# **ANNUAL REPORT:** 2018 - 2019

Summary: July 2019

BWRDD **TALIADAU REMUNERATION** BOARD

### 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, which received Royal Approval on 22 July 2010.

### MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

- Dame Dawn Primarolo DBE PC (Chair)
- Ronnie Alexander
- Trevor Reaney
- Mike Redhouse
- Dame Jane Roberts

### SECRETARIAT TO THE BOARD

- Lleu Williams, Clerk
- Sian Giddins, Deputy Clerk (to April 2019)
- Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerk (from April 2019)

An electronic copy of this report can be found on the National Assembly's website: **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 6565** 

Email: Remuneration@assembly.wales

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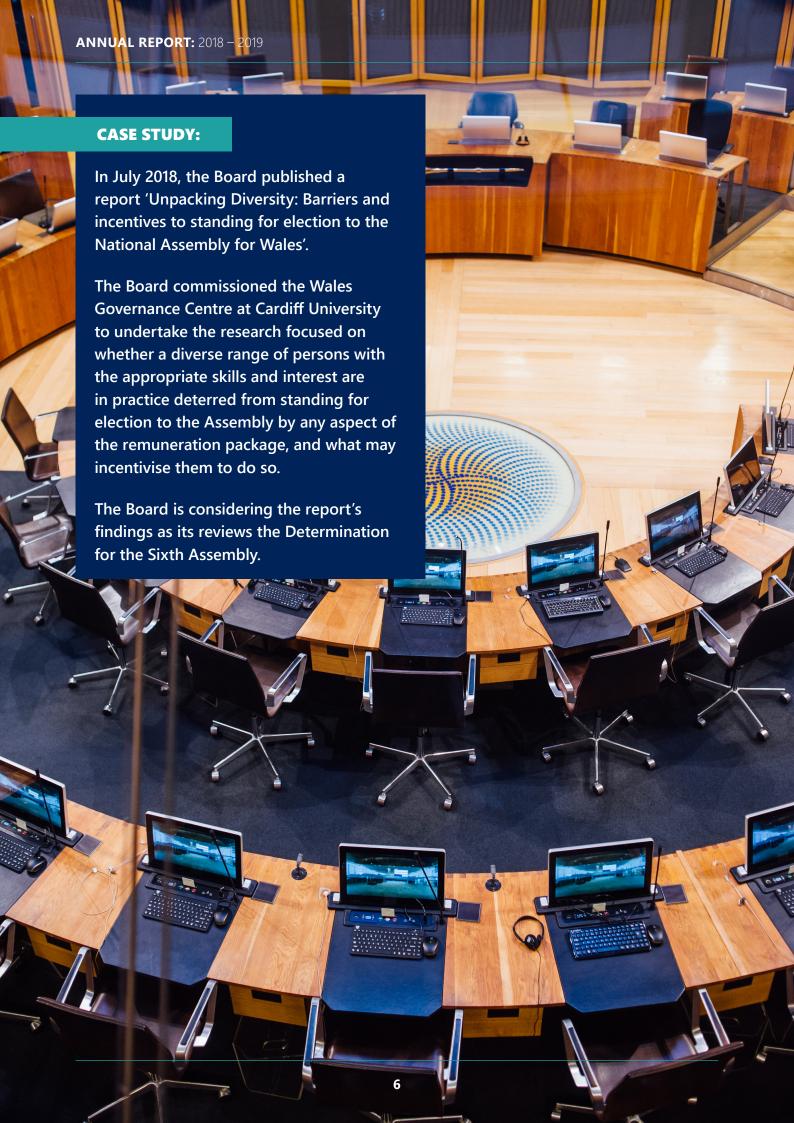
### Introduction

As the Remuneration Board enters its final year in office, its commitment to ensuring that Members receive sufficient support to undertake their work while also respecting the expenditure of the taxpayer is as absolute now as when it started its term of office.

The Board has met on six occasions and has undertaken a significant amount of work in that time. The Board and I have had several meetings with individual Members and their staff as well as both the Member and Support Staff Representative Groups, in addition to liaising regularly with the Assembly Commission and the Llywydd.

The Board also completed its review of staffing support and introduced some far reaching changes. The Board has also begun its review of the Determination ahead of the next Assembly with a view to publishing its new Determination one full year ahead of the next election.





### **Decisions**

During the past year the Board has:

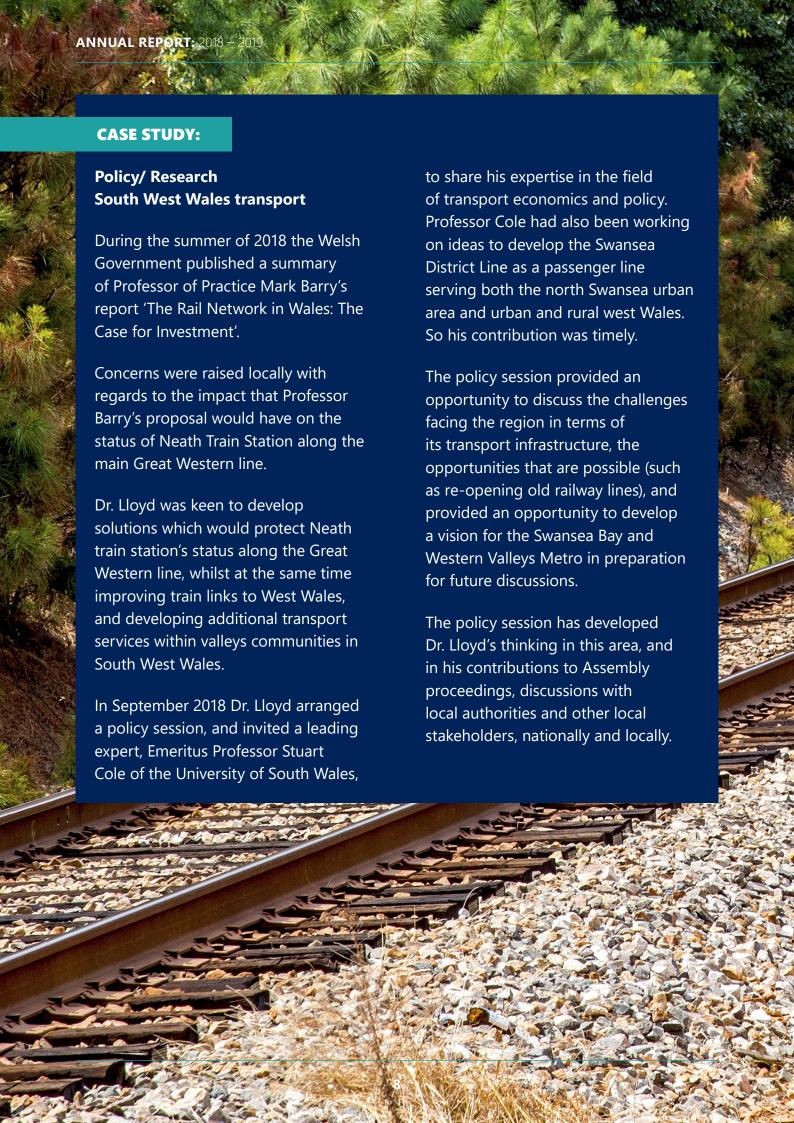
- Increased the Residential Accommodation Expenditure allowance for outer area Members by 2.4 per cent in 2019-20 in line with CPI, and increased the allowance for intermediate area Members to £6,840 per annum for 2019-20.
- Provided £47,808 as part of the Policy,
  Communications and Research Fund,
  to Members in order to commission
  discrete pieces of research work from
  external sources and to permit Members
  to engage with their constituents.
- Provided an additional £3,808 to Members who face exceptional circumstances that affect their ability to fulfil their duties. The Board reviews each case individually to ensure that those Members who require additional support receive it.

As part of its staffing review, the Board made several changes to the provisions available to Members. The Board believes the system of staffing support is now better suited to meet its objectives and we believe the decisions taken reflect that. Following a comprehensive review the Board decided to:

 give Members and Political Parties more flexibility on how they spend their allowances within the system to help address pressure points, without increasing the cost to the taxpayer;

- publish the total annual spends that Members and Political Parties make on staffing costs;
- end the ability of Members to fund the employment of new family members and partners from the allowances available to them through the Determination from April 2019. Those already employed will be on transitional protection to the end of the Sixth Assembly;
- enhance the terms and conditions of support staff to include the introduction of privilege days in addition to the support staff annual leave entitlement, as well as a brand new compassionate leave policy.

The Board has also launched a new website to improve its engagement with stakeholders and the citizens of Wales who may wish to contribute to the work of the Board- www.remunerationboard.wales





### Next steps

The Board is now working towards creating a Determination for the Sixth Assembly.

This work will include engaging with stakeholders to produce a Determination, which not only provides Members with an adequate level of support to do their jobs, but also does not deter any potential candidates who may wish to seek election to the Assembly. We expect to publish this Determination in May 2020.

