

To: All Members

Cc: All support staff

4 January 2021

Dear Member,

The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd met on 10 December 2020. The following is a summary of its discussions and decisions.

Covid-19

The Board reviewed use of the additional allowances provided to Members during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Board is content that at this time the support available remains sufficient to meet current working arrangements. As outlined previously, the situation is being reviewed at every meeting to ensure the support available continues to meet the needs of Members and their support staff. As ever, the Board stands ready to support Members in these exceptional and uncertain times.

The Board also noted the Welsh Government's proposal to introduce emergency legislation to permit the Senedd election to be postponed, should that be required. It was agreed to further consider the impact of this on the Board's work and the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances when the legislation has been introduced.

Review of the Determination for the Sixth Senedd, 2021-22

The Board finalised its proposals for the annual review of the Determination for the Sixth Senedd, which was published on 16 December 2020. You can find full details of the Board's proposals in the [consultation document](#).

The consultation will close on 11 February 2021 and the Board will consider the responses received at its meeting on 4 March 2021.

The Board will also meet with both the Member and support staff Representative Groups ahead of the consultation deadline.

Support staff contract

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The Board received an update from Members' Business Support about the consultation on updating the support staff contract and the staff handbook. The draft contract has now been circulated for consultation and the Board would encourage you to share your views with Members' Business Support.

Forward work programme and strategy

The Board considered its engagement and communications strategy as part of its future work plan. The Board agreed to further explore how it engages with stakeholders when it has finalised its strategy later this year.

As noted in our previous letter, the Board will, between now and the summer, consider the strategic approach to its work during the Sixth Senedd, taking into consideration external factors such as the impact of Brexit, Covid-19 and any potential constitutional reform. To facilitate this work, the Board has agreed to undertake some scenario planning on such matters, which it will do between January and March 2021.

Finally, the Board has begun arranging a series of "virtual" visits to constituency/regional offices to meet with Members and support staff. Such visits will provide an opportunity for the Board to better understand how Members and staff work in these truly exceptional circumstances and to explore future needs as we move closer to the next parliamentary term. These visits will start in north Wales and will be rolled out across Wales. It is the Board's intention to visit as many offices as possible before dissolution.

As ever, if you would like to discuss anything with me, please contact the Board's secretariat on remuneration@senedd.wales to make arrangements.

May I also take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy and happy new year.

Best wishes and stay safe,



Dr Elizabeth Haywood

Chair, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

