



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Wednesday, 6 September 2023**

Time: **10.30 - 11.55**

Minutes: SC(6)2023(8) Sp

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**

Others in  
attendance:

## 1 Introduction

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

## 1.b Declarations of interest

Adam Price MS identified that his brother is an employee of the Senedd Commission.

## **2 Cost of Living payment proposal 2023-24**

Following the Commission's in principle decision to make a cost of living payment in the current financial year, Commissioners were updated about a meeting between officials and the TUS which had taken place on 5 September. It was explained that the position had moved beyond what had been reflected in the papers and that the Clerk was requesting an opportunity for the Executive Board to respond to trade union requests for further information before agreeing the in-year payment.

Commissioners discussed a desire to prioritise responding to the needs of the lowest paid and reflected that over the summer period it had not been possible for full involvement in the processes to be achieved. They considered the implications of services that would be reduced, for example ICT support, training and interparliamentary activity and new activity that would not be supported as anticipated. They also expressed concerns about the impacts on the wellbeing of staff that would be caused by the cost saving measures. One Commissioner remained opposed to making a payment beyond the existing pay deal.

The Commission agreed that Officials continue negotiations with the collective Trade Union Side (made up of representatives from PCS, FDA, and Prospect) for a short period. Negotiation would be based upon the affordability of the payment and the impact that it will have upon staff and services to settle the dispute. Commissioners suggested that Ken Skates, as the relevant portfolio holder, be involved in the process if that would be helpful. They requested a brief note be prepared for Commissioners to take to their groups as an update about the steps being taken, and the Llywydd requested Commissioners provide feedback from their groups subsequently.

The Clerk set out that as Accounting Officer she would intend to write to the Finance Committee about the implications once the position was finalised as the variation in the use of funds would be significant.

## **3 Draft Commission Budget 2024-25**

Commissioners considered work undertaken as preparation for the final draft Commission budget for 2024-25, which would be presented for final decision at the meeting on 25 September.

Commissioners discussed and provided views in relation to:

- staffing costs and cost of living crisis impact;
- the operational and total budget requirement for 2024-25, budget pressure cost reductions and savings required to be identified through the service planning process and corporate review;
- the Medium Term Resourcing Framework (MTRF) and future year budget estimates;

- ringfencing costs relating to programmes which respond to requested work to be undertaken by the Senedd and the Finance Committee i.e. Senedd Reform, Ways of Working, and any future Cost of Living Payment;
- the Determination and support for the Remuneration Board.

The Clerk set out that the recommendation of the Executive Board was not to incorporate funding for outcome of a future pay deal, based on the current PCS pay negotiation position, in the core budget. The Executive Board recommended accelerating discussions about the next pay deal. Commissioners confirmed the bases for the development of the final draft Commission budget for 2024-25, including preparation on the basis of the existing pay deal. The final draft budget would be reviewed and agreed at the next meeting and laid thereafter in accordance with the requirements of Standing Orders. They agreed that it would be helpful to write to the Finance Committee to provide additional information for the scrutiny of the budget.