

To: Members of the Senedd
Cc: All support staff

17 June 2022

Dear Members,

SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 26 MAY 2022

The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd met on Thursday 26 May. The main focus of the meeting was to consider thematic reviews the Board intends to undertake as part of its strategic work programme and receive background information relating to such. The Board also considered changes to the Rules for the Members' pension scheme, the pension scheme for Members' support staff and the scope of a mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness.

This letter provides a summary of the Board's deliberations and decisions. It will be published on the Board's website along with [summaries of previous meetings](#).

1. Pensions

Members' Pension Scheme Rules

I wrote to you on 22 October 2021 to inform you of the Board's intention to make changes to the Rules on the Members' pension scheme. These proposals were made in light of the impact of the Supreme Court's McCloud and Sargeant judgment, which ruled that certain public service pension scheme provisions, which treated younger members less favourably on the grounds of age, were discriminatory. The Board consulted Members on its proposed changes to the Scheme Rules and no objections were received.

As noted in that letter, the Board was required to obtain the approval of HM Treasury to amend the Scheme Rules. However, recent amendments to the Public Service Pensions Act 2013 removed the requirement to seek HM Treasury consent for any variations to the Members of the Senedd Pension Scheme. Accordingly, at its meeting on 26 May the Board agreed its proposed changes to the Scheme Rules.

The revised Rules will be published by the Pension Board of the Members of the Senedd Pension Scheme, in due course.

Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

Taliadau@senedd.cymru

0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

Remuneration@senedd.wales

0300 200 6565

Members' support staff pension scheme

As you know, the Board has made a number of changes to encourage staff to join the pension scheme, including providing up to an additional 3% employer contribution when staff make their own contribution. Following comments relating to the support staff pension scheme received in response to the annual review of the Determination, the Board considered a comparison of the scheme with relevant public and private sector pension schemes, including the civil service pension scheme. The Civil Service Pension Scheme is open to all employees of the Civil Service and organisations listed in Schedule 1 of the Superannuation Act 1972. Unlike Special Advisers who are classed as temporary civil servants, support staff are not eligible to join the scheme.

The Board was provided with information on the contributions required of employees, contributions made by employers and the benefits provided by various schemes. The support staff scheme appears fair in comparison to the other schemes considered. Consequently, no further changes to the support staff pension scheme were considered necessary.

2. Mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness

The Board has agreed to commission a mid-term review of its effectiveness. The Senedd Commission's Head of Governance and Assurance presented a scoping paper for this review.

The Board agreed the broad scope of the review and to consider a more detailed paper on the review in its July meeting, with a view to this being carried out later this year.

3. Ways of Working Review

As part of its strategic work programme the Board intends to carry out a thematic review of changes to the ways of working of Members and support staff following the Covid-19 pandemic and their implications for the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances.

The Board received a presentation by the Senedd Commission's Director of Resources, Ed Williams, on the Commission's work in response to changes in Members' and staff ways of working. It was agreed that the Board and Senedd Commission should work together to engage with Members and their staff to understand their preferred ways of working, to avoid duplication and to make the best use of resources and Members' time. Such engagement will be carried out later this year.

BWRDD **TALIADAU** **REMUNERATION** BOARD

The Board considered a scoping paper for its own review which will be informed by the engagement with Members and support staff. A plan for how and when the review will be undertaken will be considered by the Board at its meeting in July.

4. Scottish Parliament Reviews

Officials from the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body joined the Board's meeting for a discussion about how the Scottish Parliament is gathering information on changes to the ways of working of MSPs and their staff. Despite clear differences in the context within which MSPs and Members of the Senedd operate, the information shared by colleagues in Scotland was informative and useful.

Officials from the Scottish Parliament also discussed their work in reviewing the staffing support available to MSPs.

In light of comments received in response to the Board's consultation on the annual review of the Determination and during its engagement with Members, the Board intends to undertake its own review of the staffing support available to Members, subject to its resource capacity, which is being considered as part of the Senedd Commission's supplementary budget request.

Members and their staff will be consulted as part of any such review.

Other matters:

As part of its ongoing programme of engagement the Board is seeking meetings with a sample of new and returning Members to hear of their experiences to date during the Sixth Senedd. The Board appreciates the views shared by those Members with whom it has already met.

Our next meeting

Our next meeting will take place on 7 July 2022. The Board will consider further papers on its planned review of ways of working and the mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness. We will also consider the Board's annual report on the performance of its functions, the implications for the Determination of the findings of the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform and how to engage Members on the implications of the Co-operation Agreement.

These updates will be provided to you on a regular basis after our meetings so that you remain informed about our work. In the meantime, should you have any matters you wish

BWRDD **TALIADAU**
REMUNERATION BOARD

to raise with me or the Board, please do not hesitate to get in touch via the Clerk to the Board, by emailing remuneration@senedd.wales.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Elizabeth Haywood
Chair, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.