

Responses to consultation on proposals for Assembly Members salaries in the Fifth Assembly

Many email respondents requested that their responses either be anonymous or not be published. For that reason, we have decided to anonymise all of the following responses.

Respondent	Question 1: Do you agree with our proposal that Assembly Members should be paid a base salary of £64,000 in 2016-17, the first year of the Fifth Assembly? Please explain your view.
A	<p>No.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I disagree with your entire methodology. Your comparisons with MPs salaries seem to me inappropriate, and you acknowledge this by recognising that you should be looking at salaries within a Welsh context. 2. Those who govern should not be paid a salary which only relates to the highest paid in our country. But rather to the majority in our country – whose earnings, or all too often, lack of earnings, are far lower than any of your figures. Not only is unemployment high, and the incomes of many restricted to 1% rises, but vast numbers of people are unable to obtain full employment – limited to part-time or zero-hours contracts. Please compare with the average of the majority rather than just those who happen to have very good jobs (many of which I would consider to be overpaid). 3. Just because some people are overpaid, does not imply that our AMs are underpaid.
B	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>I can agree that an increase in responsibility merits an increase in pay however I feel the 17.7% rise is too high. Personally the fairest way I would work it out is to take an MPs salary of £74000 and then reduce that by the 10-15% quoted in your report to reflect the lower earnings (and lower cost of living in Wales). This gives a sum of £66,600. Then if you were to set it at 87.5% of an MP’s salary, the same proportion of responsibility as a Scottish MP, my maths makes this to be a fair pay of £58,275 per annum. I feel this sum is generous as it gives the same level of proportional responsibility as Scotland so should absorb any immediate increase in responsibility (seeing as Scottish assembly members currently have more responsibilities than AMs). In addition I have reduced the MP’s salary only by 10% not the full 15% to reflect lower wages and cost of living.</p> <p>Reasoning</p> <p>I can accept that the job responsibilities have developed since 1999, potentially meriting a reconsideration of pay however some of the arguments in the consultation are based on speculation about expected upcoming powers that have not been agreed to yet. Until those responsibilities are given to Assembly Members I do not think that these should be considered when determining pay.</p> <p>I appreciate that you feel it is “perverse” to set their salaries at “ a level that undervalues their crucial role” however this is no different to the general situation of many of the public. Having worked in the third sector, most people in that sector are significantly underpaid. Many</p>

	<p>people would consider many professionals in a crucial role such as paramedics, nurses, teachers, social workers, carers, support workers, police etc to be paid at a level that undervalues their crucial role. As AM's are still currently in the top 5% of earners in Wales, I believe it is only reasonable to expect them to shoulder more of the "undervaluing" than lower paid workers. Of course if we reached a situation where more lowly paid workers had a pay increase to reflect their value, I would then support a pay increase for Assembly Members but feel that adjustments to pay to reflect the value of work done should be awarded to the lowest paid first where smaller amounts can make a bigger difference to more people. Realistically, the current salary of an AM can afford a comfortable existence to most people and an increase in a larger salary will probably have less of a positive benefit to the assembly member than a lower paid worker. In addition, if a recent survey you conducted on this only had a 28% response rate, this indicates that pay is not a particularly significant issue for most AMs and the money may be better spent elsewhere.</p> <p>I think that reducing Assembly Member's pensions to increase their pay is a good way to look at it as this allows people greater flexibility with their earnings to save for their future and Assembly Members who would prefer to save more for retirement can look to do so independently.</p> <p>I understand that you have not considered expenses however I think this should be looked at. Even within the private sector there are usually limitations on costs. I think realistic expenses limits should be set, tax payers should not be funding expensive meals for AMs that they could not afford themselves. I'm also aware of ministers using "ministerial cars" and "drivers" to travel very short journeys. Unless there is a cost saving to using group transport (or in the case of very high ranking members, a safety risk) I think all Assembly Members should have to use their own cars and claim mileage or use public transport in order to reduce costs and retain some level of awareness of how the people they represent live.</p> <p>I don't think that Assembly Members should be paid the same as MPs. Although I see that Hay's group find little difference in the way of their responsibilities, MPs are required to spend time in London which is much more expensive than Cardiff. MPs are also much higher profile as a whole and under increased scrutiny. I do note however that the proportional percentage of an Assembly Member's wage compared to an MPs wage has decreased recently, despite the increased responsibilities.</p> <p>I think the comparison to other public sector staff, the private sector and other assemblies is a spurious one. Just because other agencies may pay unreasonable amounts does not indicate that Assembly Member's pay should follow this and this will only encourage an escalating upward spiral. Instead I think that once in power, Assembly Members should have powers to look at chief executives pay and amend them accordingly.</p>
C	<p>I wish to contribute to the debate on Assembly members pay. I think that the Assembly members should demonstrate leadership in relation to this issue and make it clear that they will not accept any increase in pay over the next 5 years.</p> <p>They have overseen major reductions in budgets of Welsh Government Sponsored bodies and through this have a responsibility for staff in those institutions having no increase in pay or in many cases a reduction over the past 5 years.</p> <p>Whilst I accept that they will have greater responsibilities I am not convinced that they will work any harder or longer. I am not persuaded that an enhanced salary will lead to more able candidates applying to become assembly members, the political process is such that the</p>

	<p>existing candidates will be likely to remain in post whatever the salary attached to the position.</p> <p>Do you agree with our view that Assembly Members should be paid a base salary of £64,000 in 2016-17, the first year of the Fifth Assembly? Please explain your view.</p> <p>I do not agree with the proposal it is my view that the salary should be kept at the current level.</p>
D	<p>I do not agree that a base salary of £64,000 should be paid. The reference to MPs are flawed. The Welsh Government can't be seen as greedy. Housing allowances are gut, DLA phased out, heavier sanctions are in place of Job seekers allowances. Politicians are not an elite bunch of pencil pushers. They need to get real. Such a high salary is unjustified in Wales. Instead more should be done to help people in poverty and disabled. MPs have a different job in central London, not to compare with the AMs here. Welsh government needs to stay on the floor and don't lose the real view of its people living here. Such a salary increase is just plainly wrong.</p>
E	<p>Q1: No - I do not think that the WAG base rate of pay should be £64K. Whilst the work of AM's and their efforts is generally appreciated I think that many of the arguments are not valid. One main argument appears to be that the rate/s are in line with similar Chief Execs/positions of power. In my opinion many of these positions have become highly overpaid and over-promoted in recent years and have accelerated a 'fat-cat' ethos. I think this culture needs to be halted.</p>
F	<p>No. The Assembly Members have a privileged role that is of their choosing and was salaried at a lower level when they joined. At a time when other sectors are showing salary restraint increasing salaries for AM's is wholly inappropriate and selfish.</p>
	<p>Question2: Do you agree that it is appropriate to index Assembly Members' pay over the five years of the Fifth Assembly? Question2A: If so, do you agree that the ASHE figure for median gross weekly earnings of full-time employees in Wales is the appropriate index?</p>
A	<p>Yes, at whatever rate is applicable to other public service workers, currently 1%.</p> <p>Question2A: No, unless that is used as the index for uprating of public service workers in Wales generally.</p>
B	<p>I think Assembly Members need some stability of income like other workers. I think that any pay decreases should have to follow the same procedures that other employers would need to follow if they wanted to decrease the pay of their contracted staff. Having said that, I think an annual review would be reasonable and if wages had generally increased then I think increasing Assembly member's wages in line with that is reasonable.</p> <p><i>If so, do you agree that the ASHE figure for median gross weekly earnings of full time employees in Wales is the appropriate index?</i></p> <p>No, I think any consideration of wages needs to consider all workers including part time, contract, sessional, casual etc. I think any scheme which ignores the full spectrum of workers will produce unfair results and not accurately reflect the full work force.</p> <p>I would agree with a median measurement but I think that a percentage from the top should be disregarded (e.g. ignore results for top 5% of</p>

	<p>earners as a suggestion although I would be interested to hear arguments for specific numbers). I'm particularly concerned about high earners being considered as part of a median measurement as a few individuals in a privileged situation may be able to negotiate large pay rises/bonuses that would skew a median measurement and not accurately reflect the wages situation at large. I feel high level earners are more likely to get large pay increases whereas more mid level workers are more likely to be on pay freezes.</p>
C	<p>No I do not agree with this proposal. If so, do you agree that the ASHE figure for median gross weekly earnings of full-time employees in Wales is the appropriate index? Not applicable</p>
D	<p>I do NOT agree as its inappropriate. Basically the proposal is to raise the salary by about 30% in 2 years. THAT IS INSANE.</p>
E	<p>Q2: . I disagree with the indexing proposal. I would suggest that AM's pay is indexed to pay raises percentage of NHS workers percentage pay rises. Whilst I respect that some attempt has been made to make pay rises in line with the median of 'workers' however I think that the way that NHS staff in particular have had their pay effectively frozen over many years by cynical politicians is diabolical whilst their wages are increased. So - to answer 2A - I do not think that ASHE is the appropriate scale.</p>
F	<p>Increases in future Assembly Members pay should (if increases are deemed appropriate at all) be indexed with salaries experienced by the lowest paid employees in Wales, thereby encouraging Members to more carefully consider their ongoing role and actions in supporting those most in need whose future's they have power to affect</p>
	<p>Question 3: Do you agree with the Remuneration Board's proposals for remuneration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presiding Officer; - Deputy Presiding Officer; - Committee Chairs; - Commissioners; - Opposition Group Leaders; - Business Committee Members; - First Minister; - Welsh Ministers; - Deputy Ministers; - Counsel General. <p>Question 3A: if you disagree, please explain why and what you think would be an appropriate level of remuneration for that post.</p>
A	<p>In general, No. Question 3A: Current salaries are high enough, rises should be limited to the same percentage as public sector workers elsewhere.</p>

B	<p>I can cover the above collectively. I agree with the idea of a base pay and an additional pay to reflect additional responsibilities. As discussed above, I disagree with your proposed base pay and think £58,275 is a fair base pay so I think all of the amounts should drop proportionately at a minimum.</p> <p>First Minister – I disagree with your reasoning that because the Prime Minister’s pay has reduced significantly over recent years because of political decisions that this does not provide a meaningful bench mark. Whilst I can see similarities for the role I would have to agree with the HayGroup assessment that the weight of the First Minister role is some way below that of the UK. As the Hays group believe that the responsibility of the 1st Minister is the same as a Cabinet Minister, whose pay you give as £134,565 I think the 1st Minister should be paid this amount, again reduced by 10-15% to reflect the lower wages and lower cost of living in Wales. This would give the 1st Minister a wage of £114,380.25 - £121,108.50</p> <p>Welsh Ministers; - Again using the same logic, if their role is comparable to a Minister of State earning £98,740 then I think a fair wage is 85% to 90% of the Minister of State’s salary.</p> <p>Deputy Ministers – If a deputy Minister is equivalent to a Parliamentary under secretary then I think a deputy minister should get 85% to 90% of their salary (£89,435) for the reasons discussed above.</p> <p>Counsel General – I disagree with the sum of £100,000 if he only has to rock up once every 4 weeks! If the current incumbent is able to take additional work I think it reasonable to consider the part time nature of the role when establishing a salary. Presumably you hired (and paid) HayGroup for their professional opinion so it seems prudent to follow their guidance that the job carries the same weight as a Welsh Minister. Therefore for a full time post I think the post should be paid the same as a Welsh Minister, as discussed above, however if the person is required to work less than full time hours at this post then I think their salary should be adjusted pro rata, as it would be in any other workplace.</p> <p>Presiding Officer – As discussed above I am inclined to listen to the HayGroup and would therefore pay the same as the Minister. If however you did want to demonstrate that the role was higher responsibility by making it pay 5% more than a minister then I think it would be fair to apply 5% to the salary I suggested for a minister.</p> <p>Deputy Presiding Officer – I think that if you argue that a presiding officer should be paid more than a minister, then it is poor logic to then attempt to pay their deputy the same as the deputy minister, if there is such a disparity in their roles meriting a 5% pay difference. Therefore I think the deputy presiding officer should be paid the same salary that I suggested for a deputy minister plus an additional 5% if the presiding officer has that pay distinction also.</p> <p>Committee Chairs; - I don’t have any information from HayGroup on this one. I think the core salary should be as suggested before. I have no problem with the two tier additional pay in theory but don’t feel I have enough information to make a finding on the amounts of these additional pays.</p> <p>Commissioners; - Again, I would follow the guidance of Haygroup and reduce the amount of additional pay slightly in line with their suggestions. I would make the base salary the amount as suggested above.</p> <p>Opposition Group Leaders – Again I think the base salary should be as set out above, not the suggested £64,000. I agree that there should be</p>
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	<p>a recognition of group size when determining pay but also an additional pay to encourage opposition smaller parties who may not have many members but may have valuable points to contribute. I don't necessarily agree with the cap to the level of a minister. Whilst I think they should be paid less than the first minister, if in theory they were a very significant opposition party (e.g. with 29 out of the 60 assembly members in their party) then I think it would be reasonable for them to be paid more than a minister. I don't have a feeling about the £13,000 additional salary as I don't have information about whether that is reasonable but for arguments sake, if an opposition leader was paid the base salary of £58,275 suggested above plus an additional £13,000 and they then had 29 assembly members in their party, this would make their pay £100,275. In such a situation I would think it reasonable for an opposition member's pay to exceed a minister as they would potentially have more responsibility and scrutiny.</p> <p>Business Committee Members – I don't feel I have any information to make a judgement on the additional salary rate.</p>
C	I do not agree that there should be any increase in the salary of any of these positions over the 5 year period.
D	<p>I think the proposals for those ministers are totally out of proportion and the salary should stay the same.</p> <p>I do not agree with this proposal. It is sheer out of proportion. There should be a pay freeze until 2017 and politicians should help poor people. There are too much funding cut already.</p>
E	<p>Q3 & 3A: - No, I do not agree with the remuneration proposals. In these days of 'austerity' I think wages of WAG members and related positions should be frozen, or as mentioned, at least in line with NHS workers as I have suggested before, if the WAG is deemed to be a government representative of the people.</p> <p>I want to add that I am proud of Wales and 'generally' happy with the WAG but do resent the wider attitude of big pay packets. I am aware that a main argument is in relation to the weighting of WAG positions.</p> <p>Again, I think Wales is a progressive country but it is wrong to award these payouts when so many people are effectively seeing their pay packets reducing against the cost of living.</p>
F	No. As senior staff in private enterprise and in most public sector bodies have seen a freeze in salary Government should show the same restraint. There is no need to increase salaries to attract higher calibre people as all roles are already competitively fought for by all parties with Members receiving numerous benefits over and above salaries. This position is unlikely to change in the near future.
Other comments sent directly to the Board:	
<p>I have read about your proposals to increase the AM's basic pay by around £10,000. This is beyond belief and goes directly against the austerity measurements being imposed upon the general public. Public workers have had little or no pay increases for the past four years. I firmly believe that you are making a huge mistake with these proposals and they are not within public interest. A salary of £54,000 is roughly twice the national average. I have two degrees and twenty years of industrial experience and earn a lot less. There should be a nominal increase in line with that which the NHS workers in wales are being paid. I would finally like to make a comment about the makeup of the remuneration committee, there seemingly are no people on it from a non system normal background. It would appear to be an "old boys" network looking after each others interests.</p>	
<p>To whom it may concern. We are completely against any rise in A.M. s' salaries in fact the mess they are making of the N.H.S. & the purchase of Cardiff Airport lead us to the conclusion their pay should be cut ,the same as 100s of low paid staff in local authorities . Pay should be linked to results. There is no such thing</p>	

as "An Independent Review Body". Until memberships of ALL bodies such as Freemasons are declared by all in Public life, we do not know if "Brothers & Sisters" are voting for pay rises for other "Brothers & Sisters". (Secrecy is the thief of democracy) as is the case in Pembs.C.C., In short there is widespread public disquiet which has grown ever since the requirement of mandatory declarations was reversed, we believe, in 2001. We do not trust the Welsh establishment & they are not worth ANY more of OUR money.

No, No, No. If the man in the street has to go without, why should the Assembly members get even more??
So much for equality!

Over the last few years the distrust the public portray towards politicians has never been so great. There is at present a rise in support for parties in the margins of British politics, in particular UKIP, and in Scotland the SNP (who are now so out of the margins they are now a full page). I do not believe for one moment a £10,000 rise in AM salary is justified. Whilst devolution has gathered pace, and AM's are expected to scrutinise policies and legislation emanating from Welsh Government, this does not equate to the stresses felt by other professional groups, who it can be strongly argued face even greater responsibility – for example nurses, medics, and fire-fighters. A £10,000 increase equating to an 18% rise is a morally wrong message to give to a nation which has large areas of deprivation and at a time when council reorganisation is going to inevitably result in redundancies for many people who themselves are often struggling to make ends meet. This increase will only further entrench the view that politicians are out of touch with the very constituents they serve.

Shame on you Mr Sandy Blair, suggesting that the AMs will be getting a £10000 pay rise in 2016.
It's absolutely disgusting, but then in your eyes they obviously deserve the salary increase. Tell me, would they go on the streets of Wales litter picking, clearing dog mess (and human), sweeping, clearing drains, emptying rubbish bins etc, etc and remain on a pay freeze for years. Please don't insult the work force by even thinking that working for cleansing, environmental depts. means one doesn't have the intelligence to do anything else. Now at the moment local authority staff are under threat of losing their jobs due to cutbacks but finding money to raise the salaries of council management, councillors and now we hear AMs is no problem but at whose expense!!!

I have worked in the public sector in Wales for the last twenty years. I have a degree, a HNC, a postgraduate qualification and a NVQ 4. I fulfill a highly skilled technical role in the National Museum - working in a multi-disciplinary team that keeps the museum running (literally)

I haven't had a pay rise for 6 years and my pension contributions have increased. I work weekends and bank holidays (being sole technician on duty at these times, with responsibility for a £35M building) - and the additional payment for this anti-social working is under review - possibly to be phased out. And I work evenings too to support private hire events! I am multi-skilled, as are my colleagues.

Like AMs my job hasn't remained static - my skill set now is probably double what it was 6 years ago and my workload has similarly increased - whilst I have reduced costs for my employer. I could easily earn double in the private sector, but choose instead public service, as I require flexible working patterns as I have a disabled son and aged parents.

At a time when everyday public sector workers have had real terms pay cuts for half a decade it is wholly inappropriate for AMs to even consider anything more than a cost of living increase. To do so will bring the Assembly into disrepute,

I think it is very important to represent the people of Wales and am pleased with some of the Welsh Assembly achievements. However, in a time when we are having government cuts and no salary increases for government workers I do think the assembly members need to be very careful of having a pay rise of more than 1% - many people in Wales will have an opinion on this. Do we need a Welsh Assembly if it is going to cost that much to run – Scotland lost out, don't force Wales into another referendum or you may not achieve the results you want. I do not think any public funded organisation should have a Chief Executive earning more than the Prime Minister, it should be pro-rata based on population size – We are paying for all these people and struggling to pay our own bills. Think about a pay rise very carefully.

Dear Sandy Blair, It is absolutely ridiculous and utterly preposterous that you recommend that AMs should receive an 18% pay rise, especially when the vast majority of people have had none since 2008. Your saying that it is for additional responsibility is also ridiculous. This happened to me frequently during my career and it continues to happen to all my family and countless of my friend who are still working. If you don't know that when a person leaves his job and is almost always not replaced, others do that persons job for no extra pay, then you are living in a world of fantasy. Politicians have a public rating of 25%. If that applied to those of us who live in the real world, we would all be sacked, and rightly so.

Please accept my OBJECTION to the proposed AM's pay rise. It is outrageous when most people are struggling financially, particularly in North Wales where pay is low and job opportunities scarce.

I live in North Wales and this additional layer of bureaucracy (the so-called Welsh Government) has only cost the people of Wales an awful lot of money with NO benefits.

NHS in Wales - useless

Education in Wales - second rate

Care for the elderly in Wales - very poor (as in the rest of the UK)

Every year we pay more and every year things go further downhill!

The AM's are already excessively overpaid, most of them would be lucky to get an ordinary job in normal society. Check them out in the Summer in Cardiff Bay, sitting outside the wine bar slurping wine and looking bumptious and pleased with themselves - and so they should be. For a bunch of useless individuals they are doing remarkably well to be paid as much as they are!

This may sound bitter - I love Wales, it is a wonderful country to live in and bring up a family but there are clearly major problems (Betsi Cadwaladr..... to name but one) and the Cardiff "Taffia" are not up to the task of solving them.

PS I did not vote for any of them!

I am writing to inform you that the proposal of an 11% pay rise for assembly members cannot and will not ever be justifiable, especially in this time of

austerity measures. However you choose to justify the rise, whether it be cuts in "golden handshakes", scrapping huge pension pay outs to bring them into line with other public sector executives, or an utterly unconvincing consultation, it will not convince the public that it is the right thing to do, in fact it borders on a national scandal.

I have no reason to believe that your consultation differs to the one that was put forward by the IPSA justifying MP's equally scandalous 9.26% pay rise, which I have read. Therefore I will not waste my time reading the remuneration boards. In a nutshell, as I'm sure you're aware, The IPSA's consultation suggests that a "one off uplift" is needed to bring MP's pay into line after "decades of falling behind". Their cynical "public" consultation concluded that the vast majority of the public believed that MP's pay of £65,000 seems "about right" when they were informed of exactly what the role entailed, bearing in mind that this already generous salary is nearly 3 times the national average, however, there was "no appetite for a pay rise" for MP's. The leaders of all the main parties are also calling for this rise to be scrapped due to the outrage and outrageous timing of the proposals. Mr Cameron going as far as saying that the IPSA could be scrapped if the rise goes ahead.

My role as a psychiatric nurse and violence & aggression trainer at Whitchurch Hospital in Cardiff comes with great responsibility, and in my opinion is as important, if not more so than AM's, MP's and anybody employed at the remuneration board. All nursing staff have just been awarded a 1% pay rise with a lump sum of £187 payable January 2015, I rejected the offer at the vote by Unison as I believe it is degrading, however, It will now go ahead. To be told by you on the BBC news, in other words, that AM's positions are far beyond most other peoples, therefore they deserved an extra £10,000 a year left me open mouthed and disgusted.

I recently contacted Marcial Boo at the IPSA to express my disgust at the MP's equally outrageous pay rise, he did have the decency to contact me back in person. His reply was welcome, however, the justification he came back with was cynical and entirely unconvincing. I'm sure this e mail won't even raise an eyebrow, as the people who put this frankly outrageous and frankly sickening proposal of £10,000 (yes, ten thousand pounds per year) pay rise package together, which includes you, are so out of touch from the real world it defies belief, especially in this time when the political elite keeps reminding us that in this age of cut, cuts, cuts.....we are apparently, "all in this together".

Hello,

Is it true that AMs are proposing to give themselves 18% pay rise when NHS workers are going to get 1%?

I hope this is not true, if it turns out to be correct it is a total disgrace beyond all belief.

I agree with the proposal that the Welsh AM's should receive an increase and keep them in-line with the rest of the UK. The work load is ever increasing and if we want to encourage more persons to enter the assembly the pay must be representative of the responsibility.

This is totally unacceptable at a time when living standards in Wales are falling for a majority of people. Growing unemployment amongst our youth, public sector job cuts, an understaffed NHS and a rise in the use of food banks! Public sector workers have seen a pay cut of 18% over the past 4 years. Politicians

deserve not a penny more and should even take a reduction in pay!

These are the people who look after our elderly, sick and vulnerable. Why are they worth less than these politicians??

Where do you the board get this ludicrous idea in the first place??? You must be out of your minds! This is truly a disgusting slap in the face for the people of Wales. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

I do not feel that an increase at this time is appropriate. There are many people in Wales who have had no pay increase for many years and will feel that this is unacceptable. Although I can see the point that AMs pay is lower than many other public sector areas, the public are already feeling let down by their Assembly members and will be unhappy if this increase is taken forward. Also to say that AMs have similar job specs to MPs does not seem to be accurate. Yes MPs and AMs deal with many aspects which are the same but often for a great many more constituents. Wales after all has substantially less people than England.

Thank you for your time

This is totally unacceptable at a time when living standards in Wales are falling for a majority of people. Growing unemployment amongst our youth, public sector job cuts, an understaffed NHS and a rise in the use of food banks! Public sector workers have seen a pay cut of 18% over the past 4 years. Politicians deserve not a penny more and should even take a reduction in pay!
These are the people who look after our elderly, sick and vulnerable. Why are they worth less than these politicians??
Where do you the board get this ludicrous idea in the first place??? You must be out of your minds! This is truly a disgusting slap in the face for the people of Wales. You should be ashamed of yourselves.

I just wanted to register my personal opposition to the proposed very large salary rise for AMs. At a time where all public services are struggling financially, public service workers are receiving tiny or no pay rises, redundancies are being made, hospitals struggling, music, youth and other important services for children cut or axed I feel a rise of this kind is totally inappropriate. The Welsh Assembly is in danger of alienating the public.

Please do not treat the people of Wales with such absolute contempt.

1percent like other hard working Welsh people.

I'm disgusted by the proposed increase for Assembly Members. I thought there was no money. Did the assembly find some spare down the back of the fridge?? I get the "trying to get the best people for the job" thing, but there is no money available for it. Simple as. They should lead by example. The rest of us need to be the best for our jobs too, a lot of people work in public service, but we get treated like second class citizens with no wage increases, wages even lowered if you take inflation into account. It is NOT good enough. It is not fair and it is not acceptable. Lead by example. NO pay increases, at least until the country isn't on it's knees!! These people need to get back down to earth. We ALL deserve a pay increase. The fact is we can't have one. If it's tough luck for us, it's tough luck for them too. Play fair!!!

I wish to object to the proposed pay rise for Assembly Members and First Minister.

In the current economic climate it is unconscionable to contemplate, let alone implement, such a rise, while right across the public sector cuts are being made and jobs lost.

I understand the argument that in order to attract good AMs the salary needs to be attractive - the same argument can apply to nurses, teachers, ambulance crew, police, firefighters and all kinds of other public sector workers who work in much more difficult conditions, which are more valuable to society than AMs, but are motivated by a sense of duty and pride and not a high salary. Any AM who is not motivated by the already generous salary in excess of £50k, which is well above the average salary for Welsh public sector workers, is not fit for the role.

AMs are meant to represent the Welsh people. Public confidence in the Assembly and public sector generally is at an all time low. AMs salary should remain static and demonstrate to the people, in one way at least, that the Assembly is not as far removed from the people and their views as it currently appears to be.

I think giving AM's a £10,000 pay rise is an appalling course of action to take, considering how ordinary people here in Wales, many of whom are suffering from the effects of austerity and the accumulative impact of the cuts and welfare reforms, many who are unable to feed their families and have to rely on food banks to survive, this includes those who are not paid living wage and whom are stretched at every level. A pay rise of this amount to the AM,s , when public sector workers are being under paid would be a grave insult to the people of Wales.

Shame on those who thought this would be okay.

Please can you give me the justification behind a proposed £10k pay rise for AM's when the rest of Wales and its workforce are facing cuts. What have they done differently to everyone else ? In my opinion they take too long to make any significant decisions and when they do they seem to spend money on roads

which a lot of people disagree with them building - such as the proposed M4 expansion.

The NHS has faced cuts where the staff are severely overworked and deserve this rather than AM's? Why aren't these people getting more pay. They are under more pressure than any AM who has lots of staff working for them within the assembly. I would like to know the number of hours AM's work per week and how the results of there labour are recorded.

There are a lot of assembly workers who get paid far too much for doing too little.

Following media coverage of the proposed increase in AM's salaries, may I ask, as a person who will be paying for these increases, details of how these sums have been calculated.

I feel aggrieved that these increases can be made in a current climate where everyone has been told to "tighten their belts" , "spend less money". I know of people who have had to take pay cuts to remain in a job. If they did not take a pay cut then it would be likely that they would become unemployed which would put more stress on the benefits system.

Sandy Blair has been quoted as saying the following:-

“Clearly people in Wales are facing difficult economic circumstances and there is great pressure on public spending. But that is precisely why Wales needs to attract the highest calibre people to be members of the National Assembly”.

I do not clearly understand this statement as the AM's will already be in position within the National Assembly. They are here for Wales. Why would we go outside Wales to employ someone to join the NA? I am not a politically aware person, but know that councils are facing hard times and having to make decisions from directions given higher up. But surely, this is a no brainer. Surely anyone who agrees to this increase knows that they are committing public suicide

I ask those that accept the increase, will they be able to go out into the street and look people in the eye who work hours on end or more than one job to keep their children clothed, fed and warm?

This money will not appear out of thin air, I want to know where the money will come from, what cuts in services will we see next? What increases in

rates will we see. Do these AM's really need a £10k pay rise? If they do, then fine.. show me. And in turn I will show them pensioners who are afraid to turn on the heating for fear of having a bill they can not repay. I will show people queuing up at food banks. I will show charities that are struggling because more people are turning to them as the councils do not have the money to provide basic assistance. I will show you the bills I paid for music lessons for my daughter, which when I was young was free.. the list goes on, but I will not bore you as you well know

Reports in papers are constantly referring to the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer and this is what I see here.

This is yet another underhand way of politicians using their power to obtain more money whilst the rest of us struggle further to make ends meet. The AM's should be our Robin Hood, not King John!

I write in response to the proposed pay rise of £10 000 annually for AMs. I am fully supportive of ANY person in a position responsibility who deserves a pay that reflects the work that they do. However I cannot support this suggestion when others in our society are denied the right to be fairly compensated for the days, nights and thankless tasks they do. These people do not have the luxury of an expense account and are not treated to state of the art chambers or workspaces.

In a climate of pension crisis (which AMs will not have to consider, no doubt) and difficult decisions this is a selfish and blatantly arrogant choice. Welsh Assembly I urge you to reconsider- you truly will be rubbing your electorate's noses in it and dividing our country further.

I write to express my disbelief at proposals for the massive pay increases proposed for Welsh Assembly Members.

I am not anti-assembly which I am sure has caused considerable unrest regarding this subject. I consider myself to be supportive of the assembly, albeit a puppet organisation of London's imperial stranglehold over Wales and her peoples. I am not supportive, nor do I hold any allegiances with any political party, currently represented within the assembly.

It is my opinion that assembly members are our representatives in the assembly and this is a career path they have chosen. Should any existing AM's find difficulty in making ends meet on their already enormous salaries, it is my opinion that they should find alternative employment.

I regularly communicate with several assembly members, and it is quite unbelievable the lack of response, reply or acknowledgement that I will receive on

virtually any subject I choose to broach with them. In my experience all assembly members have their own political agenda for advancement of their own political party, and they have no regard or opinion whatsoever for the views and opinions of us their mere subjects, and on the very few replies I have received they have been totally worthless and basically a 'stop bothering me' kind of reply. From my experience AM's should pay heed to the teaching of the New Testament, Luke 6:42

How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,' when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

I fail to see how our elected representatives can be expected to serve and represent the peoples of one of the poorest regions of Europe, when they are paid similar wages to London Stock Brokers, they are completely separated to the reality and day to day lives of the majority of their constituents, and are hell bent on pursuing their party political agenda's in games of party political point scoring.

Our elected representatives SHOULD be selected on a basis of personal suitability to represent their constituents, and receive a wage identical to their previous career. In today's system we have career politicians whom choose to make an 'easy-buck' (albeit quite a lot of easy-bucks), and are elected on party political allegiances, I appreciate that this is not directly their fault, but many AM play this game in selecting easy win constituency, where they do not really have to do anything. It would be quite easy to get a (another) Chimpanzee elected to serve a constituency within South Wales, so long as that Chimpanzee swore allegiance to the Labour Party. This may seem a ludicrous suggestion, but they could be paid in banana's, which would save the tax payer a huge amount of expenditure, and they would serve their constituents with equal and comparable commitment to many of our current AM's.

If I did not have any interest in current affairs, I would have no idea who my assembly members are, and it is safe to say that the greater majority of the peoples of Wales, have no idea whatsoever who their AM's are, as they do so little for their constituents. I do not know of anything any AM has ever done for me or the peoples of Wales which has bettered my life or the lives of the peoples of Wales.

I have no objection to increasing the number of AM's which should be paid for by these ludicrous wage increase, but the AM's should be held to account (and not only at election time), by their commitments to the wishes of their constituents. I have probably contacted my own AM (Edwina Hart) on dozens of occasions but Edwina seems far too busy to concern herself with any opinion of mine, no matter what the subject matter. I do not think my AM would be alone in this category, and assume that AM's of all political parties would be equally shy of replying or helping their constituents.

As subjects of the Welsh Government, it feels as though we are a flock of sheep with no shepherd, whilst the imperialist wolves of the UK government circle and take off the easy pickings. Where is our shepherd to defend us from these evils? They are certainly not watching over their flocks, but (only occasionally) are in their Ivory Towers in Cardiff Bay talking over ludicrous plans to desecrate the hillsides with wind turbines, or buying airports to shuttle in Chinese investors to our country, to serve as a conduit to syphon off what little wealth remains in Wales to the furthest flung reaches of the Far East.

I do not think that the public expenditure review board scope of works is broad enough in considering salary increases alone, as I would recommend an immediate salary reduction of 50% (or more) at next election! Any AM could then have the opportunity of declining to stand at next election should this be unacceptable.

I protest against this proposal, which I consider is inappropriate on every level.

The people of the UK and especially those residing in Wales, are having to deal with very difficult circumstances and the deep cuts already imposed by the current government have meant that everyone apart from the wealthy are having to suffer significant cuts in their living standards. Cuts in the benefit system and almost non-existent pay rises for those in work, have resulted in a relatively poor community becoming even poorer, with the worst affected having to rely on food banks and other similar charities for their daily needs.

Regardless of the claim that Wales needs to attract the highest calibre people to be Members of the National Assembly, everyone should play a part in the austerity regime we currently live in, and an award of an extra £10,000 approximately to an already generous salary, added to the additional benefits not available to the public as a whole, can only be seen as grossly unfair, is a poor use of money which should be available for other more needy causes, and sets an extremely poor example of what people in the Welsh Assembly are seen to be doing, should they accept the award.

I am writing to express my disgust at the proposed £10,000 increase in AM salaries and would like it noted that I am fully against this proposal.

I strongly oppose any increase in remuneration for assembly members. Their incompetence and lack of intellect are a sad reflection on Wales. Thank God they are not running a government in an independent Wales.

Question 1: Do you agree with our proposal that Assembly Members should be paid a base salary of £64,000 in 2016-17, the first year of the Fifth Assembly? Please explain your view.

No I do not agree.

Pay increases at any level are very hard to come by in Wales. The suggestion that AM's should enjoy a 10.8% increase when their constituents will be extremely lucky receive pay rises anywhere near in line with inflation is obnoxious.

Your paper provides no detail on the additional costs borne by the taxpayer in relation to AM's expenses. Could you please provide information on both the minimum and maximum level of expenses claimed by any AM. This would allow me to better understand the total cost associated with the role of an AM. I could then make an informed judgment as to the value they provide. Whilst I appreciate these sums do not form part of a Member's package of remuneration as they receive no personal benefit from them, there is still a cost to the taxpayer.

Question2: Do you agree that it is appropriate to index Assembly Members' pay over the five years of the Fifth Assembly?

No I do not agree. Some level of indexing may well be appropriate but should be linked to performance.

Question2A: If so, do you agree that the ASHE figure for median gross weekly earnings of full-time employees in Wales is the appropriate index?

Question 3: Do you agree with the Remuneration Board's proposals for remuneration of:

I agree that additional responsibilities associated with specific office holders should be remunerated in addition to basic salary.

I only found out there was a consultation into proposals to raise the salaries of AMs this morning, so have not had a lot of time to read the proposals through nor give any depth of thought to them. In the interests of transparency perhaps a lot more publicly could have been given to the consultation than appears to have been. Given more time my response would have been more detailed than it is.

However, what I have just read in the document, and previously heard on radio and tv, has not changed my first thoughts on this. As just an ordinary person living in Wales, sorry, I do not think AMs deserve the amount of salary rise being proposed.

In the front line of the campaign for more power to be devolved to the Nat Assemb before the referendum a few years back were AMs. They were the ones

who instigated the demand for more devolved powers, they were the most prominent people arguing more power was needed. Unless they were also very stupid they would have known more devolved powers meant more responsibilities and an increased work load, but there was no mention of expecting to be paid more as well. (Where's the transparency in that?)

One of the proposals is that future increases in salary will only occur if wages in Wales go up. Although it is noted that no Wales wages increases will mean no AM salary increases, what will happen if wages go down? Is it proposed that AM salaries will go down as well? And if not, why not?

And will the percentage of increase be the same? 1% increase for wages, 1% increase for all AMs? Or will it be that the more important you are in the Assembly the more the percentage increase?

Raise Assembly salaries by all means, but only in line with the average percentage raise in public sector wages in Wales since last year, with the **lowest paid** AMs getting a larger percentage increase than the Ministers and Officials.

Please see below my response to your questionnaire.

1. Do you agree with our view that Assembly Members should be paid a base salary of £64,000 in 2016-17, the first year of the Fifth Assembly? Please explain your view.

No - regardless of the extensive work done by the panel to justify the increase, any increase at all will be an insult to the working people who elect the AMs whose own pay/salaries have been frozen for the last three/four years.

2. Do you agree that it is appropriate to index Members' pay over the five years of the Fifth Assembly?

Yes

If so, do you agree that the ASHE figure for median gross weekly earnings of full-time employees in Wales is the appropriate index?

No - it should be index to CPI

3. Do you agree with the Remuneration Board's proposals for remuneration of:

-First Minister;	No
-Welsh Ministers;	No
-Deputy Ministers;	No
-Counsel General	No
-Presiding Officer;	No

-Deputy Presiding Officer;	No
-Committee Chairs;	No
-Commissioners;	No
-Opposition Group Leaders;	No
-Business Committee members	No

If you disagree, please explain why and what you think would be an appropriate level of remuneration for that post

The current salaries and expenses are sufficient for those elected to serve the community and grossly elevated increases introduced when services (such as libraries) are being cut, will clearly send a very negative message to the population in general and the council employees in particular.

Could I please as part of your consultation procedure on the recent recommendation for a massive increase in AMs pay rates record my strong objection to any increase as an affront to the tax paying public of Wales.

Might I also request that chairman of the board Sandy Blair be removed from his post immediately for having the cheek to present a recommendation of this nature during these (or any other) times of national austerity and financial restraint for others.

I wish to register my objection to an increase in AM's remuneration as proposed in the current consultation document.

Whilst I accept the importance of their jobs; and the fact that their workload is set to increase in line with the greater powers of the Assembly, their case is not unique. Due to public spending cuts, many public sector workers have had to bite the bullet and take on extra work to keep 'front line' services working whilst receiving no increase whatsoever for a number of years; indeed some have had their hours cut.

The argument that there is a need to reward talented and experienced people to the job is an outdated one and will just not wash. I am sure there has never been a shortage of candidates to fill the roles due to a perceived lack of remuneration! I am also sure there are many very talented people who would be happy to accept the current pay of an AM and would also likely bring some much needed change and improvement to the governance of Wales.

To single AM's out for special treatment at this time would only serve to further alienate the opinion of the people AM's are meant to serve; and I believe would be an unpopular and damaging move.

Ridiculous. No increase at all for this incompetent bunch of fools.

The useless person responsible for the ruining the NHS in Pembrokeshire should be paying back every penny of his wages to the residents of the county.

Ludicrous suggestion to increase AM by £10k, should look at addressing expenses.

Would it be possible to procure a building for AMs to stay in in place of hotel accommodation. The cost of purchasing said building would surely save the tax payer over time.

Board should also look at AM hiring family members of staff, having worked for an AM I witnessed the system being exploited by someone who was not qualified for the role or worthy of the salary.

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed pay increase to AM's salaries. I believe in this troubled financial climate where Welsh families are continuing to struggle, to accept the increase would be an insult to the Welsh public. As such, I would urge all AM's to vote to reject the proposed increase.

I write in response to your proposals to award a £10,000 per annum pay rise to Assembly Members.

At a time of increasing public cuts, the notion that a public body could deem themselves deserving of such a large pay increase is un-believable. In the private sector, pay rises are awarded to reward success, does a failing health service, which is the laughing stock of Britain, and whom Doctors have raised concerns about merit pay rises, I think not, surely the money should be used to improve this service, rather than reward those that have allowed it to deteriorate to such a poor state.

The rest of the UK is being told to practice austerity, perhaps those at the top should practice what they preach and lead by example, maybe by taking a pay cut rather than a pay rise.

If the economy and services within Wales worked well and provided all that they promise to do so, then I like many people would be behind awarding pay rises, however as a member of the Welsh public I can see no evidence of an Assembly that is achieving what it set out to do. In the private sector, success is rewarded, but failure is not, so perhaps they should show they are worthy before taking what they are clearly not deserving of.

I am writing to you following the National Assembly Remuneration Board's consultation on the salaries of Members of the next National Assembly.

In my opinion, there is a strong rational debate for raising the salaries of Assembly Members. I see no justification for paying AMs less than Members of the Scottish Parliament or indeed Members of the Westminster Parliament. As those who are familiar with the history of the period know, the fact that the salaries of AMs is less than the salaries of members of the Scottish Parliament is a direct result of efforts in the late 1990s to underline the inferior status of the National Assembly compared to 'real' legislatures such as Holyrood and, of course, Westminster. With the passage of time – and as the powers and responsibilities of the Assembly have increased – most other signs of the inferior status of the National Assembly for Wales have been swept aside. Pay is one

of the major issues still to be settled, and in my opinion it is about time it should be tackled.

Of course, recommending a significant pay increase in a period of austerity is bound to generate a negative reaction. Because of this, it's important to consider how best to move towards the principle of equal status with Scotland, and especially the introductory elements of the process. Very few commentators – not to mention the public – seem aware that there are some elements in the Board's proposals which 'offset' the proposed increase in the basic salary. But whatever the difficulties, I strongly support the fundamental principle of ensuring that basic pay of AMs is raised to a level equivalent to the salary of a person who has been elected to similar legislatures. There is, in my view, no justification for the current situation to continue.

I hope that my comments will be of use to you in your consultation.

I hope this limited response is helpful. By way of background I am a former Chair of Wales Management Council and more recently completed my period as Chair of the Board of the University of South Wales.

O I am supportive generally of the conclusions arising from the Report and in particular setting the proposals within a Welsh context.

O There is an increasing criticality to attract Assembly members of the right quality and with some relevant background experience in order to improve the quality of consideration of matters.

O Make a general point that I suspect increasingly the workload places pressures upon members and their ability to deal with substance in sufficient depth which at some future date must surely require an increase in the number of Assembly members.

O I welcome the use of Hay which provides independent credibility around job size measurement.

O I have some reservations around the intention to remunerate all Ministers at the same level given differences in the size of portfolios but I note the rationale

O Whilst not central to remit it seems to me that continuous personal development is a critical element of lifting individual and collective performance and I would welcome more weight given to this requirement.

Other comments received by the Welsh Government and subsequently sent to the Board:

AM's pay rise is too high. They are getting too much in one go. Also their salaries are not linked to achievement. Money could be put into hospitals and schools. They should be paid on an achievement basis.

Mr Jones, I have never felt the urge to write to an elected representative before but I have just heard about the proposed pay rise for AMs. I am beyond speechless that this is contemplated in the present climate and that you in particular would stand to receive just £2,000 less per year than David Cameron. In return for what I beg to ask?
I voted for devolution in Wales but it is the sorriest thing I have ever done.
It pains me to see my country go down and down in the world wide league tables of education and health.
Most Welsh people would feel that only when the quality of elected members and the efficiency of services is improved, can a pay rise ever be contemplated.
This proposed pay rise can only add insult to injury to the sense of betrayal that we feel in Wales.

In this period of 'austerity' I expect ALL members to not accept and defer the announced payrise until key members of society/ services are also allowed above inflation rises. I can not emphasise enough that I do not see any difference between a nurse and an assembly member - both CHOSE to do that role they were not forced therefore I believe it's obscene to have rises for a select few. I have heard and probably so have you that people are disillusioned and fed up of the constant one rule for one and one for everyone else. At present I do not trust Labour or Conservative and would prefer a coalition government that works for the benefit of the country as a whole NOT select sections that may have coincidentally provided "funds".

I will also express my views at a national level!!!

I do realise that an outside body decides how much pay rise you all get. The rise is absolutely crazy and you cannot deny this, with the state of the country unemployment, cut backs everywhere but all you AMs get a massive pay rise. Be truthful and admit it that it's wrong. However all you AMs can refuse it, there is no law saying you have to accept so why not refuse it? Straight answer please.

I have to say that the announcement today on the Welsh news that you and your colleagues are getting a £10,000 per annum pay increase (10%) shows the Assembly in a very negative light.

In the current economic state of the Country and the mandatory cuts of millions of pounds the Assembly has placed on local Councils which in real terms means amalgamation and forced redundancies and the terrible problems that brings to families who need two parents working to survive.

Today the nurses are striking due to the paltry 1% they are being offered and all these people and their extended family and friends see is that the Assembly are getting this additional £10,000 pay increase.

We can all debate the merit of such a pay rise and if it is warranted and I am sure the defence will be that an independent body has made the decision and therefore it takes the burden off the Assembly but the Assembly could have chosen to defer the increase until next year, hopefully then the national is in a better economic state.

I am appalled to hear that a pay rise is proposed for the AMs. This is totally indefensible!

We have the most awful problems with the Health Service, Ambulance Service and our schools are embattled.

I do not believe that any of your members are as useful or productive as the average teacher, health service worker or police man. Shame on anyone awarding this rise.

I myself think its disgusting that the pay review board can even think about giving a pay rise of £10,000 to AM members when workers throughout wales are struggling to survive on the pittance they get, we have to suffer service cuts from Wrexham council, we have had ever increasing council tax with not one year has it been frozen, and then to say its out of our hands, the rules always suit yourselves don't they, if any AM excepts this pay rise of £10,000 then the people of wales should make there voices heard at the ballot box, it seems to me that the old saying is, we are alright jack stuff the rest of you. you all choose to do that job, try living on a postman/postwomans wage.