

# Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru  
National  
Assembly for  
Wales



## NAFWC 2011 Minutes of 20 October 2011 meeting

**Date:** 20 October 2011

**Time:** 13:00

**Venue:** Office of the Presiding Officer

## Minutes of 20 October 2011 meeting

### **Present:**

Presiding Officer, Chair

Peter Black AM

Angela Burns AM

Sandy Mewies AM

### **Officials present:**

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive and Clerk

Dianne Bevan, Chief Operating Officer

Keith Bush, Director of Legal Services

Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business

Craig Stephenson, Head of Commission and Member Support Service

Dr Non Gwilym, Head of Communications

Brian Davidge, Head of ICT and Broadcasting

Ross Davies, Equalities Manager

Carys Evans, Principal Commission Secretary

### **Independent Advisers:**

Mair Barnes

### **Others:**

David Melding AM, Deputy Presiding Officer

### **Apologies:**

Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM

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**1. Chair's introduction**

**Apologies**

Apologies were received from Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM.

**Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Minutes of meeting on 22 September 2011**

The minutes were formally agreed.

**2. Bilingual Services**

The pre-legislative public consultation period ended on 14 October and responses will be analysed and reported to the Commission at its next meeting. Subject to the Commission's approval, it is expected that the Bill, incorporating any revisions, will be introduced in early December, with the proposed Scheme being laid before the Assembly at the same time.

At its July meeting, the Commission agreed in principle that the fully bilingual Record of Proceedings be reinstated provided that the arrangement was sustainable in the long term and could be provided at reasonable cost. Since July, translators have been testing online software based translation systems provided by Google, and an assessment of the cost of using such a system is currently being made.

Commissioners welcomed the progress that had been made on the public consultation and exploratory work conducted in relation to providing a fully bilingual Record of Proceedings.

A further paper on this issue (as well as on the final form of the Bill and Scheme) will be discussed at the Commission's meeting on 24 November.

Action: Officials to contact Google again to investigate whether it is likely to charge for Toolkit and report on the outcome of discussions at the meeting on 24 November.

**3. Uno benefits and savings six monthly review**

The Commission received an update on the benefits and savings delivered by the UNO project. Achievements against the project's aims and the work to collect feedback on user satisfaction were discussed. It was agreed that a significant amount has been achieved,

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but a number of technical issues were still outstanding which were causing difficulties for some users.

A plan to resolve these issues is in place with Atos, who are providing dedicated technical resources to investigate and progress solutions at no further cost to the Assembly. The software update has been trialled with 100 users, and it is anticipated that the changes will be rolled out to all users during October.

An ICT strategy group was created in March 2011 to consider options for ICT provision after 2014. A detailed options paper will be brought to the Commission meeting on 24 November.

The Commission noted the report and the measures put in place to resolve the outstanding issues. It was agreed that there had been significant dedication and commitment from ICT staff in delivering the project.

A further UNO evaluation paper will be brought to the Commission in six months' time.

Action: Officials to prepare a paper on the financial benefits of the UNO project as part of the next progress report in six months.

**4. Improving access support for Assembly Members**

The creation of a central Access Fund was discussed. The fund would enable all members to engage with constituents with diverse needs. The fund would also mitigate against the risk of action or inaction that may breach the Equality Act 2010.

Commissioners noted that the fund would be established and administered outside the remit of the Remuneration Board but that there were some related provisions within the provisions of the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances. They agreed that the Remuneration Board should be made aware of the decision and how it will be implemented.

Consideration was also given to the use of the fund for providing access support to cross-party groups at the Assembly. This would be limited to particular requirements and Commissioners made it clear that it should not extend to general support to cross party groups.

The Commission agreed to the recommendations in the paper.

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Action: Officials, in consultation with Sandy Mewies, to develop guidance regarding the use of the fund.

Action: Officials to update the guidance on support for Cross-Party groups.

#### **5. Management Board report to the Commission**

The Chief Executive provided an update on issues within each of the Commission's strategic goals.

The report was noted.

#### **6. Portfolio holder updates**

Commissioners provided an update on activities within their portfolios.

As Commissioner with responsibility for budgets and governance, Angela Burns updated the Commission on the Finance Committee's report on the Commission's draft budget. The Commission agreed their response to the Committee's recommendations, including to phase the planned budget increases over three years.

Other Commissioners also gave an update on their portfolios.

#### **7. Assembly Commission rolling programme**

The rolling programme was noted.

#### **8. Finance and corporate governance adviser**

The Commission formally noted the out of committee decision to agree to extend this appointment to the end of December 2012.

#### **9. Motion to elect Members' Pension Scheme Trustees**

The Commission formally noted the out of committee decision to table a motion to elect Members' Pension Scheme Trustees.

#### **10. Any other business**

The creation of an IT Director role was discussed and agreed. Commissioners asked that the recruitment process should start as soon as possible.