

Dear Members,

cc Group and Support Staff

UPDATE FROM THE REMUNERATION BOARD

The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd met on Thursday 28 November and on Thursday 12 December 2024.

This letter provides a summary of the Board's key decisions and discussions. Information on the Board's work is available [here](#).

The Board met with the Members and staff Representative Groups and also with several Members during Drop-Ins at the Cwrt on 27 November. The Board were grateful to those who attended to share their views on Members' Pay and other matters of interest.

Part 1 - Review of the Determination for the Seventh Senedd Part One

The consultation of Part 1 of the Review of the Determination for the Seventh Senedd concluded on 6 December. The consultation included initial proposals to support Members to undertake their work, including overnight accommodation, constituency office and engagement support and Senedd Group Support.

The Board received 10 responses and is grateful to those who provided thorough and detailed feedback on the proposals. The Board has given initial consideration but will review the responses fully in the New Year, prior to finalising its policy proposals in February and March 2025.

Annual Review 2025/26

The Board agreed its proposals for inclusion in the annual review of the Determination for 2025/26 in its November and December meetings, informed by the latest economic data, comparative analysis and research and feedback from Members and staff. The proposals and consultation document are available [here](#).

The latest ASHE Wales figure for 2023/24, published in November, has confirmed a three-year period of unexpected and consistent growth in average salaries, with increases to ASHE of 7.3%, 5.7% and 6% during 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 respectively. In light of this evidence, the Board is proposing to make an exceptional Determination to remove the cap on Members' salaries, as the latest published data confirms a sustained period of consistent growth in average earnings in Wales. Given the circumstances have changed since its introduction at the start of this term, the retention of the cap, in light of the latest data, would run counter to the Board's core objectives and principles.

As part of its wider thematic review of Members' remuneration and personal support, the Board has also reviewed the support provided to Members when they leave the Senedd. The Board has considered international evidence and has reflected on the approaches of other UK legislatures; the Board is therefore proposing to introduce 'winding-up payments' for Members who leave the Senedd at the next election, similar to the approach in the UK Parliament. The Board also proposes to provide the same level of redundancy entitlement to all support and group staff, irrespective of when or how their employing Member leaves the Senedd.

The Board is also proposing other changes, following the recent consultation of Part 1 of the Determination for the Seventh Senedd, including piloting the provision of a limited amount of overnight accommodation to support inner area Members with their parliamentary duties, as well as other changes to Members' business costs to reflect inflationary pressures since the last review.

Staffing Review (for the Seventh Senedd)

The Board considered a draft Job Families framework, developed by the consultancy Beamans, in its November meeting. The draft framework outlines the broad grade and role descriptors for the proposed Job Families for the Seventh Senedd as set out earlier this year: Caseworker, Policy and Research, Communications and Management and Administration and Communications, along with the distinct grade of 'Chief of Staff'. The draft framework does not yet include pay points or pay scales, as pay benchmarking will be the next phase of the work early in the New Year.

As noted in the [October Update Letter](#), in order to finalise the draft framework ahead of wider consultation in the Spring, it is being 'tested' initially during December and January with a selection of staff and Members, some of whom were involved in Phase 1 of the review.

The Board will consider further in January, February and March prior to consulting on the new pay and grading framework and staffing budget in the Spring.

Members' Pay Review (for the Seventh Senedd)

The Board considered initial salary benchmarking analysis and Member and stakeholder feedback on Members' salaries for the Seventh Senedd during its meeting in November. The Board also received a presentation from the Senedd Research Service on options for indexation of Members' and Staff salaries for the Seventh Senedd.

Further meetings will be held with Members and stakeholders in January and comparative benchmarking will be undertaken ahead of the Board meetings in February and March, prior to consulting on proposals in the Spring consultation.

Job Share Committee Chairs

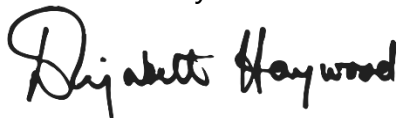
The Board considered the Business Committee's consultation on job share committee chairs. The Board has written to the Committee confirming that its decision relating to the remuneration of such a role would be informed by the approach taken by the Senedd and any changes to Standing Orders. The Board has noted that such a decision would require an 'Exceptional Determination' as the Determination does not currently provide for the sharing of additional office holder salaries (and the [National Assembly for Wales \(Remuneration\) Measure 2010](#) states that the Board can only make one Determination in relation to Members' salaries that has effect in any Senedd term).

Next Board Meeting

The Board will next meet on 16 January 2025 and we will meet with Member and Staff representative groups and hold Drop-Ins for Members on Wednesday 12 February 2025.

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.

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