

The Assembly Commission

Meeting Venue: **Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Ty Hywel**

Meeting date: **Thursday, 27 September 2012**

Meeting time: **10: – 12:45**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(4)2012(7)

Committee Members:

Rosemary Butler (Chair)
Peter Black
Angela Burns
Sandy Mewies
Rhodri Glyn Thomas

Officials present:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly (Official)
Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business (Official)
Craig Stephenson, Principal Private Secretary to the Presiding Officer (Official)
Keith Bush, Director of Legal Services (Official)
Steven O'Donoghue, Head of Assembly Resources (Official)
Nicola Callow, Head of Finance (Official)
Dave Tosh (Official)
Non Gwilym (Official)
Carys Evans, Principal Commission Secretary (Official)

Others in attendance:

Mair Barnes, Independent Adviser
David Melding, Deputy Presiding Officer

1. Introduction

1(i) Introduction and apologies

Keith Bush, Director of Legal Services, will leave the Assembly in October. The Presiding Officer and Commissioners thanked Keith for his invaluable expert advice and service during his time at the Assembly and wished him well for the future.

1(ii) Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1(iii) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes from the 12 July 2012 were agreed by Commissioners.

2. Draft budget 2013–14

The Commission is required under Standing Orders to lay its draft budget annually by 1 October. The Commission's draft budget for 2013–14 sets out the financial resources required to deliver the Assembly Services' priority work as well as the budget required to fund the Remuneration Board's Determination for Assembly Members.

The Commission agreed its draft budget, and requested that it be laid in accordance with Standing Orders. Angela Burns AM, Commissioner with responsibility for resources, will attend a meeting of the Finance Committee on 3 October 2012 to be scrutinised on the draft budget.

Commissioners thanked officials for their work to date on the draft budget.

It was agreed that the paper would not be published as the draft budget would be laid the next day.

Action: Officials to lay the draft budget 2013–14 document before the Assembly on the 28 September 2012

3. Draft ICT future services strategy

The Merlin Contract, under which ICT services are provided to the Assembly, is due to expire in 2014. The Commission is required to give notice to the Welsh Government and Atos by April 2013 of its decision in respect of the future provision of ICT services to the Assembly. The Commission agreed in November 2011 to assess two options: the extension of the Merlin contract; or a move to a mixed in-house provision.

The Commission considered its draft ICT future services strategy, and agreed to make a decision on the provision of future ICT services in November 2012.

Commissioners will have a further discussion on this issue at an additional meeting in October.

It was agreed that the paper would not be published due to its commercial content.

Action: Officials to provide more detailed costs.

4. National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill and Official Languages Scheme

The Commission discussed its approach to the Stage 3 and 4 proceedings in relation to the Bill, scheduled to take place in Plenary on Wednesday 3 October, and received an update on issues relating to the Bill and Scheme.

Commissioners thanked officials for their efforts to date in supporting the Bill during its consideration by the Assembly.

5. Commissioner updates and suggestions

The Commissioners gave an update on issues relating to their respective portfolios.

Provide outstanding parliamentary support

The following activities are underway: developing the use of XML technology for Plenary proceedings, developing an App for the Assembly, extending wireless facilities throughout the estate.

Use resources wisely

Commissioners heard an update on the Independent Remuneration Board's review of staffing for Assembly Members and the review of Assembly Members' pension arrangements.

6. Paper to note – Audit Committee minutes

The Commission received an oral update at the Commission meeting on 12 July, but the minutes were not available at that meeting for agreement. The Commission noted the minutes.

7. Any other business

Commissioners were informed that recruitment of a new set of Independent Advisers was underway.

Keith Bush updated the Commissioners on the challenge to the Assembly's competence in respect of the Local Government Byelaws (Wales) Bill.

Secretariat
September 2012