

Consultation - Review of Rules and Guidance on the use of Senedd Resources 2025

This document relates to Rule 8 of the Code of Conduct.



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1. Introduction

1. In preparation for the Seventh Senedd, an update to the Rules is anticipated. This update aims to use the experience of the past several years to provide clarity. It also reflects changes in the regulatory framework.
2. The current Rules and Guidance can be found here: **[Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources](#)**. The remainder of this document, and annex, outlines the intended changes and observations are invited on the proposals.

Background

3. The Standards framework for Members of the Senedd includes the Code of Conduct for Senedd Members ('the Code') and Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources ('the Rules'). 'Rule 8 of the Code' requires Members to comply with rules on the use of resources provided by the Senedd Commission, which are made, from time to time, by the Principal Accounting Officer ("the Accounting Officer") of the Commission. The principal accounting officer for the Senedd is the Chief Executive and Clerk.
4. The principal accounting officer of a public sector organisation is the custodian of public trust in its use of public resources. They are responsible for the regularity and propriety of expenditure, robust evaluation of different mechanisms for delivering policy objectives, value for money, the management of risk, and accurate accounting for the use of resources. To support these duties the accounting officer requires an effective assurance regime.
5. "Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources" were first issued before the 2016 elections with the approval of the then Accounting Officer. They have been updated periodically, to provide greater clarity regarding the ways in which Commission resources may be used. The Rules now incorporate guidance for Members and their staff, to make them clearer and easier to use. The document is intended to be helpful to Members by setting out the rules that apply to their use of Commission funded resources, and helpful to the Accounting Officer by setting out the rules that apply, in order to comply with requirements to have appropriate assurances in place about the way Commission resources, whether pursuant to section 27(5) of the Government of Wales Act 2006 (provision of property, staff and services to the Senedd) or in accordance with the Determination, are used and accounted for.

2. Clarification of wording or meaning

Background

6. The current version of the Rules and Guidance came into place following an extensive consultation process. They are presented in a format to provide guidance alongside each rule. The intention on this occasion is not to make extensive changes to the Rules, rather the update will continue the process of adjusting wording for consistency and clarity, or to reflect changes since the Rules were last amended. Clarifications /presentational changes have been made and are set out in the attached annex using tracked changes.

7. In some instances experience suggests that the meaning or intention of the rules or guidance could be made clearer. Changes driven by these considerations are summarised 'at a glance' in the section below, with the specifics of the proposed change set out in the attached annex.

8. There are some areas where cross referencing to other documents will be updated. For example, changes are required to remove reference to Regions as a consequence of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act 2024 because, in future, there will be no Regions for Senedd purposes, only Constituencies.

Considerations

9. In the introductory section 'Status of the Rules and Guidance' small adjustments will be made to clarify the context for the Rules and Guidance. In paragraph 4 the wording relating to referrals to "the Senedd Commissioner for Standards for investigation" will be adjusted to "...Senedd Commissioner for Standards who must treat the communication as a complaint", which more accurately reflects the legislation.

10. Similarly, two clarifications are proposed in the Interpretation section. Responsibilities of the Senedd will be reflected within the existing description of Member duties, alongside business of the Senedd and constituency business. Whilst 'Media operations' is already intended to capture all types of media, for clarity, it is proposed to include a specific reference to social media, and to remove the outdated reference to the Senedd estate.

11. The guidance to Rule 1 seeks to explain the limitations on Member use of Senedd resources, including a reminder to be conscious of other legislation which applies. A sentence is being added to this effect.

12. Rule 2 reflects requirements on the Senedd Commission in the Government of Wales Act 2006 and as a public body. It is proposed to adjust the wording to clarify and better reflect the principles in accordance with which functions of the Senedd Commission are to be exercised.

13. Rule 5 - It is proposed to make clear that the financial procedures referenced may be communicated to Members either by the Senedd Commission or by the Clerk who is the principal accounting officer of the Senedd Commission. These procedures are generally operated by the Members' Business Support team and are available on the Intranet and through other updates, both electronic and in person.

14. Rule 6 – it is proposed to remove the first sentence of the rule, as Members must comply with all legislation applicable to their role and responsibilities consequential to it, regardless of the content of these Rules. It is proposed to include a general reminder in the guidance to Rule 1.

15. Rule 10 states that a Member is required to reimburse the Commission promptly upon being required to do so, in the event that a Member is found to have breached this Rule. It has been suggested that this should be moved to Rule 1 to apply across the Rules. This would be consistent with views expressed by the Standards Committee when considering matters arising out of their reports on Recall and Deception.

16. Rule 11 reflects that Resources may not be used for media operations in relation to any election campaign for public office, and the proposal is to adjust the wording to reflect that this is not limited to campaigning taking place in Wales.

17. The guidance to Rule 12 reminds Members that Member Sponsored Events are an important part of engagement. It is proposed to add clarity that it is essential for a sponsoring Member to attend or be represented at an event they sponsor.

18. Rule 13 – it is proposed to add to the guidance to make clear that the Senedd Commission Security team is responsible for the administration of the security vetting policy.

Proposals

19. These proposed changes are set out in the attached annex.

3. How to submit a response

20. Your views on these proposals are welcomed, to help inform final decisions on changes to the Rules and Guidance on use of Senedd Resources for the Seventh Senedd. If you would like to submit a response to this consultation you can do so by sending your responses to the following:

Post: Clerk of the Welsh Parliament
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1SN

E-mail: A0consultation@senedd.wales

21. In line with the Senedd's Official Languages Scheme, you are welcome to respond in both or either of our official languages, and we ask organisations that are subject to Welsh Language standards or schemes to respond in line with their own obligations.

22. All responses will be handled according to our Privacy policy and responses are not routinely published, although summarised responses or views may be included in the published report on the annual review. Please confirm whether you would prefer that your name is not published alongside your comments in the report.

23. To allow time to consider responses and finalise decisions, we would welcome receipt of all responses by no later than 5pm, 02/11/25. Any responses received after this date will not be considered.

24. If you need assistance in preparing your response, please contact the secretariat on the details above.

Privacy Notice

25. The Senedd Commission is the data controller of the information you provide, and will ensure it is protected and used in line with data protection legislation. Our general privacy policy is available from our website at: <https://senedd.wales/help/privacy/privacy-notice/>. However, this section describes how and why the Commission uses personal data for the specific purposes of this consultation.

Why we are collecting, and what we do with, information

26. Your submission will be used to inform decisions on proposed changes to the Accounting Officer's Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources. Submissions will be seen in full by the Accounting Officer and the secretariat administering this consultation. Some personal information may be shared with different teams within the Senedd Commission in considering any changes and how any changes should be administered. It may also be necessary to share responses, including personal information, with the secretariat for, and Board members of, the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd.

27. We may publish extracts from your submission within documents produced following the consultation, including on our website. This may include your personal information. Any submissions included in published documents will remain in the public domain indefinitely. Once in the public domain, third parties, such as media or broadcast outlets, may reuse these published parts of contributions for their own purposes. Please let us know if you would prefer that your submission is not published.

28. In the event of a request for information being made under access to information legislation, it may be necessary to disclose some of the information that you provide. We will only do this if we are obliged to do so by law.