

# Senedd Commission



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 25 September 2023**

Time: **10.30- 12.30**

Minutes: SC(6)2023(9)

Commission  
Members:

**Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS (Chair)**  
**Janet Finch-Saunders MS**  
**Adam Price MS**  
**Ken Skates MS**  
**Joyce Watson MS**

Officials present:

**Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk**  
**Siwan Davies, Deputy Chief Executive and Clerk and Director of Senedd Business**  
**Arwyn Jones, Director of Communications and Engagement**  
**Ed Williams, Director of Senedd Resources**  
**Matthew Richards, Head of the Legal Service**  
**Kate Innes, Chief Finance Officer**  
**Leanne Baker, Acting Chief People Officer**  
**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support**  
**Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office**  
**Elin Roberts, Clerk to Executive Board**  
**Phil Boshier**  
**Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation**  
**Alun Davidson, Constitutional Change Team Leader/Clerk**

Others in  
attendance:

## 1 Introduction

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

Commissioners were updated that a response to the management offer in relation to a cost-of-living payment, which had been proposed to TUS with Commissioner agreement, was expected on Tuesday.

### 1.b Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 1.c Minutes of the previous meeting 10 July 2023

Commissioners agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 10 July.

### 1.d Minutes of the previous meeting 15 August 2023

Commissioners agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 15 August.

### 1.e Minutes of the previous meeting 6 September 2023

Commissioners agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 6 September.

## **2 Draft Budget 2024-25**

Commissioners were presented with the 2024-25 Draft Budget for agreement. Changes to the budget since the 6 September Commission meeting were highlighted. These included the operational and total budget requirement for 2024-25, ring-fenced provisions for Senedd Reform and Ways of Working programme costs, a minor change to the baseline staffing budget, consolidating a payment to be made to support staff and the Members' Pension scheme.

A further update was provided including in relation to areas where it was known change could be expected but where detail would not be available within the timing parameters of the requirements on the Commission to lay the budget. These included work to be undertaken by the IRB on payments to MSS/MS, and support staff salaries. It was recognised that these would potentially have to be dealt with through the supplementary budget processes once the detail became available if the budget assumptions were insufficient.

Commissioners discussed the significance of having to balance the delivery of substantial change programmes alongside the challenge to provide appropriately for BAU and requested further information be provided to the next meeting to inform prioritisation considerations and policy decisions in regard of income generation.

Commissioners also requested brief notes to set out analysis of the Welsh Block and to provide information about contract management which had led to cost savings, which had been discussed in relation to photocopiers.

Commissioners noted the Finance Committee's Statement of Principles (no change from 2019) and the letter sent from the Minister for Finance and Local Government to the Chair of the Finance Committee.

Commissioners approved the 2024-25 Draft Budget to be laid, subject to the adjustments discussed.

### **3 Medium Term Resourcing Framework**

Commissioners received the draft Medium-Term Resourcing Framework for the period 2024-25 to 2026-27, and considered the relationship between this approach to longer term more detailed planning and the annual budget setting cycle.

Commissioners discussed the approach to the medium-term and the framework as a tool to plan for and effectively manage and respond to any gap between required and available resourcing in a strategic manner. The framework would set out forecast budget requirements for 2025-26 and 2026-27, set on the basis of a 'managed growth scenario' within the Medium-Term Financial Plan; propose a Commission Target Establishment each financial year as part of the Workforce Plan, as the primary strategic tool for aligning resourcing priorities with resource availability; and adopt a staff development strategy through the Workforce Plan to ensure people resourcing is aligned with priorities.

Commissioners noted that the document was intended as an operational document to inform the setting of the Commission's annual budget and its internal priorities. They reflected on the relationship to the current year cost saving exercise and requested a further iteration of work be undertaken to identify areas for discussion by the Commission at their next meeting in relation to prioritisation of service provision, cost saving and income generation.

Commissioners discussed staff wellbeing and the tools available to support this. They welcomed information about the new EAP provision that was about to commence for Commission staff, Members and their staff. They also considered a number of specific details and requested a note about telephony and arrangements for the disposal of ICT equipment.

Commissioners noted the executive summary of the Medium-Term Resourcing Framework (MTRF), on the basis of the further work to be undertaken.

### **4 Senedd Reform (oral update)**

Commissioners were provided an oral update following the introduction of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill. They were informed that the Bill's provisions had been largely as expected, broadly in line with the recommendations of the Special Purpose Committee and/or Business Committee, though there were a few provisions included that Officials had not had awareness of previously (e.g. a duty placed on the Llywydd relating to a review of job-sharing offices at the start of the Seventh Senedd).

Provisions included increasing the size of the Senedd to 96 Members; increasing the legislative limit on Welsh Government Ministers; increasing the maximum number of Deputy Presiding Officers who may be elected from within the Senedd to two; changing the Senedd's electoral system so that all Members are elected via a closed proportional list system, with votes translated into seats via the D'Hondt formula; and repurposing and renaming the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales (LDBCW), including

providing it with the functions necessary to establish new Senedd constituencies and to undertake ongoing reviews of Senedd constituency boundaries.

Commissioners were informed that additional provisions included:

- returning the normal length of time between Senedd ordinary general elections to four years;
- requiring candidates to, and Members of, the Senedd to be resident in Wales;
- a review of the operation and effect of the new legislative provisions following the 2026 and 2030 elections; and
- a mechanism for the Senedd's consideration of job-sharing of offices relating to the Senedd, in the Seventh Senedd.

Within the timetable for consideration of the Bill the Commission would give evidence to the Finance Committee on 11 October and to the Reform Bill Committee on 26 October.

## **5 Ways of Working - Siambr 26 Project Design Development**

Commissioners were advised of the project and work underway to develop the preferred option and design for an increased Siambr for 96 Members for the Seventh Senedd.

They agreed the high level vision and scope for the project, to enable the procurement of design and architectural services to commence in October, on the basis that exploratory work should consider in a broad way possibilities within the boundaries of a circular parliament, and that accessibility requirements to be included in the specification and tenders for design and architectural services should go beyond physical accessibility issues.

Commissioners noted the planned work for the project and welcomed that a reference group of Members would be involved in what would be an iterative process which would return to the Commission for decisions, at the appropriate time.

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

Commissioners were provided with an update of the issues raised through the consultation exercise on the use of the estate; and noted a brief summary of the progress already made by the Senedd Events and Venues Team in reviewing many aspects of the process linked to the use of the estate. A further paper would be provided later in the year outlining potential solutions to some of the issues raised.

## **7 Papers to note:**

### **7.a Planning Matters Update**

Commissioners noted the recent planning applications reviewed and the productive engagement with developers and Planning officers; and the planned Consultation during summer and autumn 2023 by the Local Authority in relation to the Local Development Plan for Cardiff Bay.

### **7.b FM letter to Llywydd re: Senedd Reform Costs**

Commissioners noted the letter received from the First Minister relating to cost estimates for Senedd Reform.

#### 7.c ARAC Minutes 12 June

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

#### 7.d Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

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

### **8 Any other business**

No other business was raised.

In the period since the last meeting the Commission had, by majority, supported the management offer in relation to a cost-of-living payment, which had then been proposed to TUS.