

Assembly Commission

Venue: **Conference Room 4B - Tŷ Hywel**

Date: **Monday, 24 September 2018**

Time: **12.30 - 14.40**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(5)2018(7)

Commission
Members:

Elin Jones AM (Chair)
Suzy Davies AM
Adam Price AM
Joyce Watson AM

Officials present:

Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly
Dave Tosh, Director of Resources
Craig Stephenson, Director of Commission Services
Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission and Member Support
Rhuanedd Richards, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd
Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office
Nia Morgan, Director of Finance
Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation
Tom Jackson, Clerk/Bill Manager
Matthew Richards, Head of the Legal Service
Manon Edwards Ahir, Head of News and Media Relations

Others in
attendance:

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction and apologies

No apologies were received.

1.2 Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 9 July were agreed.

2 Budget Strategy - Commission Budget 2019-20

Commissioners considered two changes made to the draft budget since their 9 July Commission meeting. These related to the pension finance cost and the Remuneration Board's Determination budget.

Finance Committee scrutiny of the draft budget is expected on 3 October, and the Commission will consider the Committee's report at the 5 November Commission meeting.

Commissioners approved the Assembly Commission 2019-20 Draft Budget, and agreed for it to be laid by 30 September, in line with the requirements of Standing Orders.

3 Assembly reform programme

Commissioners considered an update on work on the Assembly reform programme and the areas where decisions were needed in order to introduce a Bill in January 2019.

Key areas Commissioners considered were:

- olicity, implementation and commencement details;
- he introduction of a Bill, including the approach to the short title, the approach to seeking a legislative mandate from the Assembly, and the legislative scrutiny timetable for proposal to Business Committee;
- nd the role the Commission should take in raising public awareness of the franchise changes.

Commissioners agreed the Electoral Commission's recommendations on the treatment of electoral expenses, should be excluded from the preparatory work for the Bill on the basis that Welsh Government would take it forward through subordinate legislation, subject to sufficient assurance from the First Minister about their intentions for the timing of subordinate legislation.

Commissioners noted the plans for legislative scrutiny timetable and the next steps in relation to phase 1 of their legislative programme. They also noted the Commission's role in providing public information and awareness-raising amongst young people in advance of the 2021 election and requested additional information on the role and associated budget implications.

The Llywydd informed Commissioners that she had received a letter from the Welsh Government concerning the funding and accountability of the Electoral Commission and whether provisions should be made for this as part of the Commission's Assembly Reform

programme regarding the Commission's future relationship with the National Assembly for Wales. Commissioners noted that discussions with the Welsh Government and Electoral Commission on this matter are ongoing.

Commissioners agreed that the Llywydd would make a written statement w/c 1 October to confirm the Commission's intention to introduce a Bill in January 2019 and communicating the decisions it has taken. They also agreed the approach to seeking the agreement of the Assembly for the introduction of a Bill.

4 Standards Committee Report - Creating the Right Culture

The Standards Committee have published their report relating to issues around dignity and respect. The report makes a number of recommendations to the Commission.

The Commission's working group on Dignity and Respect had considered the Committee's recommendations, to inform the Commission's considerations of them. Commissioners agreed that the recommendations dovetail with the Commission's intentions to improve accessibility to a range of complaint processes, raise awareness, provide support, monitor incidents and to create a more inclusive culture free from harassment.

Commissioners agreed a response to the Committee about the recommendations that had been made.

5 Annual Environmental Report

Commissioners agreed the Annual Environmental Report 2017-18, which reports on environmental performance for the year, as well as progress towards the Assembly's key sustainability objectives. Commissioners discussed recent achievements in removing single-use plastics and the provision of charging points for electric cars on the Commission estate. They agreed that the finalised report should be published.

6 AMSS pension scheme

The Support Staff Pension Scheme is a contract based defined contribution scheme which is run by Aviva.

Commissioners agreed to nominate the Director of Finance to represent the Commission on the Support Staff Pension Scheme Governance Group.

7 Papers to note:

7.1 Capacity Review Phase 2 report

Commissioners noted the work that had been done to address the findings of the Capacity Review and to develop plans for delivering improvements in organisational efficiency and effectiveness in the use of the Commission's resources. -

7.2 Resourcing for Brexit scrutiny

Commissioners noted the analysis of responses from committee Chairs to the Llywydd's request for their views on resourcing for Brexit scrutiny.

7.3 Creating a Parliament for Wales - Consultation report

Commissioners noted the full report of the outcome of the consultation of electoral reform (referred to at item 3).

7.4 Executive Board update (RAD decisions)

Commissioners noted the routine update.

7.5 ACARAC minutes June and July meetings

Commissioners noted the information about the ACARAC meetings which had taken place in June and July.

8 Any other business

- Independent Advisors – Commissioners were updated about the on-going process to appoint independent advisers to the Commission, and agreed to undertake formalities associated with the appointments out of meeting.
- Director Assembly Business recruitment – Commissioners were updated about the plans to appoint to the vacant post of Director Assembly Business, as part of the consultation requirements of the Commission's delegation.
- Pay negotiations – Commissioners agreed that the process, which they had been updated about, could continue.

In the period since the previous meeting Commissioners had been consulted about the plans for the senior structure of the organisation in line with the requirements of the delegation of Assembly Commission functions.

Commissioners had also noted that the Llywydd had entered in to a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the Commission with the First Minister on behalf of the Welsh Government in relation to the delivery of the first phase of the Commission's legislative strategy on electoral reform.