

# The Remuneration Board's strategy for 2016-2021

**Remuneration Board of the  
National Assembly for Wales**

**January 2017**

## The Remuneration Board

---

The Remuneration Board of the National Assembly for Wales is the independent body responsible for setting the pay, pensions and allowances of Assembly Members and their staff. The Board was established by the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010.

## Members of the Board

---

**Dame Dawn Primarolo DBE PC (Chair)**

**Trevor Reaney CBE**

**Mike Redhouse**

**Dame Jane Roberts**

## Secretariat to the Board

---

**Dan Collier**, Acting Clerk to the Board

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the National Assembly's website:  
[www.assembly.wales](http://www.assembly.wales)

Copies of this report can also be obtained in accessible formats including Braille, large print, audio or hard copy from:

Clerk to the Remuneration Board  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Tel: 0300 200 6330

Email: [Remuneration@assembly.wales](mailto:Remuneration@assembly.wales)

# Contents

---

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The purpose of the Board's strategy .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Strategic priorities for 2016 to 2021 .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Appendix A: Members of the Remuneration Board.....</b>	<b>16</b>



# Introduction

---

The Board met in September 2016 to discuss its strategy for its mandate over the course of the Fifth Assembly, with both eyes firmly on providing Members with a Determination which would be fit for the Sixth Assembly.

Our first priority is to consider the challenges and opportunities posed by a new Assembly with a significant number of new Members; a new Presiding Officer; a new Assembly Commission; changes to the political make-up of the Assembly; and of course responding to the complexities and uncertainties of constitutional change ahead.

In this strategy, we place renewed emphasis on effective engagement with stakeholders. We will continue to engage directly and frequently with Assembly Members and their staff to explain the Board's thinking and to gain feedback from those most directly affected. We will also develop productive relationships with other stakeholders, using more innovative techniques to gather evidence. The Board will maintain its evidence based approach to decision-making and will continue to explore examples of international good practice and innovation.

The Board's decisions are independent and its own to make. In making these decisions, we will build on the momentum of the previous Board and draw on the combined experience and expertise of new Board members.

We are publishing this strategy now in order to be transparent about our work and to enable productive dialogue with those who are affected and take an interest in our work and the future capacity of Wales' democracy.





# The purpose of the Board's strategy

# Chapter 1

---

## 1.1 The purpose of the Board and its core responsibilities

1.1.1 The Board has developed this strategy to enable it to be responsive to the evolving needs of this Assembly while having its eyes firmly fixed on creating a Determination which is fit for the Sixth Assembly. As Board members, we have discussed how we would approach our work over the next few years and what our priorities should be to ensure that Members are appropriately resourced to effectively fulfil their roles.

1.1.2 In seeking evidence and coming to robust and fair decisions, the Board will be creative in the way it approaches each strand of work. We will not shy away from making difficult decisions and will review the principles of the Determination if we feel that they are not fit for purpose.

1.1.3 The Board's functions, as set out in section 3 of the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010 ("the Measure"), are to determine the level of remuneration and system of financial support for Assembly Members ("Members") which enables them to fulfil their roles.

1.1.4 In addition to its statutory duties, the Measure sets out three key responsibilities that the Board must seek to achieve when making a Determination. These are to:

- provide Assembly Members with a level of remuneration which reflects the complexity and importance of the functions they discharge, and does not deter individuals from seeking election to the Assembly on financial grounds;
- provide Assembly Members with adequate resources to enable them to exercise their functions; and
- ensure probity, accountability, value for money and transparency with regards to the expenditure of public funds.

1.1.5 The Board is collectively responsible for implementing its objectives in the short, medium and long-term and consider the best interests of the Assembly, consistent with its statutory obligations.

1.1.6 The Board's purpose is:

---

The Remuneration Board makes independent decisions on the pay and direct support for Assembly Members to attract a wide range of capable and diverse candidates and to enable those elected to do their job effectively, with value for money, for the people of Wales.

---



# Chapter 2

---

## 2.1 The Board's guiding principles and objectives

- 2.1.1 The Board's work is underpinned by a set of clearly defined principles:
- financial support and remuneration for Members should support the strategic purpose of the Assembly and facilitate the work of its Members;
  - decisions must be appropriate within the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales;
  - the system of financial support for Members must be robust, clear, transparent, sustainable and represent value for money for the taxpayer.
- 2.1.2 In addition to these, and in its approach to develop a Determination fit for the Sixth Assembly, the Board will have regard to the principles of equality of opportunity and fairness.
- 2.1.3 Our strategic objectives for this term are:
- To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views;
  - Ensure that the Determination for the Fifth Assembly remains fit for purpose;
  - Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election which reflects the Assembly's evolving constitutional responsibilities and the wider Welsh context; and
  - Ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the tax payer and that the Board operates effectively.
- 2.1.4 In this document, the Board reflects on its learning so far, what challenges and opportunities lie ahead and describes the steps that it will take from 2016 to 2017 to meet these objectives. The strategy also looks to the longer term, describing what it aims to achieve throughout the course of the Fifth Assembly so that, by 2021, the public has confidence that Members' use of taxpayer's money is well regulated and that Members have appropriate access to resources to enable them to carry out their functions as elected representatives.
- 2.1.5 Where the Board sees fit to contribute to issues of wider consequence, such as seeking to support a broad range of people to be able to put themselves forward as potential Assembly Members, the Board shall do so, always mindful of its legislative remit.

## 2.2 Experience of the Fourth Assembly

- 2.2.1 The previous Board put in place a system of remuneration which targeted resources to support all aspects of a Member's role. It reviewed the Determination to create a package of financial support for Members which would be fit for an institution with greater legislative and taxation powers at its disposal.
- 2.2.2 The Board is committed to resourcing the specific needs of Members and responding to the requirements of the Assembly as it evolves. The previous Board's legacy report recommended that the new Board capture some governance principles and guidance on discharging its statutory functions in a manner reflective of independence, openness and inclusiveness, enabling it to be held to account.
- 2.2.3 Part of its early work therefore has been to consider its governance and defining principles. The Board has discussed the importance of targeting resources to support Members to fulfil their core functions: scrutinising policy and finance; holding the Welsh Government to account; legislating; and representing their constituents.
- 2.2.4 The Board is mindful that its decisions may have an impact on the evolving devolution settlement and on constitutional issues in Wales. Therefore, the Board will consider how it can contribute more widely to the strategic development of the Assembly as the institution matures and its requirements, and the expectations of the people of Wales, change over time.

# Chapter 3

---

- 3.1.1 Feedback from Members during regular consultations enabled the Board to evaluate the effectiveness of the systems it put in place. The new Board will continue with and enhance this participative approach to ensure its decisions remain fit for purpose.
- 3.1.2 The Board will also draw on the experiences and ideas of former Members, in particular their experiences on the transition from representing their constituents at the Assembly to returning to their careers or starting a new career path.
- 3.1.3 The Board has designed and implemented a pension Scheme based on Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) to replace the final salary based scheme operated under the Fourth Assembly. HM Treasury formally approved the pension scheme in April 2016 and it came into force from 6 May 2016. The Board also established a Pension Board to oversee the administration of the scheme, ensuring that an independent chair was appointed to provide a more balanced structure. The Board will work closely with the Pension Board to ensure that valuations of the scheme are effectively reviewed and that decisions are open and transparent.
- 3.1.4 There is a breadth of experience and expertise across the membership of the Remuneration Board. As individual Board members, we will use our experiences and expertise to draw out the key issues and make collective decisions based on the evidence we receive. We will also seek expert advice when necessary to assist in fully informed decision making.
- 3.1.5 In developing our strategy, we have designated specific areas of work to individual Board members to focus on and work closely with supporting officials to report their findings back to the full Board.

# Chapter 4

---

## 4.1 Forthcoming challenges – horizon scanning

- 4.1.1 The Board's strategy takes account of drivers and constitutional influences that will shape its work over the coming years.
- 4.1.2 Constitutional developments, such as enhanced fiscal powers and legislative competence, are increasing the responsibilities on Members' shoulders and it is critical that the Board is mindful of these issues when making decisions on the level of financial support available to Members. The previous Board made its decision on the salaries of Members to reflect these additional responsibilities.
- 4.1.3 The Wales Bill is devolving further powers and functions to the Welsh Ministers, some of which will relate to the Board's remit, in particular issues such as the name change of the National Assembly for Wales and electoral arrangements for the Assembly. The Wales Bill also gives the Assembly powers to make further changes to its internal arrangements, such as the composition of committees, disqualification of Members and the composition of the Assembly Commission.
- 4.1.4 The Board would need to consider whether any potential changes could have an impact on the financial support provided to Members and how best to meet these.
- 4.1.5 The UK's departure from the European Union will escalate pressure on Members and is likely to increase their workloads. Calls to increase capacity of the Assembly may become more relevant.
- 4.1.6 Any increase to the number of Members would of course have implications on the financial support provided to Members. The Board will keep a close eye on this development and will ensure that the principles of value for money and using resources wisely are appropriately applied.
- 4.1.7 The Board will reflect on these changes and consider whether to review the financial package available to Members accordingly. What Members need to work effectively will be central to the Board's and the Assembly Commission's thoughts and the balance of resources within the respective remits should be explored further throughout the course of the Fifth Assembly.
- 4.1.8 Potential threats to security will continue to be of major concern and the Board considers that any matters that fall into its remit should be addressed as a matter of priority. Although it would be difficult to provide assurance that Members and their staff will be safe in all situations, the Board will work closely with the

Assembly Commission to ensure that enhancements to increase the safety of Members at their constituency offices and their homes are sufficiently resourced.

4.1.9 There is greater public scrutiny on the spending of tax payers' money. Challenging public spending settlements will result in even closer scrutiny of the performance and budget of the National Assembly for Wales. It is important that the budget for financial support provided to Members is transparent and that the Board is accountable for its decisions.





# Strategic priorities for 2016 to 2021

This section explains our direction of travel to continue our mandate over the coming years and prepare a Determination fit for the Sixth Assembly.

# Chapter 5

---

## 5.1 Strategic Priorities

- 5.1.1 The Board intends to prepare the ground early for its consideration of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly. Given the possibility of an increase in the number of Assembly Members in coming years, it is an opportune time to consider how best the Board can facilitate a wide range of able candidates putting themselves forward for election. The Board's immediate priority is to gain an understanding of the incentives and the barriers to enter the Assembly, including a review of the diversity of AMs since 1999. In reaching its decisions, the Board will learn from approaches elsewhere in the world and reflect on the lessons learnt on the work of the previous Board and the beginning of the new Board.
- 5.1.2 The following issues, which directly relate to our objectives, will be considered by the Board throughout the course of its term of office. Although this programme of work outlines the Board's priorities over the course of the Fifth Assembly, it will be subject to regular review to ensure that it reflects and adapts to business need.
- 5.1.3 The Board's Strategy will be operationalised in a rolling programme of work.
- To engage effectively with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure we understand their needs and views*
- 
- 5.1.4 The Board will adopt more innovative approaches to gathering evidence to ensure that it receives the information it needs to make good decisions. The Board will tailor methods of consultation specifically to the area of work and the audience it wishes to target. This will include more 'purposive' means of gathering evidence, possibly by working closely with focus groups and citizen panels. The Board will also combine the new methods with tried and trusted methods of consultation, inviting people to contribute evidence to the Board on the matters under consideration and to inform its decision making.
- 5.1.5 The Board is mindful that the financial regime and guidance it puts in place are highly relevant to the work of the Assembly's Standards Commissioner. The Assembly is to be applauded for its record on standards matters generally, not just financial matters. To help develop this positive culture, the Board will continue to liaise periodically with the Commissioner on matters of common interest.
- 5.1.6 The Board will also maintain regular contact with the Presiding Officer and Assembly Commission. This is in recognition of the importance of the Commission



in providing support and services to Members and of the interdependency of the strategic roles of both bodies. The Board supports the Assembly Commission's objective to manage resources effectively<sup>1</sup> and understands its role in mirroring this objective by ensuring that the Assembly Members' budget is correctly managed and that its decisions are based on the principles of good value for money.

- 5.1.7 The Board has established the practice of engaging with Members and their Support Staff through Representative Groups. The Chair values these fora and will continue to use these Groups effectively in the Fifth Assembly to consider issues and concerns affecting Members and their staff and explain the decisions of the Board. Board members will also be invited to attend the group meetings with the Chair to enhance their understanding of the key areas of concern.

*Ensure that the Determination for the Fifth Assembly remains fit for purpose*

---

- 5.1.8 Immediate work to be carried out by the Board will focus on taking evidence on how the new Determination has operated in practice over the first 12 months or so of the Fifth Assembly.
- 5.1.9 In line with the previous Board's commitment to review new support provisions in the Determination one year after its implementation, we will conduct a review into how the new arrangements are working and being received by Members. This review will be underpinned by our principle to consider whether a prescriptive or more autonomous model of support would be more appropriate.
- 5.1.10 Over the longer-term, the Board will consider how constitutional change could have an impact on the resources required by Members over the next four years, including the implications of the UK's departure from the European Union.
- 5.1.11 The previous Board set the structure of Support Staff salaries, Office Costs and Residential Accommodation Expenditure for the Fifth Assembly, these areas will be subject to review over the course of the Fifth Assembly to ensure that the system of support reflects market conditions. While the Board has particular duties in relation to determining Members' contributions to the pension scheme, it will not require a wholesale review of the Members' pension scheme this term as the previous Board was required to do.
- 5.1.12 In the near future, the Board will also review the pay and career structure of Assembly Member Support Staff. As well as dealing with individual case work

---

<sup>1</sup> [Assembly Commission strategy 2016-21](#)

raised by constituents, Members scrutinise Government policy, finance and Legislation and they require high calibre and a range of skilled support to be able to do this effectively. The Board will consider how best to equip Members with an appropriate level of support to effectively do their job in a maturing political institution.

- 5.1.13 The Board will continue to conduct audits and reviews of policies where needed and ensure that new procedures are working effectively.

*Produce a Determination for the Sixth Assembly to inform all potential candidates one year before the Welsh general election which reflects the Assembly's evolving constitutional responsibilities and the wider Welsh context*

---

- 5.1.14 The Board intends to prepare the ground early for its consideration of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly. Its immediate priority is to gain a better understanding of the barriers for entering the Assembly, including a review of the diversity of Members past and present; and the obstacles and incentives for potential candidates.

- 5.1.15 The Board will complete its term by publishing the Determination for the Sixth Assembly, with a review explaining the Board's methodology, one year before the Welsh general election in 2021.

- 5.1.16 The Assembly Commission has agreed that the case for a larger Assembly is more compelling than ever. Subject to the passing of the Wales Bill currently before Parliament, the power to legislate to increase the size of the institution and to reform the electoral system will be devolved to the Assembly. Any increase in the number of Assembly Members will of course have an impact on our remit and our objectives for providing a Determination fit for the Sixth Assembly. We will continue to work closely with the Commission to monitor these developments.

*Ensure that the system of financial support for Members should represent value for money for the tax payer and that the Board operates effectively*

---

- 5.1.17 At each review point, the Board will consider whether the Determination represents good value for tax payers' money, and reflects the principle of equal opportunity. It will also reflect on its own performance periodically against its governance principles.

- 5.1.18 The Board will also ensure that the principle of self-evaluation is mainstreamed throughout its work by regularly reviewing its decisions and ensuring that they meet the objectives and priorities set in this strategy document.
- 5.1.19 To ensure that the Board maintains a strategic overview of the delivery of each strand of its work, it will consider progress at each Board meeting and at every third meeting will formally review its decisions and consider its strategic path going forward. In order to effectively inform its decisions for the Determination for the Sixth Assembly, the Board will conduct innovative research and engagement work early in this Assembly.

# Appendix A: Members of the Remuneration Board

---



## Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair)

---



Dame Dawn Primarolo, DBE, is a British Labour Party politician who was the Member of Parliament for Bristol South from 1987 until 2015, when she stood down. She was Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families at the Department for Children, Schools and Families from June 2009 to May 2010 and a Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 2010. She was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) for political service.

Born in London, Dawn was raised in Crawley, West Sussex. Returning to London in 1973 for work, she joined the Labour Party whilst employed as a legal secretary in an east London Law Centre.

She moved to Bristol in 1974 and her son, Luke, was born in 1978. As a mature student and single parent she studied a BA (Hons) in social science at Bristol Polytechnic, following which she conducted Ph.D. research into women and housing.

Dawn was first elected to Parliament at the 1987 general election and has held the following positions:

- 1992–1994: Opposition Spokesman for Health
- 1994–1997: Opposition Spokesman for the Treasury
- 1997–1999: Financial Secretary to the Treasury
- 1999–2007: Paymaster General
- 2007–2009: Minister of State for Public Health
- 2009–2010: Minister of State Children and Young People
- Dawn was conferred a Peerage of the United Kingdom for Life in August 2015.

## Trevor Reaney

---



Trevor Reaney served as Clerk and Chief Executive to the Northern Ireland Assembly from August 2008 until his retirement in June 2016. Trevor began his career in the hospitality industry and has held a number of management positions in both the private and public sectors. Before joining the Assembly, Trevor served as Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board from January 2004 and, prior to that, he held the post of Chief Executive of Craigavon Borough Council from 1996 to 2003.

Trevor is a member or holds office with a number of organisations:

- Fellow of the Institute of Management
- Trustee and Deputy Chair of Buttle UK (a children’s charity)
- Trustee of Tree Aid (an international development charity)

## Michael Redhouse

---



Michael Redhouse is currently Principal of EMES Consulting, which he founded in 2002, helping many major organisations with their remuneration and benefits issues. Michael graduated in mathematics from the Open University, and his career included spells as a Partner at Ernst and Young, and as Employment Policy Director at Diageo. Michael currently serves as a Trustee of the APEX Trust, which supports offenders returning to work, and as Chair of Trustees of St. Luke’s Hospice in Harrow.

Michael is a Member of the School Teachers’ Review Body (STRB), which looks into pay, professional duties and working time of school teachers in England and Wales and reports to the Secretary of State.

## Dame Jane Roberts

---



Dame Jane Roberts has an extensive background in local government and in health. Jane was Leader of Camden Council from 2000 until 2005, serving as a councillor for 16 years. She chaired the Councillors' Commission for the Department of Communities and Local Government between 2007 and 2009 and currently chairs the think tank, New Local Government Network.

Professionally, Jane is a medical doctor and works as a hospital consultant in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. She was Medical Director and later Director of Quality and Performance at Islington Primary Care Trust.

Jane has a wide range of non-executive experience in the public and third sectors mostly across health, education, public policy and ethics including as a Non-Executive Director of Ofsted from 2006 to 2011 and Chair of Parenting UK from 2006 to 2012. She is a trustee of the Institute of Public Policy Research and a member of the governing body of the Institute for Public Policy for Wales.

Jane has authored a number of peer reviewed academic papers in paediatrics and psychiatry, as well as being co-editor of the book "The Politics of Attachment" (1996). She is a Visiting Fellow at The Open University and has published work in 2015 from her research on the transition from political office.