

# Assembly Commission

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Venue: **Tŷ Hywel**

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Date: **Monday, 4 June 2018**

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Time: **12.35 – 14.20**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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## Minutes:

Commission  
Members:

**Elin Jones AM (Chair)**  
**Suzy Davies AM**  
**Caroline Jones AM**  
**Adam Price AM**  
**Joyce Watson AM**

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Officials present:

**Dave Tosh, Director of Resources**  
**Craig Stephenson, Director of Commission Services**  
**Non Gwilym, Head of Communications**  
**Nia Morgan, Director of Finance**  
**Rebecca Hardwicke, Members' HR Business Partner**  
**Carys Evans, Head of Member Liaison and Professional Development**  
**John Chick, Head of Members' Business Support**  
**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support**  
**Rhuanedd Richards, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd**  
**Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office**

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Others in  
attendance:

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## 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction and apologies

Apologies were received from Manon Antoniazzi.

## 1.2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 30 April were agreed.

## **2 Events programme for the Fifth Assembly**

Proposals for the Commission's events programme for 2018-2019, and the approach for the longer term were outlined to Commissioners.

Commissioners discussed developing plans for a democracy festival scheduled for May-September 2019, and the successful launch of the registration drive for the first Youth Parliament election. Commissioners commented on the positive engagement opportunities this was providing.

Commissioners agreed the proposed changes to the events programme including the Assembly's presence at the major summer events. The Commission agreed to:

- invest in the Senedd@ model;
- decommission the bus;
- maintain investment in key corporate events on the estate;
- develop a proposal to establish a citizen panel on a permanent basis; and
- develop plans for a democracy festival in 2019.

## **3 Budget Strategy and Commission Budget 2019-20**

Commissioners were updated on the progress of preparations of the Assembly Commission Budget for 2019-20. Their deliberations included the Finance Committee inquiry report and the Remuneration Board consultation, and an accounting change for next financial year, relating to leases, was outlined.

Commissioners noted the outcome of the Remuneration Board consultation; and indicative priority projects to be included in the budget document. They also agreed to respond to the Finance Committee recommendations and provided a further steer for continuing work on the budget plans for 2019-20.

The draft budget will be laid following the Commission's final consideration in September.

## **4 Members' Office related costs funded centrally by the Assembly Commission – note**

Earlier in the year, Commissioners had considered budgeting arrangements for office related costs which are funded by the Commission, rather than the Determination.

Given the issues raised at that meeting the proposal made to Commissioners was that that a full financial year be allocated to monitoring expenditure. Commissioners confirmed that they wished to move towards more transparency and accountability of spend directly driven by Members, and that working with Members would be a useful step in this process.

Commissioners commented on a draft note for Members in order that it could be finalised and shared with Members.

## **5 AM and AMSS survey results 2018**

Commissioners were provided with a summary of the 2018 Assembly Member and Support Staff Survey.

The level of engagement in the survey from Members and support staff is lower than it has been for some time. Scores don't tend to vary greatly from one year to the next but the qualitative information gathered provides useful information for service improvement.

Commissioners agreed to share the findings of the survey with Members and their staff later this month.

Commissioners agreed to introduce changes to the way feedback is sought from Members. These included:

- continuing with an annual survey, but to collect only the quantitative data year on year to allow for comparison and performance monitoring;
- carrying out a fuller survey before the end of this Assembly, to assist the Commission with its planning for the sixth Assembly;
- targeting newly elected Members early in the next Assembly;
- exploring different ways of communicating with Members and their staff about the services provided and gathering feedback about these.

The paper will not be published. High level detail will be included in the Annual Report as part of KPI reporting.

## **6 Future accommodation need – update**

Commissioners noted the latest update about the ongoing discussions on meeting future accommodation needs of the Assembly and Commission.

## **7 Draft Annual Official Languages Scheme Compliance Report**

Commissioners reviewed the first annual report on the Official Languages Scheme (OLS) for the fifth Assembly, it covers the work undertaken to embed the new Scheme across the organisation.

The report identifies achievements made during the past year, highlighting case studies, examples of our work and areas for improvement. The report also identifies areas that should be prioritised during the coming Assembly year, along with actions arising from feedback or complaints.

As Portfolio Holder, Adam Price wished to record thanks for the contributions made by staff and unions to achieving progress, particularly in the linguistic courtesy

framework. He commented how useful a process it had been to report in this way for the first time.

Key achievements for the reporting period include:

- The establishment of a new recruitment system which will allow us to increase the basic level of Welsh Language Skills across the organisation;
- The further development and implementation of a bespoke and tailored language skills training programme for Assembly Members, their support staff and Assembly Commission staff;
- A full review of all service level language plans;
- Work on developing methods of identifying Welsh speakers and learners across the organisation.

Feedback from Assembly Members and their Support Staff and the public and regular monitoring have allowed us to identify areas for improvement. We will use this information to better target resources and change working practices.

Areas for improvement include:

- to develop and implement a more formal and robust monitoring system;
- to look at ways of maintaining up-to-date information on language skills in a reportable format, either through our HR and payroll system or through our performance management system;
- to provide regular opportunities to refresh or develop an understanding of the Scheme and the nature of bilingual working;
- seek opportunities to collaborate on the development of emerging language technology and tools, including developments in the field of speech-to-text technology.

Commissioners approved the draft Report. The Commission is required to lay the finalised report, it will then be debated in plenary during July 2018.

## **8 Commission cleaning contract**

The current cleaning contract is due to expire towards the end of this year. Commissioners were provided with options for the future provision of cleaning services. They continued to explore their on-going interest in issues around Terms and Conditions for staff employed through Commission contracts and working with contractors on shared values.

Commissioners agreed to return to this matter at their next meeting, in order that a decision can be made on the preferred option for the cleaning contract in advance of the current contract extension expiring in November 2018.

## **9 Papers to note:**

### **9.1 Remuneration Committee annual report**

Commissioners noted the Remuneration Committee's annual report.

### **9.2 Executive Board update (RAD decisions)**

Commissioners noted the routine update provided to each Commission meeting.

### 9.3 ACARAC minutes April 2018

Commissioners noted the minutes of the 23 April ACARAC meeting.

## **10 Any other business**

- Electronic Payslips for AMs and AMSS – Commissioners agreed to a proposal to move away from paper to primarily electronic issue of payslips. This would bring AMs/AMSS into line with the system for despatching payslips to Commission staff. The plan would be to roll out to Members in a phased way over the summer months, with MBS working with AM's offices. The roll-out would include an 'opt-out' option for those who strongly prefer to continue to have paper payslips at this time.
- Independent Advisors – Commissioners were advised that the advertisements seeking to appoint independent advisers to the Commission are currently live.