

# Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

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Meeting Venue:

Meeting date: Thursday, 16 March 2023

**Remote - Digital**

Meeting time: 9.00 – 16.00

## IRB(03-23)

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### Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Dr Elizabeth Haywood (Chair); David Hanson; Michael Redhouse; Jane Roberts; Hugh Widdis.
Secretariat:	Huw Gapper, Clerk; Martha Da Gama Howells, Second Clerk; Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerk; Angharad Coupar, Deputy Clerk; Anna Daniel, Senior Adviser to the Board; Kate Rabaiotti, Legal Adviser to the Board; Bethan Davies, Head of Member Support and Engagement; Martin Jennings, Research Team Leader, Financial Scrutiny Unit; Craig Griffiths , Legal Services.
Participants:	Lowri Weatherburn, Members Business Support; Dr Rebecca McKee; Institute of Government (Item 3)

### 1 Chair's introduction (9.00 - 9.15)

- The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies had been received.
- The Chair briefly reflected on the positive Representative Group meetings held on 14 March.

- The Board agreed to hold hybrid meetings in May and July.
- The Chair confirmed a date for a meeting between the remuneration bodies of the four UK legislatures.
- The minutes of the 2 March meeting were agreed.

**Action:**

- Publish minutes of the 2 March meeting.

## **2 Annual Review of the Determination 2023-24 - post consultation (9.15 - 10.00)**

- The Board agreed the revised Determination 2023-24 and the accompanying Decision letter, subject to a few amendments as noted in the meeting.
- The Board noted the timeline for publication and agreed to issue a press release.
- The Board thanked officials for their work on the Annual Review of the Determination.
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**Action:**

- Note in the response to the Chief Executive of the Senedd that the query from Members to the Board to increase the allocation of ICT provision is a matter for the Commission as opposed to the Board.
- Secretariat to arrange a press release with colleagues in Communications.
- Secretariat to arrange clearance of letters to all those who responded to the consultation on the Annual Review of the Determination with the Chair.

## **3 Staffing Review (10.10 - 11.40)**

- The Board welcomed Dr Rebecca McKee to the meeting. Rebecca presented the findings of her research on staffing frameworks in different legislatures. The main areas of discussion were around staffing structure, job families, staff turnover, recruitment and retention.
- Mike Redhouse, the Board lead on this review, presented a paper considering the next steps of the thematic review of staffing support.
- The Board agreed the scope and objectives for the pay and grading review and agreed to include Group Support Staff within the review. An initial priority for the review is to establish the market position and to compare with other legislatures and public sector bodies.

- The Board identified additional information which would help inform the review, such as turnover rates, exit interviews as suggested at the Rep Group meetings, and Members' spend levels of their staffing allowance.
- The Board agreed for officials to prepare a specification for the work alongside the Commission's Procurement Team.

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**Action:**

- The Board queried the 3.5 FTE figure as a basis for Members' Staffing Support Allowance within Rebecca's research. Officials to check this with Rebecca and correct if necessary.
- Provide Board with the additional information requested or further advice.
- Amend the scope, objectives and information required, as above.
- The Board agreed to share further information with the Representative Groups on the review being undertaken.

**4 Simplification Review (11.50 -12.20)**

- Hugh Widdis, the Board lead on this review, presented the main strategic options to the Board.
- The Board agreed to proceed to prioritise reducing redundant controls and a review of the drafting of the Determination.
- The Board also agreed to consider any aspects of the wider whole claims system in need of review in a cooperative approach with the Commission.
- The Board agreed for officials to draw up a programme of activity and engagement for the review, also to share information with the Senedd Commission Executive Board setting out the objectives for the review.

**5 Strategic work programme (13.40 - 15.00)**

- The Board noted the presentation and reviewed the Strategic Work Programme for the remainder of the Board's term and until the end of the Sixth Senedd.
  - The Board agreed a high level scope for each Thematic Review and prioritised each for the remainder of this Senedd and identified where potential additional expertise would be required.
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- The Board agreed that Jane Roberts would be the Board lead on the review of the Political Party Support Allowance.

- The Board agreed that Elizabeth Haywood would be the Board lead on the review of Members Remuneration and Personal Support.

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**Action:**

- Officials to update presentation following feedback and circulate to Board members.
- Hold further discussions with the Chair to review the resources needed to support the Board's work in 2023-24 and 24-25.

## **6 Recruitment Policy (15.00 - 15.15)**

- The Board agreed to change the document from 'Recruitment Policy' to 'Recruitment Guidance'. The Board noted the revised Support Staff Recruitment Guidance.

The Board noted changes to the guidance to reflect recent changes to the Determination, Employment Handbook and Standardised Contract.

**Action:**

- The Board asked to be updated once the revised guidance has been published.

## **7 Effectiveness Review (15.25 - 15.45)**

- The Board agreed their response to the Mid-Term Review of Effectiveness report, subject to final changes.
- The Board discussed the presentation and publication of the report and the response and agreed to publish both, separately, but at the same time in April.

**Action:**

- Secretariat to make final changes for approval by the Chair.
- The Board agreed to email representative groups to inform them when publication of the report is imminent.

## **8 Update paper (15.45 - 16.00)**

- The Board noted the update paper and forward work programme.
- The Board noted the staffing update and that an external recruitment exercise would soon begin for a Senior Researcher to join the secretariat.

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- The Board noted an update that of the two Exceptional Expense claims that had previously been presented to the Board, one has now ended and the Board agreed to review the other in June.
- The Board noted a letter from the Standards of Conduct Committee regarding Cross-Party Group Rules and agreed a response.

**Action:**

- Secretariat to check if the £600 one off payment is included in the Finance Update forecast.
- Secretariat to meet with Chair to discuss agenda for May meeting.
- Issue a response to the Standards of Conduct Committee letter.