

Bwrdd Taliadau Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol Cymru

—  
Remuneration Board of the  
National Assembly for Wales

27 September 2016

Dear Assembly Member,

On 15 September, the Remuneration Board met in Colwyn Bay to discuss our strategy for the remainder of the Board's mandate and to visit Members' offices in North Wales. In addition to this, we considered issues around the security of Assembly Members and their staff. We have also considered the responses to the consultation on our proposals for the remuneration of Committee Chairs.

### **Security of Assembly Members and their staff**

The Board considered the financial support for security provisions currently in place and highlighted a number of actions that could be taken to enhance security for Members and their staff when away from the Assembly estate, in light of the Assembly Commission's decision to review security arrangements at your offices.

The Assembly Commission has already completed visits of many of your offices, with the remainder planned for completion during the autumn term.

Board Members consider security to be a high priority and that any matters that fall into the remit of the Board should be addressed as a matter of priority.

Following the tragic death of Jo Cox MP, there is greater urgency to review existing security measures. It is within our power to ensure that measures to help protect Members are effectively resourced. Therefore, we have decided to remove the existing requirement for the first £500 of office related security to be met from the individual AM's Office Costs. Instead we will create a ring-fenced fund which will provide necessary and reasonable

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**Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh**

security enhancements for Assembly Members in your offices, residential accommodation (if applicable) and homes.

The security review undertaken by qualified officers identifies enhancements that ‘must’ take place, ‘should’ take place and ‘could’ take place. All enhancements that ‘must’ and ‘should’ take place will be funded centrally. However those enhancements that ‘could’ take place will be subject to a business case.

Qualified officers can help advise on suitable companies for sourcing the recommended equipment. Members will be advised on how they purchase equipment by MBS.

Members’ Business Support will publish the overall expenditure on enhancing security measures for Assembly Members.

**Additional Salaries for Committee Chairs**

Following our meeting in July, we issued a consultation proposing that we retain the salary levels adopted for the Fourth Assembly (outlined in the following table):

Committees	Additional salary
Policy and Legislation Committees; Public Accounts; Finance; Constitutional and Legislative Affairs	£13,000
Petitions; Standards	£8,660

After considering responses to this consultation, we agreed that the salary levels for Committee Chairs should be maintained.

The Business Committee has indicated that the responsibilities of the new External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee, will be as significant as those of the other Policy and Legislation Committees. Therefore, the chair of this Committee will receive the higher of the two additional salaries.

As is the case for the pay of Members and all Office Holders, additional salaries for Committee Chairs will be adjusted in April of each year by the change in the ASHE Median Earnings in Wales, between March and March of the previous year.

Members’ Business Support will write to Chairs to confirm their salary which will be backdated from the date they were elected to this role.

## **Residential Accommodation Expenditure**

Following our meeting in July, we issued a consultation proposing that the Determination be amended so that Members whose main home is outside Wales would be eligible for residential accommodation expenditure.

We are grateful for your responses to this consultation and will consider this issue further at our meeting in November before coming to a decision.

### **Our strategy**

At our meeting we discussed our strategic goals and develop an ambitious set of priorities. Our intention is to build on the previous Board's achievements in the Fourth Assembly, particularly in the light of the changing constitutional situation, to ensure that Assembly Members receive the necessary resources to do their jobs as effectively as possible. We will be transparent in developing these priorities and will continue to consult you as we develop our work programme.

We are committed to engaging regularly with you and your staff to ensure that our Determination remains appropriate and that we are fulfilling our duties. On 16 September we visited a number of Members and their staff in constituency offices across north Wales. To those Members and staff who we visited, we are very grateful for your hospitality and the opportunity to speak with you.

We continue to meet many of you informally and hope to attend your party group meetings and set up an AM and AMSS Representative Group meetings this term. We look forward to ongoing engagement over the next four years.

This letter will also be published on our website as is our usual practice.

If you would like to discuss this matter with me, or with one of my fellow Board members, please do not hesitate to contact me via the secretariat.

Best Wishes,



**Dame Dawn Primarolo**  
**Cadeirydd / Chair**  
**Bwrdd Taliadau/Remuneration Board**