

Concise Minutes – Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Conference Room 4B – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: Thursday, 26 January
2017

Meeting time: 09.30 – 14.54

WRB(08)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board Members:	Rt Hon Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair) Trevor Reaney Michael Redhouse Dame Jane Roberts
Officials:	Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation Rebecca Hardwicke, Members' Business Support Martin Jennings, Research Service Jan Koziel, Head of Procurement Carys Rees, Members' Business Support
Committee Staff:	Daniel Collier, Acting Clerk Sian Giddins, Deputy Clerk



1 Chair's introduction

1.1 The Chair welcomed the Board members to the meeting.

1.2 The Board agreed the minute of the meetings on 16 and 17 November 2016 subject to minor amendments.

1.3 The Board noted its work programme for the remainder of 2017.

1.4 The Board agreed the dates for its meetings up to March 2018.

1.5 The Board agreed to arrange meetings with the AM Representative Group and the AMSS Representative Group.

1.6 Dame Jane Roberts declared an interest for item 3 as she is a member of the governing body of the Institute for Public Policy for Wales.

2 Item for decision: Consider the outline of the review into identifying barriers and incentives to running for election to the National Assembly for Wales

2.1 The Board considered a paper which outlined the parameters of the review into identifying barriers and incentives to running for election to the National Assembly for Wales, in particular the exercise to tender research into the field.

2.2 The Board agreed to seek a summary of the research which has already been undertaken into identifying barriers and incentives to running for election.

2.3 The Board agreed to embark on a procurement exercise to identify the incentives and barriers for anyone wishing to run for election to the Assembly. They also agreed the:

- scope of the exercise should be on the remuneration package which is within its remit;
- tender should be sent directly to a number of potential candidates and published on the Assembly's websites;
- application and interview process; and
- successful candidate would need to provide the Board with detailed methodology of their proposed review and provide an overview of the work they have conducted at an appropriate time of the review.

Action points:

- The Secretariat to prepare a summary of previous research undertaken in the field.
- The Secretariat to amend the tender documents as agreed by the Board and issue accordingly.
- The Board agreed that Jane would take the lead on this issue. The Board also agreed it would consider and agree the final tender document, the list of invitees to issue the tender to, the shortlist to invite to interview and the successful applicant outside the Board meeting.

3 Item for decision: Consider the outline of the review of the underpinning principles and effectiveness of the Determination

3.1 The Board agreed the parameters of the review of the underpinning principles and effectiveness of the Determination would focus on the current financial package available to Members.

3.2 The Board agreed to issue tailored questionnaires to both AMs and AMSSs to seek their views on underpinning principles and effectiveness of the Determination. Each questionnaire will focus on the relevant sections of the Determination for their role including any new provisions introduced for the Fifth Assembly.

3.3 The Board also agreed this work would be informed through its regular formal and informal communications with both representative groups.

3.4 The Board agreed the timescale for this piece of work.

Action points:

- The Secretariat to prepare a final questionnaire for the Board to consider outside a formal meeting.
- Subject to Board approval, the Secretariat should issue the questionnaires.
- The Secretariat to provide a summary of the responses at the next meeting.

4 Item for decision: Annual review of Determination 2017–18

Assembly Members Support Staff salaries 2017–18

4.1 The Board agreed to propose an increase in AMSS salaries for 2017–18 by 2.1% in line with the provisional 2016 ASHE median earning in Wales which were released in October 2016.

4.2 The Board agreed to use the ASHE figure this year to ensure a consistent approach with last year's pay review. However, the Board agreed to continue to monitor the appropriateness of this method of indexation.

4.3 The Board agreed the closing date for the consultation on AMSS pay would be 10 March.

Action Points:

- The Secretariat to issue the consultation on AMSS pay.
- The Secretariat to circulate the work undertaken by the previous Board on this subject matter.
- The Secretariat to prepare a summary of the responses received for the next meeting.

Office costs for 2017-18

4.4 The Board considered the various factors which affect office costs for Members including location, specialist equipment etc.

4.5 The Board noted the last increase in office cost was based on CPI rates. The Board agreed to use the same principle again this year. However, this will be revisited when the Board undertakes its review of the effectiveness of the Determination.

4.6 The Board agreed to propose an increase in the office costs allowance by 1.2% in line with the CPI estimate as at November 2016.

4.7 The Board agreed the closing date for the consultation on office costs would be 10 March.

Action Points:

- The Secretariat to issue the consultation on office costs.
- The Secretariat to prepare a summary of the responses received for the next meeting.

Residential Accommodation Expenditure

4.8 The Board considered the factors which impact the Residential Accommodation Expenditure (RAE) for outer area Members. The Board agreed further information was needed before consulting on the rate of RAE for outer area Members and will return to the issue in due course.

4.9 The Board considered two outer area subsidiary allowances for 2017–18. The Board agreed to maintain the existing annual amount of:

- £882 to cover essential repairs for those Members entitled to claim mortgage interest; and
- £1,440 for Members with dependents routinely residing with them at their Cardiff property.

4.10 The Board agreed to revisit the issues when it carries out its review into the effectiveness of the Determination.

Action points:

- The Secretariat to collate further information on the cost of renting in Cardiff Bay and to circulate the findings to the Board in order for any consultation to be issued ahead of the next Board meeting. The Board agreed that should it wish to amend the residential allowances for 2017–18 this would be agreed electronically outside of the Board's meeting.

5 Papers to note

5.1 The Board noted the Wales Governance Centre and Electoral reform Society report 'Reshaping the Senedd – How to elect a more effective Assembly'.