



Venue: **Hybrid - Digital**

Date: **Monday, 2 June 2025**

Time: **10.30 – 12.00**

Minutes: SC(6)2025(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
Matthew Richards, Interim Director of Senedd Business
Ed Williams, Director of Senedd Resources
Leanne Baker, Chief People Officer
Lisa Bowkett, Chief Finance Officer, Senedd Commission
Jan Koziel, Head of Procurement
Laurian Hubbard, Head of Engagement, Head of Engagement
Craig Griffiths, Head of Members Business Support
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

There were no apologies.

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 28 April 2025.

2 Budget Building Blocks

Commissioners considered the main assumptions within the draft budget for 2026-27 with financial consequence, and what should be reflected within the budget submission to Finance Committee in October.

Commissioners gave their initial views on the basis on which the detailed Draft 2026/27 budget will be prepared; and confirmed that the working assumptions were appropriate.

The Draft Budget would be prepared for the Commission meeting in September, ahead of being laid.

3 Bay 2032 Update

Commissioners were provided with an update on the Bay 32 project, and noted the progress made.

4 Seventh Senedd Matters

Commissioners were provided with an overview of the issues likely to arise for the Senedd Commission from the Future Senedd Committee's report on Parliamentary Business in the Seventh Senedd.

In light of the request from the Future Senedd Committee, Commissioners noted that the Executive Board had agreed in-principle to establish a feasibility study on reintroducing a creche service, the details of which would be subject to further approvals in due course. Janet Finch Saunders MS requested that her opposition to a Commission-provided creche was noted.

Commissioners noted the summary and that papers to inform consideration of how the Commission might wish to respond will be provided at future meetings.

5 Education Review

Commissioners were provided with the findings of the Education service's review. The aim of the review was to understand if the current provision aligned with the Curriculum for Wales implementation, and to better understand the challenges faced by educators, the accessibility of our offer, and the real or perceived barriers that exist in engaging with our services.

Commissioners noted the future provision and by majority agreed:

- that all groups, including those within a 10-mile radius of the Senedd, should qualify for the travel subsidy;
- to continue with a priority booking process for Inbound Education Sessions from the academic year 2026/27 to be available for groups with higher percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals; and
- the recommended Option to implement a 50% rise in the travel subsidy.

6 Y Farchnad

Commissioners were presented with an evaluation of the event format of the Y Farchnad, which was launched in May 2024 as a pilot following discussion by Commissioners of a number of proposals for a more purposeful and effective use of the Senedd estate.

Commissioners considered the outcomes and agreed the recommended option, to make Y Farchnad a permanent offer following the success of the pilot, which will also assist in accommodating increased demand of meeting rooms as the Senedd expands.

7 Responses to IRB Determination Consultation Part 2

Commissioners considered a draft response to Consultation Part Two of the Independent Remuneration Board's Review of the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances for the Seventh Senedd.

Commissioners agreed the response to the IRB's consultation; and noted the response that will be sent from the Accounting Officer.

The letter would be provided to the IRB. Responses are not routinely published by the Board, although summarised responses or views may be included in the published report on the annual review.

8 Armed Forces Covenant

At the meeting of Commissioners on 24 March, it was agreed that the HR Service undertake a review of the implications of signing the Armed Forces Covenant and/or the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. This was in response to the request by Samuel Kurtz MS on behalf of the Welsh Conservative Group.

Commissioners received an outline of further considerations to assist them to make a decision about whether the Senedd Commission should do so.

Commissioners agreed the recommendation that, based on the information provided, the Commission sign the Armed Forces Covenant, but refrain from committing to the Employer Recognition Scheme for the time being due to relevant HR policies already being in place.

A letter would be sent to Sam Kurtz MS to notify him of the decision.

9 Papers to note:

9.a Sickness Absence Policies

Commissioners noted the new policies to support effective management of Commission staff absence, following review and replacement of the Attendance Management Policy, which omitted key procedural steps in how long-term sickness absence should be managed. The policies will be published and implemented for Commission staff. The Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee also requested a copy of the long-term sickness policy in their Recommendation 5 of the Scrutiny of the Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24.

9.b MTRF 2026-27 to 2028-29

Commissioners noted the updated Medium-Term Resourcing Framework (MTRF), approved by the Executive Board on 15 May 2025, reflecting Commission agreement during 28 April meeting to amend the outline timetable for the review of certain contracted-out services.

9.c Governance for Support Staff Handbook

Commissioners noted the governance process for approval of the template policies (other than those mandated by the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd) contained in the Support Staff Handbook provided to Members of the Senedd, to support them in their role as employers of support staff.

9.d Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

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

10 Any other business

In the period since the last meeting Commissioners had agreed

- the draft Commission Annual Report narrative circulated for review and feedback on 14 May 2025
- the proposals paper circulated on 20 May 2025, for the scope and optimal method of delivery for the gender-sensitive parliament audit, led by Joyce Watson (as agreed at its meeting on 25 October 2024).

They also noted :

Letters from Remuneration Board in response to Hefin David on behalf of the Commission, the Llywydd, and the Chief Executive, dated 10 April.