

The Assembly Commission

Meeting Venue:
**Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor - Ty
Hywel**

Meeting date:
20 October 2011

Meeting time:
13:00

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



For further information please contact:

Helen Finlayson, 029 2089 8705
Secretariat

Agenda
AC(4)2011(5)

1. Introduction

Introduction and apologies

Declarations of interest

Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 1 - 3)

2. Bilingual services (Pages 4 - 9)

3. UNO benefits and savings six monthly review (Pages 10 - 26)

4. Support for Assembly Members: creation of an access fund (Pages 27 - 33)

5. Management Board report to the Commission (Pages 34 - 54)

6. Portfolio holder updates (Page 55)

7. Assembly Commission rolling programme (Pages 56 - 57)

8. Paper to note - Finance and Corporate Governance Adviser (Pages

58 - 60)

In line with the Commission's rules for conduct of business, this paper has been deemed not suitable for publication.

9. Paper to note - Motion to elect Members' Pension Scheme Trustees
(Pages 61 - 62)

10. Any other business

The Assembly Commission

Meeting Venue: **Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor - Ty Hywel**

Meeting date: **Thursday, 22 September 2011**

Meeting time: **11:00 - 12:30**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(4)2011(4)

Committee Members:

Rosemary Butler (Chair)
Peter Black
Angela Burns
Sandy Mewies
Rhodri Glyn Thomas

Officials present:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly (Official)
Dianne Bevan, Chief Operating Officer (Official)
Keith Bush, Director of Legal Services (Official)
Helen Finlayson, Secretariat (Official)
Steven O'Donoghue, Head of Assembly Resources (Official)
Nicola Callow, Head of Finance (Official)

Others in attendance:

Mair Barnes, Independent Adviser
David Melding, Deputy Presiding Officer

1. Introduction

1(i) Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

1(ii) Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1(iii) Minutes of meeting on 14 July 2011

Minutes of meeting on 14 July 2011

The minutes were formally agreed.

Matters arising from the meeting on 14 July 2011

A change had been requested to the Representation of the People (England and Wales) Regulations 2001 to include the Assembly Commission as a named body. The Commission would be informed once a response had been received from the Cabinet Office.

2. Draft budget 2012-13

The principles underlying the Commission's budget strategy, as agreed in July 2011, were that:

- i. the budget should include sufficient resources to allow the Commission to provide the services required by the Assembly as a legislature with full law-making powers;
- ii. the Assembly, as a growing institution, required a high standard of appropriately resourced support services to enable Members to undertake their roles; and
- iii. delivering efficient and value for money would continue to be vital.

The draft budget proposals to fund these priorities were discussed. The proposals had been arrived at through a mix of savings, reallocation of existing resources and budget growth phased over the next two years. Commissioners requested that savings, particularly those deriving from the Determination of the Remuneration Board, were highlighted more clearly, that evidence supporting proposed investment areas was strengthened, and that some redrafting was undertaken to improve the clarity of the language used in the document.

The proposed budget of £47.7 million for 2012-13 was discussed. This was a 6.6 per cent increase compared to 2011-12; following discussion of the detailed proposals, the Commission approved a 6.4 per cent increase. Of this, 5.1 per cent would be required to cover unavoidable additional costs. This budget, representing 0.3 per cent of the Welsh Block, was agreed to be a reasonable and appropriate price for proper support for the legislative process, scrutiny of Government and democratic representation. The Commission emphasised that they wanted to ensure that value for money services were delivered efficiently and effectively.

The draft budget, updated to reflect Commissioners' feedback, would be laid on 29 September. Angela Burns, accompanied by officials, would present the budget to the Finance Committee on 6 October.

A post-Plenary session would be arranged to present the budget and Commission strategy to all Assembly Members.

Action: Officials, in discussion with Angela Burns, to update the draft budget document in line with feedback from the Commission.

Action: A session to be arranged to present the budget and Commission strategy to all Assembly Members.

3. Assembly Commission rolling programme

The rolling programme was noted.

4. Any other business

It was agreed that options should be prepared for the recognition of significant contributions to the development of the Assembly, for example by Presiding Officers, and the creation of artefacts that would provide an appropriate historical record of the development of the Assembly.

Action: Officials to prepare options for the recognition of significant contributions to the Assembly

ICT issues had continued to be experienced by a number of Assembly Members and their staff at the Assembly and in regional and constituency offices. New circuits were being installed, which could improve connection speeds in remote offices. It was agreed that Members could contact Peter Black if they were experiencing significant problems, and that plain English, without jargon, should be used to communicate known issues to Members.

Issues had been experienced by Members using committee rooms 1, 2 and 3 during the first week of term. Investigations were underway, and a report would be circulated.



AC(4)2011(5) Paper 2 part 1

Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 13:00-15:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Dr Non Gwilym, ext 8647

Bilingual Services

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 At its meeting on 14 July 2011 the Commission was invited to consider the way forward for its provision of bilingual services to the Assembly and the public. It agreed:

- a. to consult on a draft Official Languages Bill (the Bill) and Bilingual Services Scheme (the Scheme); and
- b. to provide, under the Scheme, a fully bilingual Record of Plenary Proceedings (provided a sustainable arrangement for doing so, at a reasonable long-term cost, could be found).

1.2 This paper provides an update for the Commission on progress made regarding:

- a. the public consultation on the Bill and Scheme, and
- b. the feasibility of a professional translator using machine translation to facilitate the production of a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission is invited to note the progress regarding the public consultation exercise on the Bill and Scheme and further exploratory work conducted in relation to provide a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings.

3.0 Discussion

Public Consultation on the (Draft) National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill and Draft Bilingual Services Scheme

- 3.1 The public consultation on the draft National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages Bill and the draft Bilingual Services Scheme) was launched at the National Eisteddfod on 3 August 2011. Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM and Keith Bush delivered a presentation and hosted a question and answer session at the Societies' pavilion, which was attended by 20 people, including representatives from Cymdeithas yr Iaith, the Welsh Language Board, the Association of Welsh Translators and Interpreters and the media.
- 3.2 The launch was publicised widely by the Welsh language media and coverage was positive. Media follow-up work focused on ensuring the public and media understood that any use of machine based translation would be coupled with expert proof-reading and quality assurance.
- 3.3 Since the launch, a video by Keith Bush, based on his presentation at the Eisteddfod and during the three workshops referred to below has been made available on the Assembly's website as an information aid to anyone interested in responding to the consultation. The Western Mail also carried a thought piece by Keith Bush on the Official Languages Bill on 28 September (Annex A).
- 3.4 In addition, three workshops were held w/c 26 September in three locations:
- 26 September 09:30-11.30 – National Assembly for Wales, Colwyn Bay;
 - 26 September 15:00-17:00 – National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth;
 - 28 September, 09:30-11:30 – Pierhead, Cardiff Bay,
- entitled “Law making and bilingual services at the National Assembly”.
- 3.5 Although the focus of the workshops was on encouraging those attending to make full, considered, written responses to the consultation, some common themes and questions emerged, including:

Bilingual services

- the need for the Assembly to give a strong lead on bilingual services;
- Monitoring and compliance – would there be an effective mechanism for ensuring that the Commission is adhering to its scheme?;
- impact assessment – should there be a legal duty for non-Governmental legislation introduced into the Assembly to be accompanied by a formal assessment of its impact on the Welsh language (as will be the case with Government proposed legislation under proposed standards imposed under the Welsh Language Measure 2011)?;
- does the fact that the Scheme is to be known as the “Bilingual Services Scheme” (as opposed to the “Official Languages Scheme”) imply that the Scheme will be limited in its scope and will not relate to the full range of Assembly activities?;
- what does “truly bilingual” mean?; and
- should there be, on the face of the Bill (i.e. not just in the Scheme) a requirement for a fully bilingual translation of the Record of Proceedings?

3.6 Workshops are also being arranged for Assembly staff to give them an opportunity to ask questions, make comments and consider the impact of the draft scheme on service delivery. A meeting with the Unions will take place at the earliest opportunity as will a drop in session for support staff.

3.7 The pre-legislative consultation period concluded on 14 October. Responses will be analysed and any proposals for revisions to the Bill and Scheme formulated. These will then be presented to the Commission in November, so that it can consider final versions of the proposals, with a view to formal introduction of the Bill and laying of the draft Scheme before the Assembly in early December.

3.8 It is now expected that the date for the Bill becoming law and the Scheme coming into force is likely to be June 2012 (although there may be some scope for acceleration).

Update on the feasibility of using web-based machine translation and translation software for producing a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings

3.9 At its meeting on 14 July, the Commission agreed in principle to reinstate a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings provided that the arrangement was sustainable in the long term and demonstrated good value for money. Officials were asked to explore the option of using Google Translate, a machine-based translation system coupled with proof-reading by a professional translator for quality control to achieve this.

3.10 Over the period July-September, Assembly translators tested two online machine-based translation systems, both manufactured by Google – Google Translate (Translate) and Google Translate Toolkit (Toolkit).

3.11 Both systems help the reader to understand the general content of a foreign language text. Neither delivers fully accurate translations. The initial result in terms of quality of translation and the speed of translation are the same for both systems.

3.12 In addition, Toolkit:

- offers the ability to share documents online with others to edit and review prior to publication;
- offers the option of adding the corrected translation to the corpus of text used by the application to translate all documents, effectively enhancing the corpus for the future benefit of all other users;
- allows the user to upload a complete document, regardless of word count, whereas Google Translate has a word limit of 5000 per session; and
- can be enhanced by “plugging in” other technologies such as translation memory software applications e.g. the WordfastPro package, recently acquired by the Translation and Reporting Service.

3.13 It is too early to be precise about the full potential of such a system, but it may produce efficiencies in translation requirements of all descriptions.

- 3.14 Both systems are currently free to users, though Commissioners will recall that Google announced plans to charge for the Translate service as early as December 2011. Following the July meeting, we contacted Google for clarification on pricing structures and timescales, but no response has been received to date. We are confident however, following discussion with the Welsh Language Board, that Google has no intention to charge for Toolkit. We understand that the introduction of a charging structure for Translate is Google's response to significant abuse of their system which was incrementally damaging the reputation of the system, and ultimately Google itself.
- 3.15 Over recess, a pilot exercise to establish if Toolkit could provide a feasible alternative to previous arrangements for a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings was undertaken.
- 3.16 Based on our results, we calculate that the approximate annual costs for producing a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings, making use of a combination of machine translation and manual editing, will be no more than £100k.
- 3.17 At a meeting on 3 October attended by Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, Assembly staff and officials from the Welsh Language Board, we were informed that the Board is commissioning an independent report on the efficiency, cost and quality of the results produced by the leading machine translation systems, including Google and those developed by Canolfan Bedwyr inter alia. The findings will inform our understanding of how the Commission could provide a sustainable solution for producing a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings at a reasonable cost. We aim to conclude the exploratory work by the beginning of November and present recommendations for the Commission's consideration at its November meeting.

WELSH COLUMN

Dameg sy'n codi'r hen gwestiynau rhwng hawl a dyletswydd



Menna Elfyn

CFFAIS innau wyliau bach y penwythnos diwethaf ym Mharis. Mae'n amhosib peidio â ffoli ar y ddinas hon nid yn unig am ei hanes ond hefyd am ei gallu o hyd i ryfeddu. Bwm mewn orielau di-ri yn ogystal â chrwydro'r ddinas ar droed. A hawdd yw cerdded drwy'r dydd a darganfod gogoneddau ynddi. Ond gyda phob taith fe ddaw pethau annisgwyl ar eich traws a rhoi ichi dameg barod.

Cerdded dros bont gerdded yr afon Seine oeddwn pan ddaeth gwraig o'r tu ôl imi a gweiddi iddi ddarganfod modrwy aur. Ni ddwyddedais air nes iddi fynnu ei fod yn aur go iawn ac yn ddydd lwcus i mi. "Na, eich lwc chi yw e", meddwn gan obeithio'n wir na fyddai'n mynnu ei rhoi i mi. Os oedd yn aur go iawn yna, mi fyddai fy more wedi ei ddiffetha gyda thaith i'r swyddfa heddlu i adrodd y stori. Yna, daeth o'r tu ôl imi a'i gosod yn solet yn fy llaw. "Your lucky day," meddai, er y gwydwn yn iawn mai fy niwrnod lwcus i fyddai anlwc rhywun arall. A chyn pen chwinciad roedd wedi rhedeg i ffwrdd. A dyna pryd y gwydwn y fyddai'n dychwelyd ymhnen dim o dro. Eiliadau wedyn: "You give me something now for coffee". Dyma chi, meddwn a phlannu'r fodrwy yn ei llaw cyn cerdded i ffwrdd. Erbyn imi gerdded 500 llath ymlaen gwelwn wraig yn caisio yr un tric ar ymwelwyr eraill. Gwell gen i fegera wyneb yn wyneb na'r dramâu bach hyn oherwydd fe wyddoch beth yw beth gyda rhywun yn dal hat ac yn gofyn am arian.

Gyda llaw, mae cyfraith wedi ei basio yn awr yn erbyn cardota yn Ffrainc ac eto, alla i ddim peidio â meddwl y bydd y damhegion moesol hyn yn digwydd eto.

A dyna ystyried y dywediad "cael a chael". Roeddwn i fel un a fu'n cario cerdyn rhoi organau (er fe ddiflannodd i rywle rhwng pwr a phwrs) wedi fy anesmytho gan sylwadau Archesgob Cymru wrth iddo osod yn bwyllog ac yn glir y rhesymau pam na ddylai'r llywodraeth gymryd organau dinasyddion oni bai eu bod yn nodi fel arall. Yn wreiddiol, welwn i mo'r problem nes imi fyfyrto ymhellach.

Y mae a wnelo'r peth ag ystyriaethau sydd yn eu hanfod yn gwrthdaro â'i gilydd sef rhwymedigaeth sy'n orfodol - statudol a'r synnwyr o reidrwydd a rheidiau cymwynasgar. "Rhodd" oedd y gair a ddefnyddiodd Barry Morgan a dyna air sy'n rymus ac yn dueddol o gael ei golli yn ein byd materol, dihdans. I rywun roi nid ei einioes efallai ond diwedd ei einioes i eraill. Onid hynny sy'n gosod gwerth tu hwnt i bris ar ein moesoldeb?

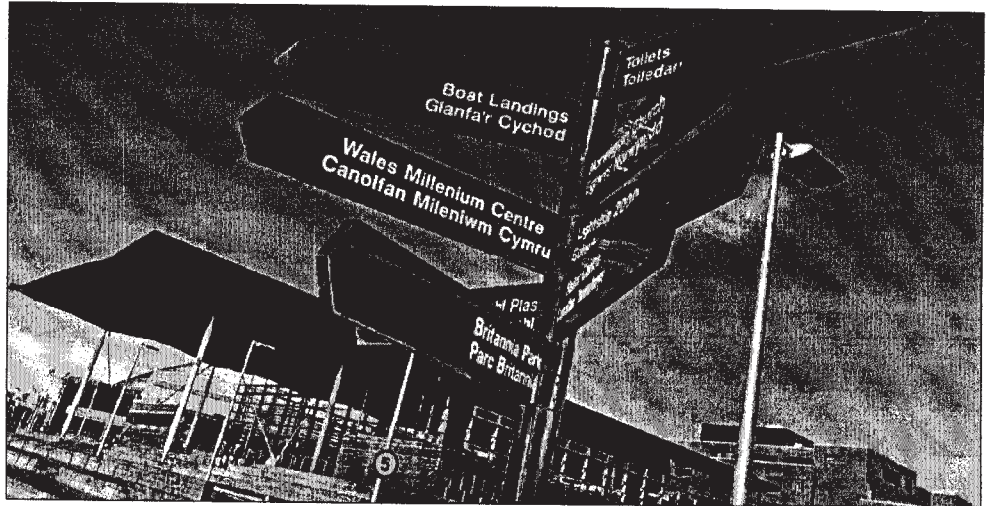
A dyma ddod at achos arall sy'n codi cwestiynau moesol go ddifrifol. Sipsiwn. Yn wir, mae'r ffaith i'r Uchel Lys oedi ac oedi wrth ystyried yr achos yn arwydd hefyd mor ansicr yw'r gyfraith weithiau o faterion sydd yn eu hanfod yn rhai moesol. Dale Farm. Ar y naill law rydym fel cymdeithas yn gwrthod manau sefydlog i sipsiwn breswlyg arnynt ac ar y llaw arall yn cwestiynu eu hawl o dir a brynwyd ganddynt.

Nawr mi wn ei fod yn llawer mwy cymhleth na hynny a rhaid i'r ddwy ochr ddod i gytundeb rywsut ond pwy all wadu na ddylai'r plant gael aros mewn ysgolion lleol? Dameg arall yw hon ac un sydd yn siwr o barhau gan godi'r un cwestiynau rhwng hawl a dyletswydd unigolyn, rhwng anorod a'r anochel.

CLICK ON

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It is proposed that the new powers will enshrine in law the vision of a fully-bilingual Assembly

Assembly bids for bilingual future, five centuries after an English king banned Welsh

WEDNESDAY ESSAY

IT'S now getting on for 500 years since the Welsh language was banned from public life in Wales.

On November 1, 1536, the Laws in Wales Act came into force. It provided that English was to be the only official language in England and Wales, at a time when few people in Wales could understand any language other than Welsh.

With the rise of democracy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, feeling grew that a law that condemned hundreds of thousands of citizens to a second-class status in their own country was unacceptable.

Substantial steps were taken by the Westminster Parliament to correct the wrong done by the 1536 Act to Welsh speakers.

Important milestones were the Welsh Language Act 1967, which restored some official status to the Welsh language, and the Welsh Language Act 1993, which established the principle that public bodies should treat the two languages on a basis of equality.

This principle was applied to the new devolved institution created in 1999. The Assembly was required to "give effect, so far as is both appropriate and reasonably practicable, to the principle that the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality."

This requirement, even though qualified in its terms, was embraced enthusiastically by the Assembly, which was rapidly acknowledged to be an exemplar of bilingual working.

When the Assembly was reformed in 2007, the new legislation, the Government of Wales Act 2006, left the rules governing use of Welsh

The National Assembly for Wales has spent the summer consulting the Welsh public about its proposed new Bill that will enshrine its vision of a truly bilingual Assembly into law. In today's Western Mail, the Assembly's chief legal adviser, **Keith Bush**, explains the two elements that the Assembly Commission believes will make this vision a reality...

in the Assembly undisturbed.

That Act did, however, place in the Assembly Members' hands the power to change the law relating to the status of the Welsh language in Wales.

This year, the Assembly passed the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011, the most extensive piece of legislation ever enacted in relation to the Welsh language.

It will, when fully in force, supersede the UK Parliament's Welsh Language Act 1993.

Like its predecessor, this piece of legislation is designed to regulate the use of Welsh by governmental bodies - by the Welsh Government, local authorities, public institutions and private bodies that carry out public functions.

It does not affect the laws relating to use of the Welsh language in the Assembly itself. That was left to the Assembly to decide.

Following the referendum this year, the Assembly now has wide powers to fashion the linguistic framework within which it operates.

The Assembly Commission, the body that provides the Assembly with staff, services and accommodation, is now proposing that the Assembly should use those powers to enshrine the Commission's vision of a fully-bilingual Assembly in law.

A public consultation is due to end on October 14, into a package of measures designed to achieve the Commission's ambition of being "a truly bilingual institution".

The package comprises two elements. The first is a piece of legislation - an Official Languages Bill - to update and strengthen the legal framework for bilingualism, in line with the laws that govern other bilingual legislatures.

If passed, this will provide simple clear legal statements declaring that both English and Welsh have official status in the Assembly and guaranteeing the right of all persons taking part in Assembly proceedings to use whichever of the two languages they choose.

The second part of the

package is a Bilingual Services Scheme which will outline how the Commission will deliver effective bilingualism in the Assembly.

Preparing the scheme will be a legal requirement under the Bill, and once approved by the Assembly and formally adopted by the Commission, it will have the force of law.

Given recent controversy relating to translation of the Record of Proceedings, much interest has centred on how, under the new arrangements, this would be dealt with.

As the draft Scheme makes clear, the Commission is now working on the reinstatement of a fully bilingual record of plenary proceedings.

In order to achieve this, the Commission is planning to take advantage of the latest translation technology.

This, combined with editing by expert human translators, will ensure the very highest standard of translation.

The Commission is leading developments likely to lead to a revolution in speedy, effective, but economical, bilingualism.

The outcome towards which the Commission is working - that of being a "truly bilingual institution" - is intended to ensure all in Wales have a sense of ownership of the Assembly, irrespective of their linguistic community.

Achieving that will require effective engagement in the consultation by as many people as possible.

Copies of all documents, and information on how to respond, can be found on the Assembly's website at www.assemblywales.org, following the "Bilingual Services Consultation" link.



Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 13.00

Venue: Presiding Officer's Office

Author name and contact number: Dianne Bevan, ext 8991

UNO benefits and savings review

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 At their meeting in January 2011, the Commission emphasised the importance of monitoring the achievements of benefits and savings delivered by the UNO project and that six-monthly reviews be undertaken and reported to the Commission.

1.2 This paper provides the first update on the project, achievement of its objectives and assessment of benefits and savings realised to date.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission is invited to note the progress report and the measures put in place to resolve the outstanding issues.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 All users of the system were asked to contribute to the lessons learned and the project board undertook a benefits realisation exercise. Assembly Members' views have been sought on a one to one basis at their ICT account manager meetings.

Discussion

4.0 Background

4.1 The main aims of the UNO project were to create an up to date ICT system, to enable the Assembly to work independently of the Welsh Government, to improve business continuity and to enable the Assembly to make appropriate cost effective choices for future ICT services.

4.2 The benefits anticipated from the project were as follows:

- delivery of a more co-ordinated use of resources by putting Members, their staff and Assembly staff on the same network, so increasing working efficiency;
- achievement of savings through the provision of an independent platform for integrated service delivery, to be sourced by the most cost effective and efficient route;
- measureable outcomes from the implementation of new technologies, systems and processes through modernisation of the ICT estate and provision of the latest technology to enhance public engagement;
- improved business continuity and resilience of the system; and
- better connectivity, particularly from constituency offices.

4.3 The system was installed for 800 users at over 100 locations and created a new, remote server centre to give considerable resilience and recovery for all Assembly IT. Fifty applications were migrated from the old system to the new and each user received the latest version of Microsoft software. Although the majority of the transfer to the new system has worked well, there are several significant technical issues which are causing continued problems for users.

5.0 Outstanding technical issues

5.1 A series of outstanding technical issues have not yet been signed off. These do not affect all users at all times, but are very unsatisfactory for those who are affected. The main outstanding issues are:

- Office applications – email signatures disappearing, hyperlinks in word documents not working, custom dictionary not being updated, access to recent documents not being updated;
- Internet Explorer – not retaining favourites;
- GF & Local settings – differences between Office applications;
- Printing – default printers reverting to previous printer settings; and
- Caseworker – error messages when attaching documents and emails to the system.

- 5.2 A plan to resolve the outstanding technical issues is in place and Atos (formerly Siemens Business Services) are providing dedicated technical resources to investigate and progress solutions, at no further cost to the Assembly.
- 5.3 The changes made to fix the outstanding system issues were provided by Atos to the Assembly during the summer, when extensive testing was undertaken. As at 6 October just over 100 users, mostly Assembly staff, have moved to the new infrastructure which incorporates these changes. Final planning is taking place to roll out the system changes to the rest of the users during October. With the exception of the Casework error message when attaching documents, which requires a change to the Casework application, Atos believe that all other issues will be resolved by this change. The Casework system change is being planned at the moment.

6.0 Financial investment

- 6.1 The total financial investment in the project was £4,256,525, against a final budget of £4.3m. In undertaking this work in 2010-11, as a single project, the Commission saved an estimated £0.9 million (20 per cent) in costs, which would otherwise have been incurred in spasmodic replacement and updating of systems.

7.0 Benefits review

- 7.1 The benefits review seeks to determine whether the project has delivered an appropriate level of quantifiable benefits in line with the level of investment. The measures include monitoring costs, gathering feedback from users, regular meetings with suppliers and monitoring the effectiveness of new processes and procedures. A benefits plan is included at **Annex A** and a summary of progress is set out below.

8.0 Cash savings

- 8.1 The UNO project enabled the Assembly to rationalise user numbers and negotiate its own support agreement (PSM2) based upon a new service model, which will also provide the Assembly with a clearer understanding of its ICT costs. Negotiations on PSM2 have been protracted but are nearing completion. Once concluded this will put us in a much better position to decide what improvements or reductions

should be made to align services to future strategy development and determine the subsequent impact on costs.

8.2 In this financial year delivery of new data circuits to Assembly Members' constituency and regional offices, homes and the homes of support staff and Assembly staff is underway with a target completion date of December 2011. This will deliver estimated savings for the Commission of approximately £200,000 per annum, along with improved connectivity.

9.0 Efficiency improvements

9.1 Integrating the two networks into a single platform means that we are able to track and record user numbers more readily, which affects our charges. Applications can also be tracked and recorded more accurately, for asset management purposes, which will improve our planning for future changes.

9.2 The latest version of Microsoft Office has provided improved and more efficient presentation of work to Members and in publications.

9.3 Whilst support calls to the Help Desk were initially very high, following implementation these have now reduced. Assembly users now share a common Help Desk which is separate from that of the Government (although services are provided for Ministers in Cardiff Bay). There is a more consistent delivery platform, reducing the complexity and number of systems being supported.

10.0 Service improvement

10.1 The new service support agreement (PSM2) is being negotiated with Atos. This aims to improve service levels to users driven by the needs, priorities and strategy of the Assembly, to improve services and ensure that they are cost-effective. An interim support arrangement has been in place since implementation.

10.2 A more secure and less complex method of connection to Assembly services has been provided through the roll out of new wide area network data circuits to Members. This provides a faster and more responsive level of on-line remote support than available previously and was an area that Members previously scored very low in the annual ICT survey.

10.3 An increased number of users are remotely accessing Assembly systems through secure and accessible systems, enabling a more flexible working approach.

10.4 The project allowed Assembly staff to leave the government secure internet (gsi). This has had benefits in our use of e-democracy as Assembly staff are more freely able to access social media profiles to alert them about issues and stories relevant to their work and to improve the Assembly's public engagement. Use of social media for Assembly purposes has been enhanced, for example, the Research Service has introduced twitter updates to further promote their work and that of Members.

11.0 Customer satisfaction

11.1 There has been a very mixed reaction from users of the new system. Whilst the majority appear to be reasonably satisfied, the outstanding issues described above are causing a significant amount of difficulty and frustration. A plan is in place to resolve these issues and ICT account managers are working very closely with users to keep them updated on progress. Although some users of the system clearly prefer the one it replaced, we aim to improve their experience and are providing tuition where needed.

11.2 The system was originally designed through consultation with Members, their staff and Assembly staff. The first user survey after UNO implementation was conducted in March 2011. The results are being used to gauge user satisfaction levels and achievement of benefits over time. **Annex B** is a summary of the results of the first survey, although there was a low response rate from Members. Another survey will be undertaken when the outstanding issues have been resolved and users have had more experience of both the system and the new data circuits, which are currently being installed.

12.0 Methodology

12.1 A consistent methodology is being developed in order to measure each of the identified benefits and provide for more accurate reporting over time. Baseline data information is being collated and will be used to develop a set of metrics for future comparison.

13.0 ICT strategy

13.1 The main aim of UNO was to position the Assembly so that it could make an independent decision on the provision of ICT services post 2014.

13.2 An ICT Strategy group has been in place since March 2011, looking at the various options available. The group has sought advice from other public sector organisations, conducted a gap analysis with Gartner and has undertaken benchmarking with other UK legislatures. Options will be presented to the Commission in November.

UNO Benefits Realisation Plan

Background

The aim of the UNO project was to create an up to date ICT system to enable the Assembly to work independently of the Welsh Government, to improve business continuity and to enable the Assembly to make appropriate cost effective choices for future ICT provision.

The benefits anticipated from the project can be summarised as follows:

- delivery of a more co-ordinated use of resources by putting Members their staff and Assembly staff on the same network, so increasing working efficiency;
- achievement of savings through the provision of an independent platform for integrated service delivery, to be sourced by the most cost effective and efficient route;
- provision of measureable outcomes from the implementation of new technologies, systems and processes through modernisation of the ICT estate and provision of the latest technology to enhance public engagement;
- improved business continuity and resilience of the systems; and
- improved connectivity, particularly from constituency and regional offices.

About this plan

The overarching benefits were categorised and split by the UNO Project Board. Each benefit was given an owner, and a timescale for completion. Using a set of measures, including monitoring costs, gathering feedback from users, and regular meetings with suppliers, the Plan can be used to gauge progress against each benefit.

The benefits to be measured are as follows:

1. improved Assembly based helpdesk;
2. improved visibility of ICT costs;
3. improved service delivery;

4. improved sustainability;
5. improved access to social networking sites;
6. organisation to be better informed prior to the procurement exercise;
7. improved log on/off times;
8. improved technical infrastructure;
9. improved ability to introduce new software;
10. removal of dependency / reliance on Welsh Government for updates / changes; and
11. improved working relationship with Atos.

Progress against these benefits will be reported to the Assembly Commission and Assembly Management Board every six months.

1. Improved Assembly-based helpdesk

Target	
Establish a single, dedicated helpdesk along with the Senedd support contract, with the aim of reducing the number of support staff required, and thereby reducing costs over time.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Atos
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With customer satisfaction surveys; and • reduced total cost of ownership
When we will measure	Annually, from summer 2011
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting
Progress to date / Latest update	
<p>A single helpdesk has been operational since summer 2010. Following the delivery of UNO, the Assembly now provides a fully bilingual helpdesk to all staff as well as Assembly Members and Assembly Members' support staff for the first time.</p> <p>In the UNO user survey, 40 per cent of users believed that the service from the</p>	

helpdesk had improved; 21 per cent believed it had not improved, and 32 per cent believed that there had been no difference. Users were also asked to rate their satisfaction with various elements of the service desk; the satisfaction ratings were as follows:

- ease of getting in touch / reporting faults: 75 per cent
- the time taken to answer calls: 71 per cent
- the time taken to resolve faults: 68 per cent
- knowledge about the organisation: 74 per cent
- courtesy and professionalism of the staff: 82 per cent

2. Improved visibility of ICT costs

Target	
<p>Through running an unified network which serves all of the Assembly's users, independent of the Welsh Government, the costs of the Assembly's part of the contract should be clearer.</p> <p>This will ultimately assist in the long-term aim of reducing total cost of ownership per desktop to £1,000 per annum by 2014.</p>	
Benefit Owner(s)	Assembly ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of the new service model costs;
When we will measure	<p>Upon receipt of PSM 2 costs;</p> <p>Full menu of costs provided by Summer 2013</p>
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting
Progress to date / Latest update	
<p>We have already identified a £200K per year saving on data connectivity.</p> <p>Costs for the Assembly service model (PSM2) are due to be provided this month; Welsh government are also working on improved visibility of all ICT costs. These two steps will provide greater clarity over where our costs lie and where we can focus</p>	

upon.

Benchmarking work, comparing the Assembly's costs with other UK assemblies and parliaments, is currently underway.

3. Improved service delivery

Target	
Create a separate service model to manage Assembly Service requirements, via a Project Service Memorandum (PSM2).	
Benefit Owner(s)	Welsh Government
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Via the successful implementation of PSM2
When we will measure	From January 2011
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting
Progress to date / Latest update	
The new service model for the Assembly (PSM2) has still to be made available to the Assembly. Atos to provide the costs by the end of September 2011.	

4. Improved sustainability

Target	
Less hardware replacement and reduced total cost of ownership per desktop. Establish a benchmark for power consumption.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Facilities Management / ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reuse and recycle any redundant ICT equipment; and assessment tool required to be implemented for power consumption
When we will measure	Ongoing

Who will measure	Head of Facilities
Progress to date / Latest Update	
All equipment replaced as part of the UNO project has been either reused or stripped-down and recycled.	

5. Improved access to social networking sites

Target	
By providing improved access to social networking sites, the aim is to improve engagement between the Assembly and the public, and between Members and their constituents.	
Benefit Owner(s)	ICT Security
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> customer satisfaction surveys; and feedback from External Communications branch
When we will measure	Summer 2011
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting
Progress to date / Latest update	
Assembly Members can access social networking sites and tools on Assembly provided ICT equipment, including desktop PCs, laptops and Blackberry devices.	

6. The Assembly to be better informed prior to any procurement exercise

Target	
To understand the assets utilised (hardware and software) on the Assembly estate, via comprehensive design documents, which can be used in a procurement exercise if the Assembly decides to go out to tender for its ICT services in 2014.	
To ascertain the actual costs of ICT provision for the Assembly, which will assist in benchmarking costs of service.	

Benefit Owner(s)	Assembly ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual and monthly charging mechanism and asset management data; and • presentation of revised design documentation from Atos following any change to the network
When we will measure	Quarterly
Who will measure	ICT Technical Manager
Progress to date / Latest update	
Difficulties have been experienced with rolling out the Atos asset management software, and work is focusing on hardware first and then software. Also still unclear regarding annual maintenance costs - included in service charge or not for the network.	

7. Improved log on/off times

Target	
Decrease in the time taken to login to the system, regardless of location, with the key aim of improving the experience for users in constituency offices and homeworkers.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Atos
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With customer satisfaction surveys; • via information gathered from calls to the ICT helpdesk; and • via feedback gathered from ICT Account Managers.
When we will measure	<p>Annually (satisfaction surveys)</p> <p>Quarterly (helpdesk statistics)</p>
Who will measure	ICT Technical Manager
Progress to date / Latest update	
Still rolling out new circuits to users, but anecdotal evidence suggests that the	

system is quicker. Logging in experience for broadband users has improved with new lines. Working with programmes and larger files have improved.

8. Improved technical infrastructure

Target	
The three key targets are: improved connectivity to the network, especially in constituency offices and at home for home workers; more efficient sharing of documents and data between Assembly Members and Assembly staff; and improved network reliability and business continuity.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Atos / ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With customer satisfaction surveys; • with 'failover' tests to the business continuity servers; and • through monitoring support call data.
When we will measure	<p>Annually (surveys, failover tests);</p> <p>Monthly meetings with Atos.</p>
Who will measure	ICT Technical Manager
Progress to date / Latest Update	
<p>Related to new lines, those who have them have better login times and experiences.</p> <p>The new platform has provided the basis for the Assembly Business Management System, which is lightening the load on our email system, but there is still no Assembly-wide information management strategy to take advantage of one network.</p> <p>Due to the ongoing work to improve the GF network, the failover tests didn't take place this summer. ICT are working with Atos on a plan to see what aspects of the infrastructure can be tested at least risk.</p>	

9. Improved ability to introduce new software

Target	
Timely, cost effective method of evaluating, impact testing and introducing new software for the Assembly's network.	
Aim to introduce new software at a faster rate than before, via an agreed process between the Assembly and Atos.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Atos / ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports from Atos; and • feedback from users
When we will measure	Monthly
Who will measure	ICT Technical Manager
Progress to date / Latest update	
Currently not fully delivering the benefit, as we share a Welsh Government controlled resource to package and deploy software.	
The current priority for resources is getting the basic infrastructure working correctly before any new software is introduced.	

10. Removal of dependency / reliance on Welsh government for updates and changes

Target	
By introducing an ICT network which is independent of the Welsh Government, the Assembly should be able to request updates and changes based on its priorities and requirements. By removing the reliance on Welsh government, the objective is to introduce these updates and changes in a more timely fashion; the changes can also be more innovative.	
Benefit Owner(s)	Assembly ICT
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PSM2 to introduce processes & procedures for

	standard updates/changes
When we will measure	Quarterly from March 2011
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting
Progress to date / Latest Update	
Dependency on Welsh Government removed, however some conflicting prioritisation remains (see benefit 9) which can slow down some Assembly-driven developments.	

11. Improved working relationship with Atos

Target	
Creation of a partnership with Atos	
Benefit Owner(s)	ICT / Atos
How we will measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meeting schedule; and • communication plan
When we will measure	Monthly
Who will measure	Head of ICT & Broadcasting / Service Managers
Progress to date / Latest Update	
Formal meetings held weekly between Head of ICT and Atos account manager.	
Normal weekly and monthly service meetings continue.	

UNO User Satisfaction survey – summary of key findings**Logging in to the new ICT system compared to the old systems**

The highest rating for each section is indicated in bold text)

Logging in to the system from Cardiff Bay

Quicker	Same time	Slower
65%	27%	8%

Logging in to the system from another Assembly office

Quicker	Same time	Slower
50%	22%	28%

Logging in to the system from a Constituency Office

Quicker	Same time	Slower
37.5%	37.5%	25%

Logging in to the system from home

Quicker	Same time	Slower
48%	28%	24%

Logging in to the system from a remote location

Quicker	Same time	Slower
38%	31%	31%

Logging in using the RSA security token

Security of the system: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	85%
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Ease of Use: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	73%
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Speed of the system after login: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	72%
--	------------

The time it takes to log in: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	67%
--	------------

Service and Helpdesk

Has the service from the helpdesk improved post-UNO?

Yes	No	No difference	No view
40%	21%	32%	7%

Courtesy and professionalism of the staff: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	82%
--	------------

Ease of getting in touch / reporting faults: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	75%
--	------------

Knowledge about the organisation: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	74%
---	------------

The time taken to answer calls: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	71%
---	------------

The time taken to resolve faults: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	68%
---	------------

The new ICT system

Look and feel of the system: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	79.8%
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New features: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	74%
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Responsiveness: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	73%
---	------------

Ease of use: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	73%
--	------------

Reliability: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	67%
--	------------

Printing: Average Satisfaction Rating (%):	64%
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Has the new system has made it easier for users to do their job:

Yes	No	No difference
32	28	40

Has the new system enabled users to work faster and smarter:

Yes	No	No difference
31	33	36



Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

AC(4)2011(5) Paper 4 part 1

Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 13:00-15:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Lynne Flux, ext 8495

Support for Assembly Members: Creation of an Access Fund

1.0 Purpose and summary

- 1.1 There is a risk that the current funding arrangements in place to support the equalities duties of the Assembly and Assembly Members could fall short of changing needs and the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.2 This paper proposes the creation of a central Access Fund that will allow Members to access the necessary resources to:
 - provide for additional requirements of disabled Assembly Members;
 - enable all Members to engage without financial hindrance with constituents with diverse needs (where reasonably practicable); and
 - mitigate the risk of action or inaction that may breach the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.3 The Fund would be separate to the provisions of Chapter 9 of the Determination regarding Equality and Access.
- 1.4 The Access Fund is directly related to the Assembly Commission's strategic goals of providing outstanding parliamentary support and engaging with the people of Wales.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Commission is asked to agree to:
 - the creation of a central Access Fund to assist Members to fulfil their obligations under the Equality Act 2010;

- an update of the Cross-Party Group Guidance to include a reference to the Access Fund; and
- refer this paper to the Remuneration Board, and the Commission's decisions on an Access Fund, for information when considering future changes to the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 Two consultations support the work and conclusions reached in this paper:

- the Equalities team undertook an Equality Impact Screening of the Determination in February 2011. Feedback was gathered from Members as part of this exercise; and
- Sandy Mewies AM, in her capacity as Assembly Commissioner with responsibility for equality, contacted all Assembly Members in August and September 2011 seeking evidence and feedback on how the Commission could better support Members in discharging their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. A summary of the feedback received from Members is at Annex A.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 In recent months some Members have made representations to the Equalities team regarding issues and costs associated with providing accessible services to constituents with diverse needs. Issues that have arisen relate to the funding of translation and interpretation services and the provision of specialist equipment.

4.2 In considering the need to establish a Fund, the Equalities team has reviewed the arrangements in Scotland, and assessed the potential financial impact on the Commission's budget and the risks related to these activities. A budget requirement of up to £10,000 per year is estimated based on the requirements identified.

5.0 Supporting Members in serving their constituents

5.1 The Commission, as an employer and service provider, is subject to the requirements of the public sector equality duty in the Equality Act 2010 and must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and
- foster good relations between different groups.

5.2 The equality duty also explicitly recognises that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people. Public bodies should therefore take account of disabled people's needs when making decisions about policies or services.

5.3 Under the Act the Commission and Members should make the necessary reasonable adjustments when providing a service to their constituents. Some Members might have regular contact with a higher proportion of disabled constituents in a densely populated area, may have a special interest in groups requiring communication support or may have constituents whose first language is neither English nor Welsh. These Members might therefore incur costs associated with providing additional support that are disproportionate to other Members' costs.

5.4 The current Determination requires that Members pay for such costs through their office cost allocation. Other costs of engagement, such as translation and interpretation, are also borne by the Members' office cost allocation. From the feedback received, Members are concerned about the differential financial impact of funding additional services from their office cost allocation. Consequently there is a risk that Members may not meet fully their legal obligations towards diverse groups with specific needs. These points were raised during oral questions to the Commission on 5 October 2011.

5.5 The Presiding Officer's Guidelines on Cross-Party Groups, produced in the Second Assembly, states that there is no Assembly budget to cover the running costs of Cross-Party Groups and that any such costs must be met by members of the groups. However, there is one Cross-Party Group which has, historically, been provided with specialist communication services to facilitate the participation of those with a hearing disability. This provides a further incentive for establishing a more open and formalised footing for funding such needs.

5.6 The Cross-Party Group on deaf issues is a good example of when Members might need communication support in order to provide a service to diverse constituents, including disabled people. The

recommendation in this paper is to make such funding available. It must be stressed that the Access Fund would be limited to supporting access and engagement in respect of Cross- Party Groups.

6.0 Remit - the Determination and access issues

6.1 Some access issues are already covered in section 9 of the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances. These areas will not be affected by the creation of an Access Fund:

- adaptations and modifications to a Member's constituency or regional office are funded as per section 9.2 of the Determination. This requires that a Member must pay the first £1,000 for any such changes out of their Office Cost Allowance; and
- support for disabled support staff is covered by section 9.3, and would therefore not form part of the proposed Access Fund. The Determination states that such support is to be provided from the Office Cost Allowance or Support for Groups Allowance as appropriate.

6.2 The Equalities team will provide clear guidance around issues of reasonableness and proportionality to Members to ensure that they continue to provide accessible services and appropriate facilities for their staff. There are also other external sources of funding for specialist equipment, such as the UK Government's Access to Work scheme, which the Equalities team will also signpost to Members.

6.3 Section 9.4 of the Determination states that a Member "may" use their Office Cost Allowance to provide an accessible service to a constituent. This is the area where Members have identified issues of costs of access and provides the Commission with the flexibility to fund necessary equipment and communication services for Members to engage with their constituents and groups with diverse needs.

7.0 Risk assessment

7.1 The main risk of not creating an Access Fund would be the risk of non-compliance with the Equality Act 2010. For example:

- disabled Assembly Members may not be adequately supported to enable them to undertake their jobs;

- Members may not be able to make reasonable adjustments or effectively communicate with diverse constituents; or
- Members may be deterred from engaging fully with diverse constituents due to the adverse impact on their Office Cost Allocation.

7.2 The Assembly would be likely to face reputational risks if it was perceived that individuals or groups with diverse needs were not being offered equality of access to Members or Assembly business forums.

7.3 There is a risk that if a Fund is provided, it will be insufficient to meet the needs it is intended to meet, as demand is difficult to estimate precisely. The Commission holds a contingency which could be used if this issue arose.

8.0 Scope and operation of the Access Fund

8.1 The Scottish Parliament Corporate Body has a dedicated budget to support disabled MSPs and to make reasonable adjustments for disabled constituents. Communication support is available on application via the Additional Expenses provision. Applications to use the fund are submitted and approved in advance of need. As an illustration of the usage of this provision, eleven applications were received and approved in the financial year 2009-10, totalling £1,122. In the financial year 2010-11, three applications were received and approved, at a total cost of £158. The proposed Access Fund for the Assembly would bring both of these elements within a single budget line.

8.2 As a result of the Equality Impact Screening of the Determination and feedback received from Members in the two consultations, the Equalities team identified the type of costs which could be covered from a central Access Fund to support Members in discharging their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The proposal is to include the following costs in the ambit of the Access Fund:

- communication support for Members' meetings with diverse constituents, including interpretation for Cross-Party Groups and Member-led events. 'Communication support' is taken to mean translation and interpretation into other languages, including British Sign Language (BSL), and the use of palantypists and lip-speakers;

- providing information in alternative formats (i.e. Braille, Easy Read); and
- purchase and maintenance of specialised equipment for disabled Members such as Textphone, IT or other specialist equipment.

8.3 It should be stressed that the Access Fund is to support additional needs of Members with particular access requirements and is not part of Members' allowances. The Fund would be operated by the Members' Business Support team, in consultation with the Equalities team. A set of principles would be established to assess requests to the Fund.

8.4 To access the Fund, Members would be required to apply in advance to the Members' Business Support team for approval. This is intended as a simple 'reasonableness' control and to maintain oversight of need and spending patterns. The Member would then book the service or order necessary equipment and pass the invoice to the Members' Business Support team for payment. Detailed guidance and procedures would be developed for Members.

9.0 Conclusion and recommendation

9.1 The duties placed upon the Assembly by the Equality Act 2010 and the assessment of these by the Equalities team, combined with practical and financial pressures highlighted by feedback from Member consultations has led to the conclusion that the Assembly should provide more support to disabled Members and Members who need to engage with constituents with diverse needs on an individual or group basis. The proposed solution is to establish an Access Fund, administered by the Members' Business Support team, supported by the Equalities team, to fund costs associated with providing these enhanced services.

Proposed creation of an Access Fund

Evidence and Feedback

In August and September 2011, Members were asked to provide feedback on how the Commission could better support them in discharging their responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Below is a summary of the evidence received.

- A number of Members raised concerns about communicating with people who speak little or no English. One Member wrote that having to use office costs “has proven prohibitive and, as a result, I am no longer able to translate letters for constituents.” This Member has relied on voluntary translators in order to provide a service to their diverse constituents. The Member goes on to state, “many of these people who are unable to speak, read or write in English, are amongst the most vulnerable in our society – a position greatly exacerbated by the language barriers they may encounter.” The feedback from responding Members agreed that it would be beneficial to have a separate budget to cover such costs.
- Feedback also highlighted the need for a budget to cover communication support for Members’ meetings with disabled constituents, including support for Cross-Party Groups. One Member stated that “any member of the public should have equal access to Assembly Members regardless of their disability.” They went on to state that providing such communication support “should not result in higher individual office costs.”
- Evidence has also been collected on the need for a budget to cover the provision of reasonable adjustments for Members and their support staff. This would include modifications to an office space and the provision of specialist equipment such as a text phone.

Agenda Item 5

Comisiwn y Cynulliad

Assembly Commission

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



AC(4)2011(5) Paper 5

Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 13:00-15:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Claire Clancy, ext 8233

Management Board report to the Commission

October 2011

Outline

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List of annexes

- Annex A: Freedom of information
- Annex B: Minutes of Audit Committee meetings (9 June and 7 July)

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Assembly Commission's strategic goals

1.0 Strategic goal – provide outstanding parliamentary support

1.1 Assembly business update

a. Committee business is now firmly underway, and early indications suggest that committees appear to be more active than during the equivalent period in the Third Assembly. Since the beginning of the autumn term several committees have formally established sub-groups to undertake specific inquiries. As at 4 October, this included:

- Common Agriculture Policy Task and Finish Group;
- Common Fisheries Policy Task and Finish Group;
- Procurement Task and Finish Group (will work informally); and
- Task and Finish Group on the future outlook for the media in Wales.

b. In addition to the inquiries being done by these sub-groups, committees are themselves underway with inquiries into:

- Energy policy and planning in Wales
- Disability-related Harassment in Wales
- Regeneration of town centres
- Children's Oral Health in Wales
- Community Safety in Wales
- Welsh Government draft budget proposals for 2012-13
- Stroke Risk Reduction
- Contribution of community pharmacy to health services in Wales
- Granting of Powers to Welsh Ministers in UK Laws

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- c. They are also undertaking additional work, such as preparing for budget scrutiny, examining annual reports of the PSOW and Children and Older People's Commissioners, and meeting stakeholders in a range of events.
- d. This level of activity and the new committee timetable is generating a need for adjustments to working styles and practices for both Members and staff. In particular, the demand for briefing is high and expected turnaround time extremely tight, with some Members expressing a desire for this to be made available more quickly. The staff supporting committees are working with Chairs and Members to ensure that expectations can be met in a sustainable way.

1.2 Remuneration Board

- a. The Remuneration Board met on 23 September to discuss its future work programme. In the next few years the Board will undertake a review of Assembly Members' pensions, and continue to monitor the implementation of its Determination based on feedback from Members and their staff. As part of its review of pension arrangements, the Board will undertake early consultation with Members and other stakeholders on the principles of pension provision for Assembly Members. This is likely to include written consultation, and a colloquium to be held in the spring. The Board will engage in ongoing consultation on all aspects of its future work programme.
- b. The next meeting of the Remuneration Board will be on 25 November.

1.3 Fourth Assembly programme

- a. The programme recently conducted a lessons learned session with Assembly staff and will be doing the same with support staff leads from each of the party groups. The Hansard Society is conducting some independent research with new Assembly Members about their experience of the Assembly and the support they were given to help them settle into their new roles. This material, and feedback gathered from Members more generally, will be included in a future paper for the Commission, and used to inform planning and action for the Fifth Assembly.

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1.4 Flow of information from the Welsh Government

- a. The *Protocol on Contact between the Welsh Government and the National Assembly Research Service* has now been agreed between Government and Commission officials and came into force on 10 October 2011. This follows the First Minister's agreement to the recommendation of the Remuneration Board that arrangements should be put in place for access to Welsh Government-held information which are equivalent to those in other UK parliamentary institutions.
- b. The protocol describes the relationship between the Welsh Government and the Research Service and sets out the working arrangements for accessing information from the Government by the Research Service on behalf of Assembly Members.
- c. The main change is that instead of each request having to be submitted in writing to Ministerial private offices, the Research Service will be able to contact relevant policy officials by phone for clarification purposes or to ascertain the location of previously published material and will be able to e mail officials directly for all other requests. The Government intend to publish all questions and responses on a disclosure log on their website.
- d. The protocol and new working relationships will be kept under review to ensure the best possible service to Members.

2.0 Strategic goal – engage with the people of Wales

2.1 Media coverage

- a. Media work during the summer recess concentrated on publicising the Presiding Officer's outreach activities, including essay pieces and interviews in newspapers including *The Western Mail* and *The Daily Post*, and *South Wales Argus*.
- b. There was significant coverage of the launch of the public consultation on the Official Languages Bill and Bilingual Services Scheme, including a thought piece from Keith Bush in the *Western Mail* and articles publicising the Bilingual Services workshops.

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2.2 Summer engagement activities

- a. The Assembly bus visited five national and seven regional events across Wales. Over 6,500 people visited the bus to engage with Assembly staff and take part in various activities.
- b. The Presiding Officers attended a number of the shows and met with a range of organisations to discuss their priorities, and to establish how the Assembly, with its new powers, could ensure that these issues were brought to the fore.
- c. The Petitions and Environment and Sustainability committees held well-received meetings and workshops at the Royal Welsh Show and the National Eisteddfod.

2.3 The Assembly as a legislature then, now and in the future

- a. The Assembly held a conference in partnership with the Wales Governance Centre and the Study of Parliament Group in September to consider the Assembly's development as a legislature. Contributors included Professor Richard Wyn Jones (the Wales Governance Centre's Director), Professor Laura McAllister of the University of Liverpool, Sir Christopher Jenkins (a former First Parliamentary Counsel), and Alan Trench (a constitutional expert).
- b. The conference, which was opened by the Presiding Officer, also provided an opportunity for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wales Governance Centre, which will, in future, be based in the Pierhead.

2.4 Draft Strategic Equality Plan

- a. The Management Board has recently agreed the objectives set out in the Commission's draft Strategic Equality Plan. The Presiding Officer and the Assembly Commissioner with responsibility for equality have also provided their endorsement. The Assembly Commissioner's Equality team have now started the consultation process which will be on-going throughout October and November. Comments will be invited from all Assembly Members, Assembly staff, special interest groups and the public during this time. Responses will be analysed and will contribute to the final plan. This will

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be returned to the Management Board for consideration before being submitted to the Assembly Commission for formal approval at the February 2012 meeting. The final Strategic Equality Plan will be published in April 2012.

2.5 Vote 2011 campaign feedback

- a. In 2010, the Assembly devised a communications strategy to promote the three opportunities the people of Wales had to vote in 2011. Running in early 2011, the campaign aimed to raise awareness, encourage people to vote, support the Commission's goal to promote and widen engagement in devolution and to position the Commission as an informative, impartial and authoritative source of information.
- b. More than 20,000 Vote 2011 leaflets were printed and distributed. In addition, over 52,500 visitors to the Senedd between July 2010 and January 2011 were exposed to the leaflets and the display materials.
- c. The Assembly Bus visited the 22 local authority areas and the majority of electoral constituencies prior to the start of the pre-referendum moratorium in February. Outreach presentations were given to 626 people, 269 people attended conferences on Vote 2011, and officials spoke to 1,350 students at Freshers' Fairs across Wales.
- d. The online advertising campaign drove 7,767 clicks to the microsite, and, during the course of the campaign, more than 2,000 people visited the Vote 2011 pages on the Assembly website. The advertising campaign delivered 25 million impressions (the number of times the advert could have been seen online).
- e. Vote 2011 received broadcast coverage from BBC Breakfast, BBC News 24, the BBC Network News (lunchtime and evening) and Radio 5 Live and Radio 4 – giving exposure to a combined audience of approximately 24 million people. In addition, local press coverage in Wales (daily titles such as the Western Mail and Daily Post) as well as weekly regional titles reached an average readership of approximately 700,000.

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- f. The campaign was shortlisted for the Chartered Institute of Marketing's Canmol Cymru Awards 2011, but was not successful on this occasion.

3.0 Strategic goal – promote Wales

3.1 Commonwealth Parliamentary Association

- a. Two Members attended the 57th Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference on behalf of the Assembly in July. The conference, which was hosted by the House of Commons, had a theme of 'Reinforcing Democracy in the New Age'.
- b. In July, the Deputy Presiding Officer represented the Assembly at a CALRE (Conference of European Regional Legislatures and Assemblies) workshop on the 'The Dynamics of European Regionalism' in Italy. The minutes and reports discussed at the workshop are available on the Assembly's website.
- c. The Presiding Officer attended a meeting of the CALRE Standing Committee in Tenerife in September. At the meeting, the Committee discussed the issue of immigration from Africa and its impact on European countries, and nominations for the next CALRE president. The minutes and reports discussed at the meeting will be made available on the Assembly's website.

3.2 Official Opening of the Fourth Assembly

- a. The Official Opening of the Fourth Assembly in June 2011 comprised two events:
 - i. the 'Celebration of the Mace', held on 6 June in partnership with the Inter-Faith Council for Wales; and
 - ii. the Royal Opening of the Fourth Assembly by Her Majesty The Queen, in the company of His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh and Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.
- b. The Royal Opening was attended by 298 invited guests, including representatives of the Welsh judiciary and the

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Supreme High Court, Assembly Members' guests, representatives of Welsh civic society and local government, and diplomatic representatives.

- c. A report of the official opening, which sets out the lessons learned and the final cost of the opening (£39,518 against a budget of £51,000), has been considered by the Presiding Officers. A copy can be made available to Commissioners on request.
- d. Feedback about the opening has been mainly positive, including correspondence from Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales expressing their congratulations to the Assembly for a memorable and enjoyable occasion.

3.3 Prime Minister's visit – July 2011

- a. The Prime Minister, accompanied by the Secretary of State for Wales and the Deputy Prime Minister, addressed the Assembly in the Siambr in July 2011 following a regional meeting of the UK Cabinet. In his speech, the Rt Hon David Cameron MP paid tribute to the role that Wales has played in shaping the UK, and stressed that mature devolution should be about “mutual respect, the sharing of ideas and the spirit of collaboration”. He also confirmed that a process similar to the Calman Commission in Scotland would be established to seek a consensus on the future direction of devolution and the way that Wales is funded.
- b. Following the visit, Outreach officials compiled a lessons learned report to inform similar visits in future.

4.0 Strategic goal – use resources wisely

4.1 Finance Committee – 6 October 2011

- a. On 6 October, Angela Burns AM, accompanied by Claire Clancy and Steven O'Donoghue, attended the Finance Committee for scrutiny of the Commission's draft budget 2012-13. The Committee probed the proposed budget increase in comparison to budget reductions being applied elsewhere in the public sector. The Commissioner explained

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the Commission's proposals for protecting and enhancing services to Members, and the impact that would have resulted had the Commission decided to continue with a strategy of year-on-year budget reductions. The Committee has three weeks to lay its report. The current intention is to lay the Commission's final budget on 9 November, for a motion debate on 16 November.

4.2 Audit Committee

- a. Minutes from the Audit Committee meetings on 9 June and 7 July 2011 are attached at Annex B for information.

4.3 Investment programme

- a. Our Change Programme has been refocused and is now known as the Investment Programme. The purpose of the change was to streamline the way the programme is managed and to place a greater emphasis on project management and ensuring that all projects undergo careful, critical scrutiny, with appropriate expert input.
- b. The key projects under consideration at present are proposals to develop a combined HR and payroll system, and to refresh the ICT equipment the Senedd. Initial consideration is also being given to options for the replacement of the Merlin system. The Investment Programme is forecast to spend £960,000 this year.

4.4 Industrial action – 30 November

- a. Trade unions have called a collective day of strike action on Wednesday 30 November in protest at the UK Government's, public sector pension reforms including planned increases to contributions with effect from April 2012. The three unions recognised by the Commission (PCS, Prospect and the FDA) have all indicated their general support for the action and their intention to ballot their members. FDA's (the union for senior managers and professionals) unusual decision to ballot for industrial action is an indication of the depth of feeling concerning the reforms.

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- b. Some 40 per cent of the Commission's workforce were absent from work as a result of the last day of industrial action on 30 June (as they were directly involved in the strike action). A further number of staff were absent due to caring responsibilities arising from school closures etc. Some 60 per cent of the Commission's staff are members of a trade union.
- c. The Commission's business continuity plans are being implemented to ensure all practicable steps are taken to mitigate the impact of the action on business.

4.5 Attendance management

- a. Absence rates for the staff of the Commission have reached an all-time low as result of the robust but supportive application of the Commission's Attendance Management Policy. In the twelve months to August the level of absence reduced to an average of 5.72 days per employee. Absence rates had peaked at an average of 10.6 days per annum in 2007. Current rates of absence compare favourably with benchmark data that shows an average of 7.9 days per full time equivalent employee in public sector organisations of between 250-500 employees.

4.6 Security staff

- a. Following an improved offer to security staff to change to new working hours, there were no extra volunteers. As the Commission prefers to move to the new working patterns on a voluntary basis, a recruitment exercise has begun to ensure that we have sufficient staff to cover the Assembly's requirements, including seven day opening, and Plenary sessions or events that continue into the evening.
- b. Part of the cost of bringing in new staff will be met from the removal of the need for planned overtime. Nevertheless, in the short term, there will be a net increase in cost of about £240k per annum, but this will reduce as security staff who continue to work on the old patterns will not be replaced as they leave or retire.

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4.7 Head of Procurement

- a. This post, which will enhance the skills available to us in procurement and contract management, has been offered to and accepted by Jan Koziel, currently Head of Procurement with the Environment Agency, Wales. He will start on 1 November. The post is a two year secondment, and will be reviewed towards the end of that period. Soon after he joins us, Jan will talk to all Commissioners to get their feedback and ideas on procurement-related issues.

5.0 Financial report

5.1 The budget for 2011-12 totals £48.8 million. The position at the end of August shows a total net spend of £12.339million for Assembly Services. This is within 0.5 per cent of the planned expenditure. Assembly Members have utilised 37 per cent of their total annual budget.

5.2 Both the Assembly Services and the Assembly Members' budget ambits contain one-off election resource that is not likely to be fully utilised. In particular, the Assembly Members' budget was set with the one-off election costs estimated using a larger turnover of Members at the election than actually took place, with the result that a considerable amount (£1.8m) was not required. The senior management team is currently considering the matter to determine the funds likely to be returned to the Welsh Block, and will bring a paper setting out the issues to the Commission's November meeting.

6.0 Other information

6.1 A list of information disclosed since the last report under the Freedom of Information Act is attached at **Annex A**. The full disclosure can be provided to Commissioners on request.

Annex A

Information released following access to information requests (May-September 2011)

- Costs associated with the running of the Deputy Presiding Officer's Office over the last five years
- Assembly costs relating to the Royal Wedding
- Payments made by the Assembly to barristers
- Numbers of cheques issued by the Assembly
- Information relating to Assembly staff filled vacancies
- Costs of the report by the Commissioner for Standards and costs of the motion to reinstate Liberal Democrat Member and translation costs
- Number and costs of flights using the North/South Wales air route since April 2010
- Information relating to recess periods

Information withheld following access to information requests (May-September 2011)

- Information relating to ICT and server details
- Legal advice relating to disqualified Members
- Correspondence between an Assembly Member and the Commission
- Personal data relating to the above requests

Annex B

Bwyllgor Archwilio Comisiwn y Cynulliad
Assembly Commission Audit Committee

NAFWC ACAC

Minutes of 9 June 2011

Time: 11:00

Venue: Conference room 4B

Minutes of 09 June 2011 meeting

Present:

Richard Calvert (Independent Advisor) (Chair)

Tim Knighton (Independent Advisor)

Professor Pickard (Independent Advisor)

Officials present:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk

Dianne Bevan, Chief Operating Officer

Nicola Callow, Head of Finance

Mark Jones, Wales Audit Office

Lynne Flux, Head of Internal Audit

Rachael Tonkin, KPMG

John Grimes, Head of Governance

Alison Rutherford, Secretariat

Item 1 - Welcome and Introductions

1. The Chair welcomed attendees. No apologies had been received

Declaration of Interests

2. No interests were declared.

Minutes of Meeting held on 19 April

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

4. Claire Clancy summarised events at the Assembly since the Audit Committee last met. Following the election in May there had been 23 new Members to the Assembly, a new Presiding Officer, Rosemary Butler, and a new Deputy Presiding Officer, David Melding. Four new Commissioners

had been selected, Angela Burns, Peter Black, Rhodri Glyn Thomas and Sandy Mewies. The portfolios of each of the Commissioners, including Audit Committee membership, would be agreed at the Commission meeting on 16 June.

Claire reported that she had received very positive feedback following the Members induction, including praise from the First Minister that the process had been successful and well received.

The Royal Opening had taken place the previous week to formally open the Fourth Assembly, and had been extremely successful.

Claire outlined events surrounding the disqualification of two Liberal Democrat Assembly Members as a result of being members of an organisation listed in the National Assembly (Disqualification) Order 2011. Motions to disregard the disqualification had been tabled, but any debate on the motions would have to follow the current investigation by the Police and CPS, and an internal review.

External Audit

5. Mark Jones advised that Richard Harries would be the new Wales Audit Office Audit Director for the Commission. He would shortly be meeting Claire Clancy and would attend the next Audit Committee meeting.

Item 2 – Internal Audit

Paper 1 Progress on Internal Audit programme

6. Lynne Flux introduced the paper and advised that work for the 2010/11 programme had been completed. Lynne invited comments from the Committee about the usefulness and format of the paper to be used for the 2011-12 audit cycle. The Committee agreed it was a clear summary and a useful way to track progress.

Paper 5 Payroll Internal Audit Report

7. Rachael Tonkin from KPMG introduced the Payroll report, a full scope audit, which produced an overall rating of Satisfactory. Rachael said that the control environment within the payroll function was very strong but that a streamlining of the control process was required to achieve a higher rating. Three recommendations had been agreed and should shortly be implemented. The committee emphasised the importance of effective controls.

Paper 6 Risk Management Internal Audit

8. Rachael Tonkin outlined the findings of the limited scope review of Risk Management at the Assembly. She told the Committee that there was evidence that Risk Management was well embedded and dealt with at every level within the Assembly.
9. The report made a number of recommendations for improvement. These covered minor control weaknesses in managing the risk process and bringing more clarity to the reporting of risks. Specifically, the style of the reports could be changed to ensure key risks were highlighted and not lost in the detail. One suggestion was to provide a top ten risk report to the Audit Committee to ensure key risks were reported directly.
10. The Chair noted that Risk Management is largely embedded in the Assembly's culture, and that the improvements suggested were minor. The Committee emphasised the benefits of clear reporting, which can be aided by IT tools.

Paper 3 Annual Opinion and Report by the Head of Internal Audit

11. Lynne Flux introduced the paper which provided a summary of the reviews undertaken for 2010-11. Of the total 47 recommendations made, 9 were rated as high. Lynne provided a positive opinion on the control environment within the Commission. In coming to this conclusion the Head of Internal Audit had drawn assurance from the work undertaken in the internal audit programme and from other sources. The latter included Directors' Statements of Assurance and Wales Audit Office audit work on members' expenses.
12. Mark Jones noted Wales Audit Office's agreement with the assurance and the Chair expressed the Committee's acceptance of the opinion.

Paper 4 Progress on recommendations

13. The Committee considered the paper detailing updates on progress on recommendations of Internal Audit reports from the 2010/11 programme.
14. Dianne Bevan confirmed, in relation to the Contract Management recommendations, that stringent checking around contract management issues had been put in place and that legal issues and advice was being considered in detail where necessary.

15. John Grimes told the Committee that a new Head of Procurement would shortly be recruited to strengthen the team, to evaluate processes and provide assurance to the Chief Executive. John told the Committee that a paper would be delivered at the next Change Board to consider a strategic approach to the Change Programme and to clarify the various roles.
16. Claire Clancy reiterated the importance of having the right structures and systems in place, and to ensure that there is corporate commitment to the delivery of contracts.
17. The Committee emphasised the importance of including implementation dates when looking at progress, and tracking where dates are missed. The Committee suggested that the management response could be excluded from the report to avoid duplication, and that 'traffic lights' might be useful in monitoring progress on recommendations. This was agreed. Lynne Flux to oversee amendments to the reports produced.

Paper 2 Audit Plan 2011/12

18. Lynne Flux introduced the Audit Plan and told the Committee that the aim of the 2011/12 plan was to ensure a more consistent spread of work throughout the year. She said that some in house resource would be available to assist in completing this work. Since the last meeting, she had been able, with KPMG to provide a more detailed plan with target Audit Committee review dates. Key changes since the Committee's consideration at the last meeting included the:
 - Fourth Assembly. The 4AP programme was conducting a 'lessons learned' exercise. The Head of Internal Audit would feed into this process rather than undertake a separate piece of work.
 - Website content. A short in-house piece of work would be conducted to assess the current operation of content management controls. Governance and decision making arrangements in the Assembly Commission. This would be conducted in-house and map the boards and committees operating in the Commission to assess effectiveness and potential duplication of roles.
 - The Resources Service was undertaking work looking at fraud, whistleblowing and the Bribery Act. Internal Audit were participating in this to develop, with staff groups, a fraud risk register.

Item 3 - 2010-11 Annual Accounts
Paper 7 Draft resource accounts 2010-11

19. Nicola Callow introduced the paper and accounts, advising that they were substantially complete, with some drafting of the commentary to be finalised. The accounts were delivered on time to Wales Audit Office on 1 June and the Commission was on time to deliver the final accounts to the Committee at 7 July meeting.
20. Nicola highlighted one re-statement which referred to the change in accounting of costs of capital charges, and said that this charge had been removed from the Commission's account in line with Treasury guidelines.
21. The Committee identified some areas where cross references between statements and notes of the accounts would ensure a clearer picture is given. Nicola Callow agreed to include cross references where necessary.

Item 4 External Audit
Oral Update on the emerging external audit opinion for the financial year 2010-11

22. Mark Jones from the Wales Audit Office thanked the Commission for the quality of the draft accounts submitted to them for audit. He reported that there were no substantial findings thus far and WAO would report fully at the July meeting. Mark also said that the sickness of one audit team member at the start of the audit had been addressed and would not impact on the timetable

Item 5 Assembly Commission Governance
Paper 9 Quarterly Risk Management Report

23. Dianne Bevan introduced the paper and said that the horizon scanning exercise and strategic register would need to be considered in light of the new strategic goals of the Commission. Key issues on the horizon were Contract Management risks, possible industrial action, and some delays in the ABMS project in light of problems in loading it onto the system.
24. The Committee suggested that registers should be monitored closely and that traffic lighting and direction of travel of risk ratings could be indicated for clearer reporting.

Item 6 Other Items

Future Meeting Dates

25. The Chair asked that the Work Programme be circulated with the agenda for future meetings. The Chair said that dates following the July meeting had not yet been decided, noting that the June and July meetings were scheduled to fit in with the draft and final accounts. Future dates to support the Internal Audit Programme would be identified by John and Lynne and circulated to the Committee.

Item 7 Papers to note

Paper 11 Audit Committee Annual Report

26. The Chair said that the Annual Report had been finalised and circulated, and agreed by e-mail.

Paper 12 Departure Report

27. The Chair noted there were fewer departures than at April's meeting because a shorter time period was covered in this report. The Committee questioned the 'value for money' claimed in the summary of the Bus Maintenance departure. The Committee asked John Grimes to investigate and report back to the Committee.

Any Other Business

28. Mark Jones told the Committee that David Wood, Audit Team Leader at WAO was to leave at the end of the audit of the Annual Accounts, and that there would be a new team leader in place for next year's audit.

Date of next meeting

29. The next meeting will take place on 7 July – venue to be confirmed.

Bwyllgor Archwilio Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission Audit Committee

NAFWC ACAC

Minutes of 7 July 2011

Time: 11:00

Venue: Video Conference Room, Ty Hywel,

Minutes of 7 July 2011 meeting

Present:

Richard Calvert (Independent Advisor) (Chair)

Tim Knighton (Independent Advisor)

Professor Robert Pickard (Independent Advisor)

Angela Burns, AM

Officials present:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk

Dianne Bevan, Chief Operating Officer

Nicola Callow, Head of Finance

Lynne Flux, Head of Internal Audit

Richard Harries, Wales Audit Office

Mark Jones, Wales Audit Office

John Grimes, Head of Governance

Item 1 - Introductions

1. The Chair welcomed attendees. No apologies had been received

Declaration of Interests

2. No interests were declared.

Minutes of meeting held on 10 June 2010

3. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Matters Arising

4. Para 27 'Bus Maintenance Departure' John Grimes reported that he had investigated the circumstances behind this departure which had been required because there were fewer than three tenders. He said that, while consideration had been given to whether the preferred tender

offered value for money, this had been based primarily on the basis of the contract manager's opinion and there had been little analysis presented in support of it. He said that procedures would be strengthened to ensure a more thorough analysis in future cases.

5. This led on to a wider discussion of the risks associated with procurement and project management in the Assembly. The Chair noted that action was in hand which would lead to the appointment of a new Head of Procurement and asked whether, in the meantime, officials felt the safeguards in place were adequate. Responding, Claire Clancy pointed to the way in which awareness of, and sensitivity to, procurement issues had been raised within the Assembly. She also outlined the changed approach to scrutinising and approving projects and the recent training course which had been provided for contract managers. While one could not eliminate all risks, Claire Clancy thought that current position was satisfactory but that it would be fully strengthened once all the planned action had been implemented. She said that, while concerns remained, she would let the Audit Committee have a progress report on procurement exercises at each meeting.

Clearance of Minutes

6. The Chair told the Committee that he intended to send their minutes to the Assembly Commission after each meeting. To avoid delay he would in future ask Members to agree them by e-mail rather than wait for the Committee's next meeting.

Item 2 - Annual Accounts and Assurance 2010/2011

ACAC(9) Paper 1 Resource Accounts 2010/2011

ACAC(9) Paper 2 Wales Audit Office ISA 260 Report 2010/2011

7. Nicola Callow outlined the changes that had been made to the accounts since the Audit Committee had considered the draft version on 10 June. While a number of small amendments had been made following the audit, these were of minor significance.
8. Richard Harries reinforced this message saying that it was the Wales Audit Office's intention to issue an unqualified report on the accounts. He added that his team had very much appreciated the cooperative way that officials had worked with them – and, particularly, in dealing with the last minute change in relation to pension costs which had resulted from late guidance received by Wales Audit Office on 1 July.

9. The Audit Committee noted the change that had been required in the accounting treatment for the pension scheme past service costs. While this did not significantly affect the conclusions to be drawn from the accounts the Committee considered it unsatisfactory that a change of this kind should be required after the end of the year.
10. The Audit Committee noted the very satisfactory financial performance that had been achieved during the year and asked that their congratulations be passed to the Finance team. The Committee particularly welcomed the continued improvement over the last three years which had been evidenced by the most recent ISA 260 report. The Committee concluded by recommending to the Accounting Officer that she should sign the accounts.

Item - 3 Dates of Future Meetings

ACAC(9) Paper 3 Dates of future meetings

11. The Dates of future meetings were agreed.

Item 4 - Paper to note

ACAC(9) Paper 4 Report on TRS project

12. The Audit Committee noted the report on this project and that the lessons to be learned from it largely echoed those from other recent reports and which were already being addressed.
13. In the discussion Audit Committee members emphasised the key role that the Senior Responsible Officer plays within a project and the crucial role of an experienced project manager. Members stressed the importance of sound advice where technical issues were involved and noted that independent ICT consultants could assist with 'scoping' a project. The Committee noted also the importance of sound document management when dealing with complex project issues.

Date of next meeting

14. The next meeting will take place on 11 November.



Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

AC(4)2011(5) Paper 6

Date: 20 October 2011

Time: 13:00-15:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Secretariat, ext 8705

Assembly Commission portfolios

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 This paper invites Assembly Commissioners to provide a verbal update on their portfolios.

Portfolio	Commissioner
Presiding Officer and Commission Chair, with responsibility for Legal Services.	Rosemary Butler AM
Budget, governance, including Audit Committee membership, and links with the Remuneration Board. Improvement of services to Members, employment support and professional development for Members and their staff.	Angela Burns AM
ICT, broadcasting and e-democracy, the Assembly estate, facilities and sustainability. The Commission as the employer of Assembly staff.	Peter Black AM
Education services, front of house, catering and security. The Commission's statutory equality functions and Freedom of Information.	Sandy Mewies AM
Citizen engagement and communications, national and international outreach. The Commission's Welsh language functions and policy.	Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM

Although the Deputy Presiding Officer, David Melding, is not formally a member of the Commission, it was agreed that he would support the Commission by focusing on the Pierhead as a centre for Assembly development and debate, and links with the Wales Governance Centre and others relevant to this role.

Agenda Item 7

Comisiwn y Cynulliad

Assembly Commission

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



AC(4)2011(5) (Paper 7)

Date: Thursday 20 October 2011

Time: 13:00-15:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Commission Secretariat, ext 8705

Assembly Commission rolling programme

Meeting date	Agenda item	Portfolio holder/lead official
24 Nov 11	Bilingual services	Rhodri Glyn Thomas/Non Gwilym
	Finance Committee report on draft Commission budget	Angela Burns/Steve O'Donoghue
	Carbon management strategy annual report	Peter Black/Connie Cockburn
	Options for ICT services after 2014	Peter Black/Connie Cockburn
	Strengthening governance arrangements	Angela Burns/Steven O'Donoghue
	Consideration of supplementary budget 2011-12	Angela Burns/Steven O'Donoghue
	Management Board report to the Commission	Claire Clancy
	Rolling programme	Secretariat
2 Feb 12	Assembly staff remuneration?	Peter Black/Steve O'Donoghue
	Equalities scheme 2012-16	Sandy Mewies/Steve O'Donoghue
	Review of Freedom of Information processes?	Sandy Mewies/Non Gwilym
	Procurement and contract management	Sandy Mewies/John Grimes
	ICT strategy decision	Peter Black/Connie Cockburn
	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Commission?	Presiding Officer/Ian Summers
	Portfolio holder updates	Portfolio holders
	Management Board report to the Commission	Claire Clancy

AC(4)2011(5) (Paper 7)

Assembly Commission rolling programme

Meeting date	Agenda item	Portfolio holder/lead official
	Rolling programme	Secretariat
8 Mar 12	Assembly staff remuneration?	Peter Black/Steve O'Donoghue
	UNO benefits and savings six monthly review	Peter Black/Connie Cockburn
	Framework for annual report and accounts 2011-12	Angela Burns/Rhodri Glyn Thomas/Non Gwilym/Steve O'Donoghue
	ICT strategy decision?	Peter Black/Connie Cockburn
	Management Board report to the Commission	Claire Clancy
	Rolling programme	Secretariat
10 May 12	Draft budget strategy 2013-14	Angela Burns/Steve O'Donoghue
	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Commission?	Presiding Officer/Claire Clancy
	Portfolio holder updates	Portfolio holders
	Management Board report to the Commission	Claire Clancy
	Rolling programme	Secretariat
28 Jun 12	Sign off annual report and accounts 2011-12	Presiding Officer/Claire Clancy
	Draft budget strategy 2013-14	Angela Burns/Steve O'Donoghue
	Management Board report to the Commission	Claire Clancy
	Rolling programme	Secretariat
12 Jul 12	Draft Budget 2013-14	Angela Burns/Steve O'Donoghue
27 Sep 12	Draft budget 2013-14	Angela Burns/Steve O'Donoghue

Agenda Item 8

This paper has been deemed not suitable for publication in line with the Commission's rules for conduct of business.

Document is Restricted



Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

AC(4)2011 Out of committee

Date: Out of committee

Author name and contact number: Secretariat, ext 8705

Motion to elect Trustees of the Members' Pension Scheme

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 Under Standing Order 1.7, “the Assembly must, on a motion proposed by the Commission, elect Trustees to the National Assembly for Wales Members' Pension Scheme in accordance with the Scheme Rules”. This paper asks Commissioners to approve and table a draft motion.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Commission are asked to approve and table the draft motion (attached at Annex A) to elect Pension Trustees.

3.0 Discussion

3.1 Standing Order 1.7 states that “the Assembly must, on a motion proposed by the Commission, elect Trustees to the National Assembly for Wales Members' Pension Scheme in accordance with the Scheme Rules”.

3.2 The Trustees have requested that the Commissioner table a motion for debate on Wednesday 12 October, the purpose of which is to bring the Members' Pension Scheme Trustee body up to its full complement of six Trustees, as permitted in the Scheme rules, following the resignations of three Trustees earlier this year.

3.3 In addition to the replacement of Member Trustees, nominated by party groups, there has also been a ballot of Scheme members to identify a Pensioner Trustee following the resignation of Lord Wigley. Scheme members elected Gareth Jones as the Pensioner Trustee. As Gareth is currently a Member Trustee, he does not need to be re-elected to be Pensioner Trustee.

Draft motion to elect Members' Pension Scheme Trustees

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales, acting under Standing Order No. 1.7, elects David Melding AM, Mike Hedges AM, Peter Black AM and Jocelyn Davies AM as Trustees of the National Assembly for Wales Members' pension scheme in place of Rosemary Butler AM, John Griffiths AM, Lord German and Lord Wigley.

Agenda Item 10

This paper has been deemed not suitable for publication in line with the Commission's rules for conduct of business.

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