



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 15 July 2024**

Time: **10.00 – 11.45**

Minutes: SC(6)2024(5)

Commission  
Members:

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

Officials present:

**Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk**  
**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:

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

## **1 Introduction**

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

### 1.b Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.c Minutes of the previous meeting

Commissioners agreed the Minutes of the meeting on 17 June.

## **2 ARAC / Remuneration Committee Annual Reports**

### 2.a Audit & Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2023-24

Bob Evans, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, was welcomed to the meeting and presented the committee's Annual Report, outlining the work that it had undertaken in the year and summarising its findings and conclusions.

He highlighted how impressed the committee had been by the interactions they had had through the year, appreciating the engagement by new Commissioner Hefin David and noting that a high level of performance had been achieved not only by the senior team, but notably by staff at Head of Service level and below. He indicated that the Committee had introduced a new way of working to strengthen its strategic approach and let Commissioners know that they would be continuing to focus on delivery issues following the Senedd Reform legislation, resourcing, projects and cyber security.

The Commissioners noted that the Report would be published on the Committee's pages of the Senedd website in due course.

### 2.b Remuneration Committee Annual Report 2023-24

The Commissioners noted the Remuneration Committee's Report, which outlined the role of the Committee and its findings and conclusions from the work it had done during the year.

## **3 Siambr 2026 design update**

The Commission received an update on the works undertaken to date following the appointment of the architectural services supplier, Rogers Stirk Harbour Partnership (RSHP), to work with the Senedd Commission on the Siambr 2026 project.

This included the design for an increased Siambr to accommodate 96 Members and the next stages of the project, ICT options for the Siambr and security considerations.

Commissioners noted the work undertaken to date on the design for an increased Siambr to accommodate 96 Members and the next stages of the project.

They agreed to engage more widely with Members of their groups in relation to the public gallery glazing, noting the contents of the paper in relation to the associated security issues.

They approved the ICT working assumptions set out in the paper and that the Reference Group's preference for Options 2 and 3 be reflected in worked-up detail ahead of future decision making, discounting Options 1 and 4 for further work.

Commissioners agreed that Siambr Hywel be used as a temporary Siambr to house Plenary whilst work to adapt the Senedd Siambr is undertaken, and that during the period concerned Siambr Hywel would not be used for any activities other than Plenary.

## **4 Ty Hywel 2026 Options Update**

Commissioners received a summary of work completed on the Ty Hywel 26 project to provide parliamentary accommodation for 96 Members, and the next stages of plans over the coming months.

Commissioners noted the update, the ongoing dialogue with Welsh Government and media stakeholders, the intended changes to accommodation used by Commission services (including planned implementation activity) and the update on the plans and options for additional Member offices and next steps.

Further consultation would take place following Summer recess with final proposals for the new Member Offices being submitted to Commission during the early stages of the Autumn term for consideration and approval.

## **5 Commission Budget**

### **5.a Pay negotiations update**

Commissioners noted the progressed position of the formal negotiations between Commission Management Side (CMS) and Commission Trades Union Side (TUS) on the pay framework for Commission staff as from April 2025.

TUS had responded to the formal pay offer in 26 June asking to the Commission to increase its offer.

Commissioners considered options that would ensure that the necessary resourcing for the preferred option would be built into the final draft budget for 2025/26, which had to be agreed by the Commission in September 2024. The budget required for an agreed pay deal would form part of the Commission's annual budget, and be scrutinised by Finance Committee.

They considered the further options presented and agreed the recommended option 3 - 3.5% in Y1, 3.25% in Y2 and 3% in Y3. This responds to the TUS ask to increase the Commission offer, yet is prudent from a budgeting perspective. The tapering both recognises and mirrors the projected fall in inflation, providing a pay settlement and certainty for the Commission for 3 years.

### **5.b Commission draft budget 2025-26**

Commissioners considered a high-level outline of the early draft budget 2025-26, based on the budget planning assumptions agreed by the Commission at the 29 April meeting.

The outline included an early indication of budgetary requirements, set out emerging issues along with a clear indication of further work required.

Key emerging issues include potential level of growth across the budget including BAU; the gap in project funding and the emerging list of life cycle maintenance replacement required for 2025-26 which is still being considered along with the timing of the supplementary budget.

The information provided reflected the uncertainty created by the delay to the Welsh Government 1st Supplement Budget for 2024-25 Motion, which would likely mean the

outcome of the process would be unknown at the point the Commission is required to lay its draft budget. The consequences of this were anticipated to be that the Commission may need to consider presenting a budget that takes account of this uncertainty, and would likely be unable to conclude pay negotiations until late Autumn.

Commissioners noted the update on the 2025-26 budget preparation and agreed that they were content for the detail of the budget to be developed as outlined, over the summer.

The agreed draft budget will be laid in line with the requirements of Standing Orders.

## **6 Official Languages Scheme Review**

Commissioners considered a paper that presented some ideas relating to the official languages of the Senedd and Senedd Commission, prompted by reflections of the Commissioner with responsibility for the Official Languages Scheme, following a commitment given to continue to monitor and look for ways to remove obstacles to the use of the Welsh language in Senedd proceedings.

Commissioners noted the package of practical changes currently being discussed with Committee Chairs and teams and in relation to Committee meetings. They also noted assurances that preparatory work for Senedd reform by the Commission will pay due attention to matters relating to language.

Commissioners agreed to carry out a survey/language audit to understand how to better support Members and their staff who are Welsh speakers and learners to use their spoken and written Welsh language skills, as included in the Official Languages Scheme Annual Report.

They also agreed to consider the current ethos, promotion and service provision in relation to the Senedd's official languages along with the supporting legal framework as part of preparation for the Seventh Senedd.

## **7 Dignity and Respect Update**

Commissioners received an update on the work that had taken place since the Commission considered a review of the Dignity and Respect framework and agreed a number of recommendations, in June '23.

Commissioners noted the progress update on activity undertaken since then and the results of the recent dignity and respect survey of third party building users.

They agreed the actions set out in the report, and that the survey report be shared with the Standards of Conduct Committee, the Commissioner for Standards and the Independent Remuneration Board, with an anticipation that the report will be published by the Committee, accompanied by appropriate internal and external communications.

Commissioners noted the updates on the work of the Standards of Conduct Committee and the Independent Remuneration Board. They agreed to adopt the anonymous data collection and monitoring mechanism for Dignity and Respect issues and noted that there are implications of the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023. In particular they stated the importance of MS being aware of their responsibilities as employers.

## **8 Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24**

Commissioners approved the final Annual Report and Accounts for '23-24, subject to any minor corrections or edits.

The Report would be signed and laid by the Auditor General for Wales and published online on specific Annual Report webpages.

## **9 Broadcasting Framework**

At the Commission's request, one of the Commission's Independent Advisors had been asked to undertake a review to aid the Senedd Commission to develop a broadcasting protocol to provide clarity on the channels to be available on the Senedd's internal television system into the future.

Commissioners received the information reported and accepted the policy approach recommended by the Independent Advisor. This would mean that the Senedd Commission's Triple Play system would include only those channels which have public service obligations: BBC, ITV, Channel 4, Channel 5 and S4C. Commissioners agreed one addition to this provision, which was to include Sky News as an additional channel to ensure a plurality of news programmes.

## **10 Papers to note:**

### **10.a Establishment of Senedd 26 Change Board**

Commissioners noted an update on how, in the context of the passage of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act 2024, the Commission is responding strategically to the governance pressures deriving from the context of a complex delivery challenge, taut resourcing and highly visible, non-negotiable change milestones, whilst continuing to deliver its services to Members and the Senedd.

### **10.b Finance Committee Letter - update on Budget Protocol**

Commissioners noted a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office from the Finance Committee on proposed changes to the Budget Process Protocol and related Budget Procedures.

### **10.c Executive Board update (RAD decisions)**

Commissioners noted the summary of recent recruitment decisions.

## **11 Any other business**

None