

Dear Members,

cc Group and Support Staff

## **UPDATE FROM THE REMUNERATION BOARD**

I am writing to provide you with an update of the Board's recent work and to outline our planned activity for the autumn, when we intend to finalise and consult on several policy proposals for the Determination for the Seventh Senedd.

### **Board Meeting on 26 September 2024**

The main focus of the Board's discussion was consideration of policy proposals to include in its initial autumn consultation for the Determination for the Seventh Senedd.

The Board intends to undertake a two-stage consultation on the Determination for the Seventh Senedd, with the first consultation conducted this autumn focusing on proposed changes to the Determination's provision relating to the Office and Constituency Liaison Fund (OCLF), Residential Accommodation Expenditure (RAE) and Support for Political Parties Allowance (SPPA).

The Board is undertaking further developmental and engagement work during the autumn around Members' Pay and the review of the staff pay and grading framework. The Board is planning to consult on these matters in the spring.

Given the focus on significant policy matters for the Seventh Senedd and the detailed consultations with Members and support staff, the Board is currently planning to undertake a 'light-touch' annual review of the Determination for 2025-26 which will mainly focus on annual indexation of Members and staff pay and other business costs. The annual review consultation may also include proposals to review the support for Members who leave office at an election (Chapter 9) following engagement with Members earlier this year.

The Board's consultative timetable, which will be kept under review, is currently as follows:

- End October/Early November – Mid-December 2024 – Consultation on Policy Proposals for Seventh Senedd (OCLF, RAE and SPPA).
- 8 January -19 February 2025 - Annual Review consultation
- 24 March-19 May 2025 - Consultation on Policy Proposals for Seventh Senedd (Members Pay and Staff Pay and Grading) & Draft Determination.
- July 2025 – Determination for the Seventh Senedd published

## **Staffing Review**

I wrote to Members in July confirming the Board's intention to progress to Phase 2 of the pay and grading review, which would be the development of a new job families-based pay and grading framework for implementation in the Seventh Senedd.

The Board has appointed the external job evaluation consultancy Beamans to develop a new framework on its behalf. Beamans conducted a review of the existing framework earlier this year and will be a familiar name to those Members and staff who engaged with that review.

Beamans have recently begun their work on designing of the new framework based on information received previously on the types of roles occupied by Member and Group staff and feedback from Members and staff on the current framework. A new draft framework to enable Members to classify job roles into different job families and grades will be subject to engagement with Members, staff and unions in December and finalised in the New Year based on the feedback received.

Beamans will also be reviewing support staff salaries based on externally commissioned market data on the pay of job roles comparable to those occupied by support staff, with the aim of addressing feedback received from Members in respect of the recruitment and retention of staff. This will allow for salaries to be Determined by the Board for each of the job families and grades as part of the new pay and grading framework, to be published for consultation in Spring 2025.

Alongside this work and closely linked to it, the Board will continue its review of the Members' Staffing Allowance to ensure it adequately provides for the staffing support requirements of Members of the Seventh Senedd. The Staffing Allowance will be discussed with Members and staff at the Board's Representative Group meetings in November and it will be subject to formal consultation in Spring 2025.

## **Review of Members' Pay**

I wrote to Members last week with an update on the review of Members' pay, which will be undertaken by the Board during the autumn. The review will focus on: Members' salaries, annual indexation of Members' salaries, and any changes that may be required to the remuneration of Committee Chairs and Chief Whips. During our engagement, we will seek assurance that the comparative value of all Additional Officer Holder roles remains appropriate.

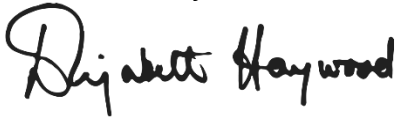
The secretariat has approached a representative range of Members in different roles and parties to meet with Board members during October and November, to hear perspectives about Members' pay and their role and how it has evolved over the last five years. All Members will also be invited to two Drop-in sessions on during the coming months to provide views on Members' pay. I will also be seeking the views of other stakeholders as part of this autumn engagement. The Board has undertaken international comparative research into the remuneration of Members and we will be undertaking a comparative analysis of with that of other elected representatives and other roles in the jobs market.

## Next Board Meeting

The Board will next be meeting on Thursday 17 October 2024 and we will meet with Member and Staff representative groups and hold Drop-Ins for Members on Wednesday 16 October. As noted above, the Member Drop-Ins will focus on the review on Members' Pay but Members are welcome to meet with the Board to raise any matters of interest. Further details about the Drop-In sessions will be provided in the next few days.

Should you have any matters you wish to raise with me or the Board or would like to discuss any matter further in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing [remuneration@senedd.wales](mailto: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