

To: Members of the Senedd
Cc: All support staff

14 February 2023

Dear Members,

SUMMARY OF BOARD MEETING HELD ON 2 FEBRUARY 2023

The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd met on Thursday 2 February. The focus of the meeting was:

- The Recruitment Policy for Members;
- The Commission's Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme;
- The Board's thematic review of the ways of working of Members and their staff;
- The Board's simplification review;
- The mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness.

This letter provides a summary of the Board's discussions and decisions. It will be published on the Board's website along with [summaries of previous meetings](#).

Drop-in sessions with Board members that would otherwise have been made available to Members were not held on Wednesday 1 February due to the industrial action that took place on that day.

1. The Recruitment Policy for Members

Paragraph 7.1.4 of the Determination states that Members' Support Staff must be appointed and employed in line with the Recruitment Policy issued by the Members' Business Support Team (MBS). The current version of the Recruitment Policy is available on the [Members' intranet](#) (as noted on the intranet the policy is currently under review).

The Board considered potential changes to the Recruitment Policy to simplify and clarify the policy, and to reflect recent changes to the Determination, in line with the approach taken to the employment handbook and standardised contract for Support Staff. The Board will consider this matter further at its meeting on 16 March, taking account of the Board's strategic aim of simplifying the rules on Members' expenditure.

2. The Commission's Electric Vehicle Salary Sacrifice Scheme (EV Scheme)

As recently announced on the [Members' intranet](#) the Senedd Commission is shortly due to launch a new scheme to make electric vehicle leasing possible via a salary sacrifice scheme.

The Board considered the implications of the introduction of the EV Scheme on Members pension benefits at their meeting on 2 February. In principle, we agreed a change to the rules of the Pension Scheme to ensure that both employee and employer pension contributions are based on the Member's notional salary before the reduction for the salary sacrifice deductions under the EV Scheme. If this change is not made, the pension contributions and therefore the pension benefits, of Members that join the EV Scheme would be lower than Members that do not join the EV Scheme.

The Board has written to the Pension Board to seek its views on this proposed change to the Pension Scheme Rules.

3. The Board's thematic review of the ways of working of Members and their staff

The Board was presented with the findings of the recent engagement exercise with Members on their current and future ways of working, which included interviews with 40 Members. We are grateful to those Members for their time.

We will now explore what changes to allowances are needed to remove barriers to support Members' various ways of working during the remainder of the Sixth Senedd. At the same time the Board will engage with the Commission to explore how the Board and Commission may support Members' ways of working in the Seventh Senedd, within our respective remits. In due course, we will wish to test different models for supporting Members' office requirements, as a basis for further engagement.

4. The Board's simplification review

One of the Board's strategic objectives is to deliver a simpler Determination to provide flexibility for Members to determine their own priorities with proportionate safeguards. The importance of simplicity and clarity was highlighted in the Member engagement exercise during the autumn term in respect of their preferred ways of working.

The Board had an initial discussion on the scope of its simplification review. Hugh Widdis, will present proposals to the Board on its scope and a timetable for the review in its meeting on 16 March.

5. The mid-term review of the Board's effectiveness

At the request of the Board, Gareth Watts, the Senedd Commission's Head of Internal Audit, has been conducting a review of the Board's effectiveness approximately halfway through the Board's term in office (the current Board were mostly appointed in June 2020 for a 5 year period). The Board is grateful to Gareth for undertaking the review and preparing a report for the Board, and to the Members and Support Staff who contributed to the review.

The Board was presented with the findings of the review and a number of recommendations to strengthen its effectiveness. The Board will consider its response to the recommendations at the Board's meeting on 16 March.

These updates will be provided to you following each meeting of the Board. In the meantime, should you have any matters you wish to raise with me or the Board, please do not hesitate to get in touch via the Clerk to the Board, Huw Gapper, by emailing remuneration@senedd.wales.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Elizabeth Haywood

Chair, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.