

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Chair of Finance Committee
Senedd Cymru
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

3 October 2023

Dear Peredur

I am writing in relation to ongoing consideration by the Senedd Commission of 'cost of living' support payments for Commission staff in the 2024-25 year.

Following engagement with the Finance Committee in the 2022-23 year, the Commission made payments totalling £500 to its lowest paid staff (at Team Support and Executive Officer grades) in early 2023. The Commission has now agreed, as set out in my recent letter to you, to make a further payment totalling £1,500 to all eligible staff (at Team Support grade to Grade 6). The decision to make this payment was supported by the Commission's Trades Unions, and the PCS Union has confirmed that, in recognition, it has suspended industrial action that was being taken as part of its overall dispute.

The Commission is also being asked by the PCS Union, as part of its current national dispute, to consider the option of making further additional cost of living support payments to its staff.

The PCS Union has informally indicated that the further payment might involve a sum of £3,000 per member of staff in the next financial year. The provision for such a payment to Commission staff would be in the order of £1.6m which would be almost 4% of the Commission operating budget before ringfenced programme budgets, twice the amount we are facing in this financial year.

The Draft Commission Budget for 2024-25 laid before the Senedd has included provision for an annual uplift in pay for Commission staff under the terms of our current pay framework that was negotiated with, and approved by, our Trade Union Side representatives and the Commission; it does not include provision for any additional salary enhancement beyond those amounts in line with budgetary requirements. Negotiations have yet to take place about this demand, and, indeed the new pay deal from 2025 onwards also. The Commission does not wish to pre-empt the conclusions of those negotiations.



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It is also mindful of the financial pressure facing the wider Welsh public sector as set out by the Minister for Finance and Local Government in her letter to us in August.

Notwithstanding this, the Commission felt that given the potential for significant impact on our ability to deliver Senedd services if this materialised, it should be brought to your attention at the earliest opportunity. As the request has not been made formally and or agreed, we are unable to consider it within our budgets for 2024-25.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature of Ken Skates, consisting of the name 'Ken' in a cursive script followed by a stylized, circular flourish.

Ken Skates MS

cc Senedd Commissioners, Manon Antoniazzi

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

