

Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Meeting date: Thursday, 27 February 2020

Conference Room A - Tŷ Hywel

Meeting time: 10.15 - 14.30

WRB (27)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Trevor Reaney (Temporary Chair) Ronnie Alexander Michael Redhouse Dame Jane Roberts
Officials:	Joanna Adams Anna Daniel Carys Evans Huw Gapper Craig Griffiths Gareth Watts
Secretariat:	Lleu Williams (Clerk) Daniel Collier (Deputy Clerk) Joanna Adams Anna Daniel Carys Evans Huw Gapper Craig Griffiths Gareth Watts

1 Chair's introduction

- 1.1 The Temporary Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from Dame Dawn Primarolo. Trevor Reaney was selected as Temporary Chair for this meeting.
- 1.3 The Board agreed the minutes of the 16 January meeting as a correct record.
- 1.4 Prior to the meeting, the Board met the Member Representative Group and the support staff Representative Group, which was constructive and greatly welcomed. The Board noted that issues raised at those meetings would inform its review of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly.
- 1.5 The Board discussed what additional resource it could put in place to best mitigate any potential security risk to support staff as they undertake their work. The Board agreed to fund one additional personal security device for each Member's office (in addition to the devices that are provided to Members themselves).
- 1.6 The Board noted that the Assembly will conduct a week of business in north east Wales in June 2020. The Board agreed that, for this week only, the limited number of return journeys by support staff outlined in the Determination could be utilised between the Member's constituency/region and the location in north east Wales.
- 1.7 The Board discussed a request from the Llywydd to consider revising the salary rate for the Chair of the Standards of Conduct Committee to reflect an increase in responsibilities.
- 1.8 The Board agreed that the Chair should be remunerated at the committee chairs' higher level salary rate. The Board agreed that this rate would apply from 1 March 2020 until the end of the Fifth Assembly.
- 1.9 The Board noted and agreed its Forward Work Programme for the remainder of its term.

Action points:

- The Secretariat to inform the Llywydd of its decision to remunerate the role Chair of Standards of Conduct Committee to the higher level salary rate for the remainder of this Assembly.

- The secretariat to issue the Board's decision letter as soon as possible.

2 Item for decision: Review of support staff handbook

- 2.1 The Board welcomed Joanna Adams to the meeting.
- 2.2 The Board discussed the scope of a review of the support staff handbook.
- 2.3 The Board agreed that, following a discussion on the review of the handbook, it would be appropriate to refresh the existing contract to reflect the updated handbook. This would ensure that there is alignment and that they are both fit for the Sixth Senedd.
- 2.4 The Board noted that Members' Business Support would discuss this further with the Representative Groups over the coming weeks.

3 Item for decision: Consultation on annual review of the Determination and name change proposals

- 3.1 The Board considered responses to the consultation on annual review of the Determination for 2020–21 and name change proposals.
- 3.2 The Board decided to increase the residential accommodation expenditure allowance for outer area Members by 1.7 per cent for the next financial year. This will increase the allowance to £9,720 per annum (which is £810 per calendar month).
- 3.3 The Board agreed to increase the Political Party Support Allowance by 3.86 per cent which will see the allowance increase to £999,070 for the next financial year.
- 3.4 The Board agreed to remove restrictions on Members' ability to recruit to fixed term contracts by amending the Recruitment Policy. Such recruitment would be subject to an 18 month limit instead of the current six month limit. The Board agreed that the decision would take effect from the next financial year.
- 3.5 The Board agreed to amend the Recruitment Policy to reflect this decision. The Recruitment Policy will continue to state that all appointments longer than six months in duration will be subject to an open and fair recruitment process.
- 3.6 The Board also agreed to amend the section on Temporary Support in the Determination for the forthcoming year to reflect the Board's decision.

- 3.7 The Board noted that the Assembly name change to Senedd will take place on 6 May 2020. The Board agreed that it was reasonable that Members should not be able to claim back the costs of updating items as a result of the name change, such as office signage, prior to the next Assembly election.
- 3.8 The Board agreed not to allow Members to claim back the costs of replacing items related to name change before the next election. The Board maintains its previous view that this is a proportionate approach due to the possible turnover in the number of Members at an election and the short shelf life of new signage.
- 3.9 An updated version of the Determination for the next financial year will be published in due course.

4 Item for decision: Review of the Board's effectiveness

- 4.1 The Board welcomed Gareth Watts, Head of Governance, to the meeting.
- 4.2 The Board considered proposals to conduct an end or term review of its effectiveness, including the scope, draft Terms of Reference and themes to explore further.
- 4.3 The Board agreed to conduct an end of term review which will consider the effectiveness of the Board's performance over its term; how it has discharged its functions in line with the 2010 Measure and how it has delivered against its strategy.
- 4.4 The review is expected to be completed by May 2020 and will inform the Board's legacy report, which will be published at the end of its term in office.

Action point:

- The secretariat to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the Board's work and report back to the Board later in the spring term.

5 Item for decision: Employment Practices Liability Insurance

- 5.1 The Board considered and discussed options and costs for providing Members' Employment Practices cover.
- 5.2 The Board agreed to maintain the current insurance arrangements.

Action point:

- The Board agreed to write to the Assembly Commission stating that the current insurance arrangements will be maintained and that the cost of the Employment Practices Liability insurance will be borne by the Assembly Commission.