

# Senedd Commission



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Venue: **Remote - External**

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Date: **Monday, 7 December 2020**

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Time: **12.30 - 14.25**

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## Minutes:

Commission  
Members:

**Elin Jones MS (Chair)**  
**Suzy Davies MS**  
**Rhun ap Iorwerth MS**  
**David J Rowlands MS**  
**Joyce Watson MS**

Officials present:

**Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Senedd**  
**Siwan Davies, Director of Senedd Business**  
**Arwyn Jones, Director of Communications and Engagement**  
**Dave Tosh, Director of Resources**  
**Nia Morgan, Director of Finance**  
**Eleanor Mulligan, Senior Member Learning and Engagement Manager**  
**Mark Neilson, Head of ICT and Broadcasting**  
**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support**  
**Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office**  
**Elin Roberts, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd**

Others in  
attendance:

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.a Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

### 1.b Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 1.c Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of 2 November were agreed.

## **2 Senedd Commission supplementary budget 2020-21**

Commissioners considered an update on the 2020-21 financial position and the recommendation for a supplementary budget in relation to the mid-year IAS19 pension finance cost calculation (£0.4 million) and an anticipated increase in the provision for accrued annual leave (£1.3 million).

Commissioners agreed to submit a Supplementary Budget for inclusion in the Welsh Government's third budget motion. They agreed the associated Explanatory Memorandum and letter to the Finance Committee.

## **3 Election Transition**

Commissioners discussed the position with regard to the Government's intention to introduce legislation in the new year relating to the 2021 election. The legislation would be likely to use the emergency procedure due to time available. The expectation was that the legislation would increase the period by which the election could be varied, and would likely propose reducing the length of Dissolution of the Senedd, which would be de-coupled from the pre-election period.

Commissioners discussed anticipated timescales and implications for the Commission, including the implications for decisions already taken about access to resources during Dissolution.

### 3.a Welcome, Induction and Learning programme

Commissioners considered an overview of the proposed welcome and induction arrangements for Members and their staff following the Senedd election in 2021; and recommendations for the Member and support staff learning programme in the Sixth Senedd. They noted information about the interpretation of Standing Orders to enable remote oath taking and proposed changes to security passes for spouses/partners.

Commissioners noted the proposed welcome and induction arrangements, recognising the strong foundations for the provision, and the overall direction and outline approach to Member Learning in the Sixth Senedd.

Commissioners discussed the importance of elements of the induction and training package which they agreed should be regarded as essential content, in particular the Code of Conduct, Dignity and Respect, Rules on Use of Resources, responsibilities as an employer and as a data controller, and cyber security.

### 3.b Members' ICT Allocation

Commissioners were presented with options and recommendations for the allocation of Information & Communications Technology (ICT) to Members and their support staff in the Sixth Senedd. Commissioners raised a number of points for clarification, and discussed the mechanisms for disposal of equipment being replaced.

It was agreed that a shorter version of the paper would be discussed with Commissioners individually, in order that they could provide written feedback from their groups about the proposed Member ICT allocation for the Sixth Senedd, bearing in mind the need to be prudent in the use of public funds.

### 3.c Senedd assets

Commissioners received a paper informing them of the intended approach to the use and return of Senedd assets in the period from January 2021 through the election and encompassing the winding-up arrangements for Members not re-elected.

Commissioners agreed the approach to the treatment of Senedd assets as part of Members' winding-up arrangements:

- All items that can provide value for money by being reused or re-purposed by the Commission should be returned.
- Other items, where additional cost or resource pressures (eg storage needs) would be disproportionate and not vfm, should be disposed of by the Member, the methods to be agreed through their winding-up plan.
- Disposal should be sustainable (re-purpose/recycle) and not result in personal gain for the Member or their staff.

The Commission noted the issues raised in relation to the public perception of the prudent use of resources in the period leading up to the election, and the need to demonstrate value for money principles in the final months of the Fifth Senedd and winding up period.

## **4 Member and Support Staff Survey 2020**

Commissioners received the 2020 Member and Support Staff survey results and noted that data from the survey would contribute to two Key Performance Indicators in the Commission's Annual Report 2020-21. They discussed the value of taking Members' views through the survey and agreed that it should continue to be used as one of the means to seek feedback. In recognising the low response rate in this survey, Commissioners reflected that it would be reasonable to assume that people who are unhappy with services would be more likely to prioritise completing such a survey and those who were content less so.

Commissioners noted the survey results and agreed to share the results report in the usual ways; and to share a summary of relevant findings with the Remuneration Board.

## **5 Covid update**

Commissioners were provided with an update on arrangements in place whilst the Senedd continues to operate under the current Welsh Government regulations and guidance, and assurance that monitoring for next steps is ongoing.

## **6 Papers to note:**

### **6.a Executive Board update (RAD decisions)**

Commissioners noted the routine summary of recruitment decisions provided to each Commission meeting.

### **6.b PAC report on the 2019-20 Annual report and Accounts**

Commissioners noted the PAC report, published on 26 November, and agreed that the response be agreed out of meeting by the portfolio holder.

## **7 Any other business**

A Commissioner raised that the decisions taken in June about the access to Commission resources by former Members during the period when the Senedd is Dissolved had given rise to some queries from their group members. The core principle of that decision making had been to provide for a free and fair election.

In light of the potential for the Dissolution period to be changed by proposed Government emergency legislation the Llywydd flagged that the issue may need to be revisited and asked for feedback from Commissioners.