

Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Meeting date: Thursday, 24 May 2018

Conference Room A - Tŷ Hywel

Meeting time: 09.01 - 15.16

WRB(16)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Rt Hon Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair) Ronnie Alexander Trevor Reaney Michael Redhouse Dame Jane Roberts
Officials:	Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business Matthew Richards, Head of Legal Services John Chick, Head of Members' Business Support Rebecca Hardwicke, Members' HR Business Partner Martin Jennings, Research Team Leader Craig Stephenson, Director of Commission Services
Committee Staff:	Lleu Williams, Clerk Sian Giddins, Deputy Clerk
Witnesses	Dr Huw Pritchard, Wales Governance Centre Professor Roger Awan-Scully, Wales Governance Centre

1 Chair's introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Board members to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Board congratulated Adrian Crompton on his recent appointment as the Auditor General for Wales. On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked Adrian for his work, guidance and support in his role as senior advisor to the Board.

- 1.3 The Chair welcomed Craig Stephenson to the meeting, who will support the Board in light of Adrian's departure.
- 1.4 The Board agreed the minute of the meeting on 15 March 2018.
- 1.5 The Board considered the provisions within the Determination with regards to exceptional expenses and agreed to return to the issue at its July meeting.
- 1.6 The Board considered its forward work programme and agreed to return to the issue once it has agreed the scope of the review of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly.

Action points:

The secretariat to publish the minute of the meeting on 15 March 2018.

2 Item for discussion: The report by the Wales Governance Centre on the barriers to and incentives for running for election to the Assembly

- 2.1. The Chair welcomed Professor Roger Awan-Scully and Dr Huw Pritchard, who were representing the Wales Governance Centre's research team for the review, to the meeting. Apologies were received from Dr Diana Stirbu who had been scheduled to discuss the report via video conference, but due to unforeseen technical problems wasn't able to participate.
- 2.2. The Board discussed the report with the research team.
- 2.3. During its private consideration of the report the Board considered the next steps of the review.

Action points

The secretariat to seek the views of the research team with regards to the Board's proposed next steps.

3 Item for discussion: Review of staffing support for Members: Consideration of evidence received

Consultation on the flexibility of the allowances for Assembly Members

- 3.1. The Board considered the consultation responses and agreed to implement the following changes with effect from 1 October 2018:
 - removal of the 111 hour cap on permanently employed staff;
 - allowing Members to vire up to 25 per cent from their Office Cost Allowance and the full funding from the Policy, Research and Communications Fund into their Staffing Allowance.
- 3.2. The Board agreed that as the changes to viring procedure would be implemented mid-way through the financial year, the amount available to vire would be pro-rata for the financial year 2018-19.
- 3.3. The Board agreed to calculate the remaining balance of the Staffing Allowance at actual cost rather than at total maximum cost as is the current practice. This change would be

implemented from 1 April 2019 to allow appropriate systems to be put in place to assist Members to manage any budget volatility.

- 3.4. The Board also agreed to publish the expenditure each individual Member makes on their Staffing Allowance at the end of each financial year. The publication of the information will follow the same procedure as is used to publish other expenditure against each individual Member. Should a Member only employ one member of support staff within the financial year that information will not be published.
- 3.5. The Board agreed to provide a summary of the consultation responses in any output it may produce at the end of the review.

Action points

The secretariat to:

- inform Members and support staff of the upcoming changes;
- prepare a revised Determination for publication in October 2018;
- prepare guidance for Members and support staff.

Consultation on the flexibility of the allowances for Political Parties

- 3.6. The Board considered the implications of these changes on the Support for Political Parties Allowance and agreed to consult on the following proposals:
 - budgeting the Support for Political Parties Allowance at actual pay points;
 - publishing the expenditure each individual Party makes on their Support for Political Parties Allowance;
 - removing the provision within the Determination which allows for the virement of funds from the Member's Staffing Allowance to the Support for Political Parties Allowance.
- 3.7. The closing date for the consultation would be 20 July 2018.
- 3.8. The Board agreed to return to the other issues raised during the review during the autumn term.

Action points

The secretariat to:

- issue and promote the consultation;
- prepare a summary of the responses for the Board's consideration.

4 Item for discussion: Reviewing the Board's effectiveness

- 4.1. The Board considered the issues raised as part of its mid-term review and agreed it was content the internal operation of the Board.

Action point

The Board to undertake a full review of its effectiveness towards the end of its term in office.

5 Item for discussion: Dignity and Respect Policy

- 5.1. The Board noted the revised Dignity and Respect Policy was approved by the Assembly during [Plenary on 16 May](#).
- 5.2. In light of the Policy being approved, the Board agreed to review the policies for which is responsible for. The Board agreed this work would be undertaken once the Standards of Conduct Committee has completed its [inquiry into the Review of the Code of Conduct for Assembly Members](#).

Action point

The secretariat to inform the representative groups of the work the Board will be undertaking.

6 Papers to note

- 6.1. The Board noted the correspondence from IPSA on its consultation on MPs' remuneration and IPSA's publication policy.

Action point:

The Board to respond to the letter to request that it be kept informed of the outcome of the work being undertaken given the direct relevance to its work.