

To: Members of the Senedd  
Cc: All support staff

1 August 2022

Dear Members,

## **SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 7 JULY 2022**

The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd met on Thursday 7 July.

The main focus of the meeting was to consider Senedd Reform and to further progress two thematic reviews as part of our strategic work programme. The Board also agreed the terms of the mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness.

While we had prepared for an in-person meeting, we took a late decision to hold the Board meeting and drop-in session virtually, on account of rising incidence of covid and the associated risks. The Board is fully intending to resume in-person meetings in the autumn term, restrictions permitting.

We regret that the planned informal meetings with the Party Groups were unable to take place. These meetings are invaluable in helping us to appreciate the impacts of the Determination and giving us insights into how you work. We will look to rearrange these meetings for October around the Board's next meeting.

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. Senedd Reform**

The Board considered a paper on Senedd Reform, focusing on the findings of the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform's (SPCSR) and the next steps anticipated.

The former Chair to the SPCSR, Huw Irranca-Davies, gave his perspective on the work of the committee and the next steps to realising Senedd Reform by 2026.

We will be looking to arrange meetings with Party Leaders in the autumn term to help inform our early thinking on our approach to Senedd Reform and the issues we need to keep at the forefront of our mind as the legislation progresses, and ultimately what Senedd Reform will mean for the Determination for the Seventh Senedd.

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I shared with the Board that I had met with the Llywydd and that we have agreed to further, regular meetings as our thinking on Senedd reform develops.

The Board noted that it would probably need to give consideration to cost estimates during preparations for the Bill.

### **2. 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 agreed that Sir David Hanson would be the Board lead on this thematic review.

We developed our draft terms of reference (ToR), approach and timescales for the Ways of Working Thematic Review. The draft ToR will be shared with the Member and Staff Representative Groups for their views before a final version is published.

The Senedd Commission is also undertaking a Ways of Working review. The intention is for the Commission and Board to hold a joint engagement exercise on ways of working with Members and staff.

The Board agreed that there are issues of immediate priority around *current* ways of working that need to be considered and addressed in time for the next annual review of the Determination in the autumn term, such as reviewing working from home practices and the home working allowance.

The Board agreed that the implications for allowances of rising inflation and energy costs should be considered outside this thematic review. As we said in April, we are keeping a close eye on this area and have had regular updates from Commission colleagues regarding the market and also the pressure on Members' allowances. We will consider this at our next meeting and whether it is necessary to make any adjustments this year.

### **3. Thematic Review – Staffing**

The Board discussed draft terms of reference for a thematic review of staffing support and our approach to the review. The Board agreed to concentrate in the autumn term on issues that require immediate consideration.

Draft terms of reference for this review will be shared with the Representative Groups ahead of our next meeting, for discussion. Your input and evidence will help shape the review which will also focus on longer term issues into the Seventh Senedd.

#### **4. The Impact of the Co-operation agreement on Members' pay and allowances.**

The Board will consider again the impact of the Co-operation agreement ("the agreement") between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru on Members' pay and allowances at its October meeting. We agreed to seek evidence on this issue from internal stakeholders and the Welsh Government over the summer months to inform our decision making in the autumn term. We will be writing to Party Leaders to seek their views on the impact of the agreement.

**If you have any evidence or views on the impact of the agreement on your role as Members and the allowances available to you, please do get in touch by emailing [remuneration@senedd.wales](mailto:remuneration@senedd.wales).**

#### **5. Mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness**

The Board agreed terms of reference for a review of its effectiveness as well as the scope and timetable for this review. The review will provide an opportunity for stakeholders to feedback on how we engage with them and our ability to deliver our strategic programme for our remaining term in office. The review will be undertaken in the autumn term by Gareth Watts, Head of Governance and Assurance, Senedd Commission.

#### **6. Annual Report**

The Board reviewed its draft Annual Report. The report will be laid before the Senedd as soon as is practical.

#### **7. Our next meeting**

Our next meeting will take place on 13 October 2022, when we will consider the evidence received in relation to the Cooperation Agreement. We will also consider the impact of rising costs of living and inflationary pressures on Members' business costs; the next steps on Ways of Working and our Staffing Review and an update from Security on Member and support staff security measures.

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 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](mailto:remuneration@senedd.wales).

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

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.