

# Remuneration Board

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**Meeting Venue:** Ty Hywel

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**Meeting date:** Friday, 12 December 2014

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**Meeting time:** 08:00 – 13:30

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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## Concise Minutes: WRB(29)

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### Board Members:

**Sandy Blair CBE DL (Chair)**  
**Mary Carter**  
**Stuart Castledine**  
**Professor Monojit Chatterji**  
**Professor Laura McAllister**

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### Attendees:

**Richard Bettley**  
**John Chick, National Assembly for Wales**  
**Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business**  
**Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation**  
**Matthew Richards**  
**Barbara Lees, Finance Team**

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### Board Staff:

**Gareth Price (Clerk)**  
**Daniel Collier (Deputy Clerk)**

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## 1 Chair's introduction

1.1 The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.

1.2 Subject to minor amendments, the Board agreed the minutes of the meeting on 28 November 2014.

1.3 The Board will consider all responses to the consultation on AM salaries when it closes on 12 January 2015.

## **2 Assembly Member staffing and Assembly Members Support Staff: Pay, Pensions and Benefits**

2.1 The Board considered a paper setting out some options regarding the pension and death in service benefits available to Assembly Member Support Staff.

2.2 The Board discussed what would be the most appropriate way to index AMSS salaries. The Board noted that it would be more volatile if it was linked to inflation and that it would be more consistent to index to ASHE Welsh Median earnings, in line with the proposal for AM salaries in the next Assembly.

2.3 The Board considered the UK Government's 1% public sector increase, the latest increase in median earnings in Wales (1.2% in 2014) and changes in the rate of inflation (CPI 1.3% over the 12 months to October 2014).

2.4 Although there was merit in adopting Welsh median earnings as a way of updating salaries for which the Remuneration Board is responsible, the Board wanted to ensure that for 2015–16 AMSS were no worse off than AMs, who will receive a 1 per cent increase. Therefore, the Board proposed an increase in AMSS salaries by 1 per cent or the March figures for ASHE median earnings in Wales – whichever is the greater.

2.5 The Board discussed whether to set an indicative figure for the AMSS salary for 2016–17 (the first year of the Fifth Assembly) and agreed that the successor Board should be responsible for setting the salary in January 2016.

## **3 Determination for fifth year of Fourth Assembly: Consideration of Determination for consultation**

3.1 The Board considered a paper on the annual review of the Determination and the requirement to set the appropriate levels for two particular budgets needing review: accommodation and office costs.

3.2 The Board considered some early responses to recent consultations on allowances for the Fifth Assembly and whether there would be value in bringing forward some proposals (if agreed at the Board's February meeting) to the last year of the Fourth Assembly.

## **4 Determination for Fifth Assembly: Group Support**

4.1 The Board noted the paper highlighting the current system of financial support for political groups.

4.2 The Board looked in greater detail at the support available to groups, focusing on the principles of why the board offers support to groups.

4.3 The Board agreed there were two fundamental aspects of the support for groups:

- to enable and encourage effective scrutiny of the government;
- to ensure that groups have sufficient administrative support to operate in a co-ordinated and efficient manner.

4.4 The Board will consider this matter further at its next meeting and consult in the spring term.

## **5 Assembly Member salaries and pension contributions: Transition between Fourth and Fifth Assembly**

5.1 The Board considered how to deal with office holders who continue to hold office after the dissolution of the Fourth Assembly. This category includes Welsh Ministers, the Presiding Officer and the four Assembly Commissioners.

5.2 The Board requested further work to ensure that office holders do not lose out either in monetary terms, or in relation to the tax implications.

### **Action points:**

- The Secretariat to provide further legal advice on the provisions in proposals to pay office holders an allowance during the dissolution of the Fourth Assembly to the beginning of the Fifth Assembly.

## **6 Operational Issue: Methods of payment to Remuneration Board members**

6.1 The Board noted a letter from the Assembly Commission regarding a number of changes to their method of pay.

### **Action point:**

- Board members to send completed forms to the Secretariat by mid January for them to process.