



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 27 March 2023**

Time: **10.30 - 11.50**

Minutes: SC(6)2023(3)

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**  
**Simon Hart, Interim Head of Financial Services**  
**Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation**  
**James Attridge, Senior Security Manager**  
**Leanne Baker, Acting Chief People Officer**  
**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support**  
**Elin Roberts, Clerk to Executive Board**

Others in  
attendance:

## 1 Introduction

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

## 1.b Declarations of interest

There were no formal declarations of interest.

Rhun ap Iorwerth informed Commissioners of his membership of the Senedd rugby team.

## 1.c Minutes of the previous meeting - 19 January

The minutes of the meeting on 19 January were agreed.

## 1.d Minutes of the previous meeting - 30 January

The minutes of the meeting on 30 January were agreed.

## **2 Senedd Reform**

Commissioners considered information prepared in response to a letter from the First Minister which requested that the Senedd Commission provide a best estimate of the cost that would arise for the Senedd Commission from the Welsh Government's Senedd Reform Bill.

The Commission had agreed that two scenarios: minimal change and greater change, should form the basis of the Commission's estimate of the costs it would incur as a consequence of the Bill.

Commissioners agreed a letter, and annexes, be sent to the First Minister to provide:

- an explanation of the basis from which costs have been estimated; and
- tables presenting a 10-year profile of costs, according to the two scenarios agreed by the Senedd Commission at its meeting on 12 December 2022, and prepared in line with the standard approach to cost estimates as part of a legislative process.

Commissioners were reminded that cost estimates would form part of the explanatory information to accompany any Bill introduced, and published, by the Welsh Government. The appropriate time for public discussion of the identified costs would be as part of the parliamentary scrutiny process.

One Commissioner asked for it to be recorded that they were not supportive in principle of the Senedd Reform proposals, and their associated costs, though they recognised there had been a vote in the Senedd in support of the work being undertaken by the Government.

Commissioners expressed thanks for the detailed work and extensive process that had brought together the information requested by the Government, and asked questions about the relationship between the estimates produced and future budget decisions.

## **3 Commission Budget Review 2023-24 and First Supplementary Budget update**

Commissioners approved the proposed budget savings, as an outcome of the 2023-24 Budget Review, and the revised budget subject to final approval through the supplementary budget process. The approved budget reduction proposals would be encompassed in the Commission's submission to the First Supplementary Budget for '23-24. The measures

would result in a revised overall budget increase of 3.4% compared to the currently approved budget which would have been a 4.1% increase, through reductions of:

- £208k in the Estates and Facilities budget through implementing energy saving measures and cost reductions;
- £107k in the ICT budget through robust renegotiation of contracts; and
- £120k in the Commission's Project Fund budget.

Commissioners noted the timeline for approval and laying of the 2023-24 First Supplementary Budget, and agreed that the finalised Supplementary Budget papers (Explanatory Memorandum and accompanying letter) be circulated to Commissioners in April for final agreement; and

Commissioners noted that further potential options for savings and efficiencies, would be considered as part of the medium-term planning for the 2024-25 Commission budget and the subsequent two years as part of the work to develop the Medium-term Resourcing Framework. These included:

- reviewing Significant non-staff budget lines;
  - generating additional income;
  - reviewing the profiling factor to align pay budgets with anticipated staff levels;
- and
- any further measures discussed in Plenary and not considered elsewhere.

#### **4 Use of the Estate Policy Review**

Commissioners considered a planned consultation exercise to inform a review of the Use of the Estate Policy. This was in response to queries being raised about current requirements on the use of the Estate, future events need, changes since the pandemic on how engagement events are offered and how Members want to use the Estate.

Commissioners approved short and medium term proposals for changes to room bookings. They suggested that officials be invited to attend party group meetings to receive feedback about Member needs in this area, and encouraged officials to also talk to some of the organisations who had raised queries.

Commissioners also discussed significant regular dates in the annual calendar cycle, and how these might appropriately be reflected within the system. They discussed the value that would come of the engagement exercise, and welcomed that an updated policy proposal would be presented to them in the autumn. The relationship between the number of events that can be supported and the resource available was also highlighted, with a reference to the recent cost reduction exercise discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### **5 Update letter to Finance Committee on Report recommendations**

Commissioners agreed a letter, which would be provided to Finance Committee, to deliver on a commitment to provide further information in two areas of recommendation made by the Committee in their Report on the Scrutiny of the 2023-24 Budget:

- decisions relating to the future of the Colwyn Bay office and the Senedd presence in north Wales; and
- seeking the views of Members to better understand the engagement work they wish to take forward.

## 6 Papers to note:

### 6.a ARAC Minutes 21 November Meeting

Commissioners noted the routine update about ARAC meetings provided to the Commission.

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

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

### 6.c Rugby Team request

Commissioners noted an email received from the Senedd Rugby Team and information about the existing provision to enable Commission 'sponsorship' of Senedd sports teams kit.

### 6.d Cost of Living payment letters to Contractors - replies

Commissioners noted letters from BowTie, Compass, TSS and CBRE in response to a letter sent to Commission contractors in relation to the Cost of Living payments made to Senedd employees.

One of the Commissioners requested the minutes reflected her disappointment about the nature of the responses, and queried whether the staff members employed by external contractors were fully aware of all the benefits available to them from their employers.

The Llywydd requested that one matter raised by a Commissioner be the subject of further discussion with the Accounting Officer.

It was discussed that a variety of employment terms exist for different groups who provide services associated with the Senedd. It was agreed to re-circulate information about outsourced contracts to Commissioners, and confirmed that information about the catering contract would be provided in the autumn.

## 7 Any other business

- **Trade Union industrial action ballot** – Commissioners were informed of a notification received of a ballot being undertaken by PCS about extending the period of the mandate for strike action to November.
- **Surveillance/CCTV** – Commissioners were informed of advice received to cease to deploy certain types of surveillance equipment. They were assured that the Senedd Security team is committed to helping ensure that the equipment installed at Members constituency offices and homes is safe and all appropriate action is taken to mitigate against any potential concern. A note will be provided to all Members,

and the team will work with Members on a case by case basis to assess individual requirements and will support Members in implementing any required actions.

- **Tiktok** – Commissioners were updated that additional information had been provided to Members about the use of Tiktok.

In the period since the last meeting, Commissioners had been consulted ahead of the award of the Facilities Management Contract, and had agreed the Commission's response to the Remuneration Board Consultation on the Determination.