

I am writing to raise concerns about current proposals to amend Assembly Member Remuneration for Residential Accommodation Expenditure, as outlined here:

<http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s52193/Update%20following%20Remuneration%20Board%20meeting%20-%206%20July%202016.pdf>

I am deeply concerned about the following passage:

For this reason, we propose amending the Determination so that Members whose main home is outside Wales are eligible for residential accommodation expenditure. The Board will give effect to such an amendment by extending the Outer Area to the whole of the UK.

The amendment to the Determination means that Assembly Members for the National Assembly for Wales, who live outside of Wales, will be able to claim accommodation expenditure in Cardiff. For me, it is unreasonable that the Welsh taxpayer should pay for an individual who lives beyond Wales to be remunerated for accommodation in Cardiff. As noted in the passage above: 'The Determination is, therefore, based on an assumption that all Members have their main home in Wales', and this is how it should remain.

If an Assembly Member wishes to claim Residential Accommodation Expenditure from a national legislature, it does not seem unreasonable to expect that the Assembly Member lives within the boundaries of that legislature. Personally, I would wish to see subsequent legislation on the Governance of Wales demand that the Assembly Member's main home be based within their constituency/region, but until then, it does not seem unreasonable to expect Welsh Assembly Members to live in Wales if seeking to claim expenditure for accommodation in Cardiff.

I hope the Remuneration Board considers these comments before proceeding with their decision.