

Assembly Commission

Venue: **Conference Room 4B - Tŷ Hywel**

Date: **Monday, 15 July 2019**

Time: **12.30 - 14.30**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(5)2019(5)

Commission
Members:

Elin Jones AM (Chair)
Siân Gwenllïan AM
David J Rowlands AM
Joyce Watson AM

Officials present:

Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly
Siwan Davies, Director of Assembly Business
Craig Stephenson, Director of Engagement
Dave Tosh, Director of Resources
Nia Morgan, Director of Finance
Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation
Tom Jackson, Clerk/Bill Manager
Lowri Williams, Head of Human Resources and Inclusion
Holly Pembridge, Head of Diversity and Inclusion
Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support
Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office
Elin Roberts, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd

Others in
attendance:

Robert (Bob) Evans, Independent Advisor

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and apologies

Bob Evans, Chair of the Assembly Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, was welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Suzy Davies.

1.2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 10 June were agreed.

2 ACARAC annual report

Bob Evans presented the Assembly Commission Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report to Commissioners. He highlighted a number of aspects of work the Committee had focused on in the previous year and indicated their conclusion that the Commission's governance arrangements are strong, robust and reliable.

He commented on the finalisation of the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts, providing assurance as to its readiness. With a forward look, he observed that the period ahead is likely to continue to be challenging, and that retaining the flexibility and agility of the Commission's staff will be valuable.

Commissioners noted the ACARAC Annual Report.

3 Annual report and accounts

Commissioners agreed the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts covering 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

They noted that one matter had arisen since their previous considerations, relating to a very recent judgement in the Supreme Court, which had impacted on the Assembly Members' Pension Scheme liability included within the Commission accounts.

The report would be signed by the Auditor General for Wales and laid before the end of the summer term.

4 Contract staff

Commissioners discussed information relating to the minimum hourly pay for contract staff, who are paid the current Living Wage Foundation rate.

They agreed in principle to link the minimum rate of pay for contractors to that of directly employed staff and asked for budget implications to be investigated for consideration as part of the ongoing budget strategy deliberations.

5 Assembly reform - update

Commissioners considered two main themes in relation to Assembly reform. Firstly, they discussed issues around the Electoral Commission financing and accountability in the context of the Senedd and Election Wales Bill. Commissioners were updated on the work

carried out to date and following discussion agreed to continue working with Welsh Government and others to refine the policy and legislative proposals.

Secondly, Commissioners considered recommendations made by the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee and Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee in respect of the Senedd and Elections (Wales) Bill. They discussed responses to the recommendations, and agreed to consider further the issue of potential disqualification of Commission Staff from standing for election.

6 Draft annual Diversity and Inclusion report

Commissioners agreed the suite of reports detailing activities related to diversity and inclusion over the period from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. They supported the proposal to publish the workforce and recruitment diversity data monitoring report and an equal pay audit and gender pay gap report as separate reports, to enhance transparency.

Commissioners welcomed that the Commission would be amongst the first public sector institutions in Wales to publish some of the data.

7 Dignity and Respect update

Commissioners were provided with a update on the recently published Dignity and Respect survey results. They discussed the positive direction of travel and were supportive of the plans to launch a 'call it out' campaign, signing up to pledge their personal support. They discussed the importance of giving people at all levels confidence to understand where behaviours are inappropriate.

8 Memorial proposal

Commissioners agreed a proposal for a memorial to Captain Archibald Dickson which had been submitted by Mick Antoniw, AM.

9 Papers to note:

9.1 20th anniversary update

Commissioners noted a further update on plans to mark the 20 year anniversary of devolution in Wales, between July – October 2019.

9.2 Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

Commissioners were provided with the routine update of recent RAD decisions.

9.3 ACARAC draft minutes June meeting

Commissioners noted the regular presentation of ACARAC meeting minutes.

10 Any other business

- Appointments – having been consulted in April, Commissioners were updated about the process to appoint to the post of Director of Communication and Engagement.

- Joyce Watson made reference to communication she had received from David Emery. Commissioners indicated that they were content for the current arrangements to remain unchanged.

In the period since the previous meeting Commissioners had agreed changes to the Visitor Code of Conduct.