

The Assembly Commission

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

Meeting date: **Thursday, 16 May 2013**

Meeting time: **10:30 – 12:00**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(4)2013(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)
Dave Tosh, Director of Information and Communications Technology (Official)
Nicola Callow, Head of Finance (Official)
Craig Stephenson, Principal Private Secretary to the Presiding Officer (Official)
Carys Evans, Principal Commission Secretary (Official)

Others in attendance:

David Melding, Deputy Presiding Officer
Mair Barnes, Independent Adviser

1 Introduction

1(i) Introduction and apologies

No apologies had been received.

1(ii) Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1(iii) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed.

2 Commission Budget Strategy 2014–15

The Commission's budget for 2014–15 will be published in September for consideration by the Assembly. Commissioners agreed that the budget be prepared in accordance with assumptions as laid out in the paper. The budget will be based on the £50.598m sum as set out in the previous two years' approved budget documents. These were scrutinised by the Assembly's Finance Committee in October 2011 and 2012.

Action: Officials to prepare the budget in line with discussions for consideration at the Commission's 18 July meeting.

3 Remuneration Committee annual report

The role of the National Assembly for Wales' Remuneration Committee is to assist the Commission and Chief Executive in ensuring the Assembly's services meet the highest standards of probity and accountability for the use of public funds. The Committee advises, on request, the Commission and Chief Executive as Accounting Officer on their responsibilities for appraisal and remuneration policies and systems. It acts in an advisory capacity and has no executive powers. In line with its terms of references the Committee is required to make a formal annual report on its work to the Commission at the end of the year.

The Committee met once during 2012–13 on 19 April 2012 and agenda items included:

- the Draft Reward Strategy for Assembly Staff;
- a review of the Executive Team's pay and performance.

In addition to these, the Committee also considered public sector pay policy more widely to ensure its advice was set within this broader context.

Commissioners noted the report.

4 Highlight report to the Commission

The highlight report summarises activities that have been undertaken or are underway to make progress towards the Commission's strategic goals. It was noted that the Business Directorate was currently undergoing a restructure and that this should reflect the future structure of Committees. A wide range of outreach and engagement activities had been delivered, in line with the goal of engaging with the people of Wales and promoting Wales. The second Assembly Member and Assembly Member Support Staff user satisfaction survey would be launched in June.

Key Performance Indicators would be reported at future meetings, in line with the recommendation of the Finance Committee. Commissioners agreed the indicators and noted that these were likely to develop.

Action: Angela Burns AM to write to the Chair of the Finance Committee confirming the key performance indicators that would be used.

5 ICT Progress and Performance Report May 2013

Work to deliver a successful transition of ICT services as part of the Future ICT Services Project was confirmed as being on-track. A detailed Exit Management Plan was in place capturing the activities to be completed before the Atos contract comes to an end. Officials had been making arrangements for external assurance of the work to be undertaken by KPMG. This would include a project 'health check', in depth project management review and an assessment of risk management.

Replacement of the existing Blackberry contract with more flexible provision was underway, which was expected to deliver significant savings as well as improving services for Members.

Options to improve sound in the Siambr were being tested which aimed to resolve current difficulties. Commissioners discussed the extent to which devices should be used in the public gallery. It was agreed that those visiting the public gallery would be allowed to use mobile devices in future, as long as they did not cause any disturbance.

Action: Officials to ensure that staff and the public were made aware of the change of policy regarding the use of mobile devices in the public gallery, subject to certain restrictions.

6 Feedback from Audit Committee 18/4

The minutes of the 18 April Audit Committee were not yet available. Angela Burns AM gave a verbal update of matters discussed at the meeting, including independent assurance of the ICT future strategy programme, which would be managed by the Assembly's Director of Finance.

7 Any other business

Commissioners discussed a request from Star Walk Wales seeking permission from the Assembly Commission to place paving and stars on the Assembly's estate. The project would celebrate the lives and work of individuals who had contributed to Welsh life, and would be overseen by a working group. There would be no cost to the Commission.

Commissioners agreed in principle that the project should include the Assembly Estate, subject to there being input from a representative of the Commission.

Action: A letter would be sent to the Chief Executive of the project to confirm the Commission's agreement in principle.

May 2013