

# The Assembly Commission

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Meeting Venue: **Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Tŷ Hywel**

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Meeting date: **Wednesday, 18 June 2014**

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Meeting time: **12.15 – 13.00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



**Minutes:** AC(4)2014(7)

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**Committee Members:**

**Dame Rosemary Butler AM (Chair)**  
**Peter Black AM**  
**Sandy Mewies AM**  
**Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM**

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**Officials present:**

**Claire Clancy, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly (Official)**

**Dave Tosh, Director of Information and Communications Technology (Official)**

**Craig Stephenson, Chief Adviser to the Presiding Officer (Official)**

**Gareth Watts (Official)**

**Carys Evans, Principal Commission Secretary (Official)**

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**Others in attendance:**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction and apologies

Angela Burns AM and David Melding AM had sent their apologies.

### 1.2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 8 May meeting were agreed.

## 2 Review of Assembly Commission Effectiveness

In line with corporate governance best practice and the Assembly Commission's governance principles a review of the Commission's effectiveness had been completed between January and April 2014. This had assessed progress against the recommendations made in the first review, presented in January 2013, and identified some actions for the future. The exercise had been carried out by the Commission's Head of Internal Audit, Gareth Watts.

The review found that the Commission had continued to make progress.

Commissioners had displayed effective oversight of significant projects such as ICT Futures and the Machine Translation project. The development of tools such as the key performance indicators had resulted in a sharper strategic focus, greater accountability and transparency.

Individual Commissioners had demonstrated a strong command of their respective portfolios, taking the lead in discussion of their areas of responsibility and forging effective working relationships with staff operating in those areas. As the members of a governing board, Commissioners had felt that they were able to take a corporate view on matters and give clarity to their party groups and the public about the decisions taken.

Commissioners accepted the proposals in the paper, including the development of an action plan for implementing the report's recommendations. It was felt that the review had been a valuable exercise in identifying where the Commission had worked well and opportunities for the forthcoming 12 months. A further review would be carried out next year. Gareth Watts was thanked for completing the review.

## 3 Official Languages Scheme Annual Compliance Report

In accordance with the National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Act 2012, the Commission is required to produce an Official Languages Scheme. Each year the Commission must lay before the Assembly a report setting out how it has given effect to the Scheme during the reporting year. The report for 2013-14 would be laid before the Assembly for debate on 16 July.

Commissioners noted that good progress had been made throughout the year and commended staff for their achievements in these areas, including:

- the launch of the Microsoft Translator;
- developing different ways to support Members in their committee work;
- awareness training for all Assembly Commission staff;
- the work carried out by the official languages scheme coordinators in each service area; and
- enhanced support for Members' bilingual constituency casework.

The priorities for the forthcoming year to further embed good practice across the organisation were agreed. Commissioners emphasised the importance of the Scheme in supporting their aim of making the Assembly a bilingual organisation and leading the way in developing bilingual services. Best practice should be shared where possible so that others could learn from the Assembly's experience of supporting a bilingual workforce.

## 4 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee update

Claire Clancy provided a summary of the Assembly Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting on 9 June. The following matters had been discussed:

- Internal audit activity report, including working information governance and business continuity.
- The Committee's annual report and accounts.
- Corporate risks.
- The Commission's developing approach to programme management.

The Chair of the Committee would attend the July Commission meeting to present the Committee's Annual Report.

## **5 Any other business**

Commissioners reviewed the Commission's Records Retention Policy and agreed to an addition to deal with circumstances when the impact of compliance with the Policy becomes unreasonable and disproportionate.

**Secretariat**

**June 2014**