the Committee's views in relation to the effectiveness of the overall risk, control and governance environment, and discussed cyber security with Commissioners.

The Committee observed how the Commission continued to demonstrate high standards of governance throughout the pandemic, despite the challenging circumstances. Further, the Committee had commended the Commission on the robust and well managed emergence from the pandemic.

The report also provided an indication of areas in which the Committee would be taking an active interest during 2022-23. The Commission thanked Bob for the Committee's work and noted the report.

### 2.b REWAC Annual Report

Sarah Pinch, Chair of the Remuneration, Engagement and Workforce Advisory Committee introduced the Committee's Annual Report. Commissioners noted the reporting, both on the Remuneration Committee function and on the wider assurance and advisory role, particularly giving focus to ethnic minority and socioeconomic representation as a matter of special interest. The Committee had taken a key interest in the Commission's annual metrics and were pleased to note the emerging positive results within the suite of D&I reporting, particularly early indications of progress in attracting a greater diversity of applicant and the development of a new Ethnic Minority Internship Scheme.

Commissioners welcomed the assurance provided by the Independent Advisers, individually and through the Committees and noted the REWAC report.

## **3 Strategic planning**

The Llywydd provided a introduction to the responsibility of the Commission to prepare properly for the significant change that would be needed for Senedd Reform, and

highlighted that Commissioners may need to make changes to their ways of working in response to what would be a period of intense work.

### 3.a Senedd Reform

Commissioners received information setting out the high level implications for the Commission in response to Senedd reform proposals.

These related to the Commission's responsibilities to provide the property, staff and services for the Senedd, and the high level governance framework within which Commission work would take place to provide assurance to the Commission.

Commissioners noted:

- the need to respond to any requests for information to inform the legislative process, including the recommendation of the Special Purpose Committee relating to the number of Senedd Commissioners;
- the proposed programme approach to support effective decision-making by the three different workstreams (Commission Reform, Senedd Reform, and Determination Reform) and to enable effective oversight of cross-cutting matters, such as the Senedd Reform related budget matters, Member engagement and stakeholder communications;
- the establishment of a Joint Assurance Board with Welsh Government to provide assurance to our respective Accounting Officers and decision-makers on those elements of the Senedd Reform Programme where a joint interest and decision-making dependencies exist; and

the risk and assurances arrangements and the feedback from ARAC.

### 3.b Ways of Working: Developing a Resource Management Strategy

Commissioners received a paper which set out an approach to Senedd Commission resource management for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd, in the context of Senedd Reform. They discussed the importance of taking a broad view, to understand the full picture.

Commissioners noted that a review of existing Commission capacity and resources, including the scope for allocating existing resources to absorb the likely transitional capital costs of any final Senedd Reform plans would be undertaken. They agreed to receive a draft 'Resource Management Strategy' in the Autumn.

Commissioners noted the provisional planning assumptions set out and agreed the in-principle position that transitional capital costs of any final Senedd Reform plans would need to be covered through requests for the necessary, justified, non-recurrent funding via the annual budget process.

Commissioners also noted that a rigorous internal process undertaken at this stage, supporting evidence-based budgetary growth requests made in the Sixth Senedd would also assist the Seventh Senedd when it comes to determining its resource needs. Any uplifts in capacity and resources would be made in properly phased way in the coming years, from a robust baseline.

### 3.c Draft Budget Strategy 2023-24

Commissioners discussed the 2023-24 draft budget strategy to decide on their approach to setting out the finances of the Commission in the context of preparing for Senedd Reform and other pressures. They reflected that this context would require some agile thinking to avoid detrimentally impacting Commission provided services.

Commissioners agreed Model B as the basis for the financial information presented in the draft budget document, and Option 3 for its preferred budgetary approach to any additional costs identified as relating to Senedd Reform for 2023-24 and following the agreed review of existing capacity. The approach would be to include any net additional costs as a ring-fenced contingency line; only to be used for Senedd Reform purposes, if needed.

Commissioners also agreed that the 2024-25 and 2025-26 staff and non-staff budgets will reflect pay award and inflationary increases, that costs associated with Senedd Reform would continue to be included as ring fenced amounts in future, and that in 2024-25 and 2025-26 Senedd Reform costs would reflect the staffing costs that are expected to commence in 2023-24 and capital costs only.

This would mean that any additional resource/staffing costs e.g. which may commence in 2024-25 or 2025-26, are not included. However, additional narrative would be included within the budget document to support these additional costs, to explain the uncertainties inherent in the figures, to explain why certain costs are not included and to note when these future resource/staffing costs for 2024-25 and 2025-26 will be known with more certainty.

The Commission draft budget will be laid and published in accordance with the required budget timetable.

#### **4 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Sixth Senedd**

Commissioners discussed the draft Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. They welcomed the progress that had been made and were supportive of the next steps set out, reflecting on the significance to the recommendations made by the Special Purpose Committee.

Commissioners approved the strategy.

#### **5 Pension Board member nomination**

Commissioners were presented with options for the appointment of a Commission Nominated Trustee on the Pension Board for the Members' Pension Scheme.

Commissioners agreed to nominate Bob Evans for re-appointment as Commission Nominated Trustee for a further term, for so long as he remains as a Commission Independent Adviser.

Commissioners also requested officials to explore the potential to extend his current appointment as an Independent Adviser, with a view to the period of significant change anticipated for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd.

#### **6 Papers to note:**

6.a Commission Strategy (updated)

Commissioners noted the update to the priorities for the 6th Senedd which had been made following discussion at the last meeting, with wording relating to the Commission as a bilingual organisation.

#### 6.b Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

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

### **7 Any other business**

None.