

The Assembly Commission

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

Meeting date: **Monday, 14 May 2012**

Meeting time: **14: – 16:30**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes: AC(4)2012(4)

Committee Members:

Rosemary Butler (Chair)
Peter Black
Angela Burns
Sandy Mewies

Officials present:

Claire Clancy, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly (Official)
Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business (Official)
Dianne Bevan, Chief Operating Officer (Official)
Keith Bush, Director of Legal Services (Official)
Dave Tosh (Official)
Craig Stephenson, Principal Private Secretary to the Presiding Officer (Official)
Carys Evans, Principal Commission Secretary (Secretary)

Others in attendance:

Mair Barnes, Independent Adviser

1. Introduction

The Presiding Officer welcomed Dave Tosh, Director of ICT, to his first Commission meeting.

1(i) Introduction and apologies

Apologies were received from Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM.

1(ii) Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

1(iii) Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were formally agreed.

All actions were being progressed by officials.

2. Budget 2013–14 – strategic priorities/implications

Commissioners agreed at the 8 March meeting that they would continue to work within the 2013–14 indicative funding set out in the budget document and discussed the budgetary priorities for 2013–14 in this context.

The indicative budget is £49.5 million, of which £34.1 million is for operational costs and £13.7 million relates to Assembly Members. The balance is available for investment in line with the Commission's strategic priorities. Additional resources are expected to be released for investment priorities in 2013–14 with contributions arising from the value for money programme, efficiency targets and contingency funds.

A number of investment priorities were discussed. Whilst the ICT priority was recognised as the highest priority, further discussion on the implications of adopting this priority approach needs to be continued at subsequent meetings.

The Commission budget will be laid in September. Consultation with Members is likely to follow the format adopted last year, with Angela Burns AM as the Commissioner with the relevant portfolio attending group meetings and holding briefings with Members.

Action: Officials to develop the budget document in line with the agreed approach.

3. Assembly procurement 2012–14

The procurement team has been strengthened and now takes a more centralised approach to managing the procurement process, particularly with contracts worth more than £25k.

This work is developing in line with the Commission's aspirations, specifically the need for procurement to be efficient; to support the development of a diverse supply chain that helps small suppliers to compete; and to focus on value for money.

Commissioners welcomed the approach being developed, which ensures that appropriate strategies can be adopted for different markets.

4. Feedback from last Audit Committee (19 April 2012)

For good governance, the Commission receives a report from the Assembly Commission Audit Committee, and discussed the minutes of the Assembly Commission Audit Committee held in April.

Commissioners focused on the findings of Internal Audit Report on Budgetary Control and Financial Management processes, and the need for a greater awareness of value for money and efficiency improvements across the whole organisation.

5. Assembly Commission Reward Strategy for the Fourth Assembly

The existing pay deal for Assembly Commission staff ended on 31 March 2012. Negotiations for future reward arrangements are continuing.

6. Management Board report to the Commission

The following items were discussed:

Remuneration Board

- The Board has proposed changes to the arrangements for overnight accommodation for Members whose main homes are in the inner area and will reach a final view on the matter at its meeting in June. Members have been invited to submit their views on the matter;
- The Remuneration Board will be undertaking a review into staffing arrangements for Assembly Members and will engage with support staff and Members to inform this work.

ICT

- Improvements have been made to ICT services in recent months, including those provided by Atos and by Assembly staff. These include access in constituency offices and health checks of ICT equipment and infrastructure;
- ICT staff have met with most Assembly Members to identify problems. The findings will inform the planning of future works, such as wireless connectivity and a wider range of end user devices.
- Two significant pieces of work are underway: a project to evaluate the options for future ICT service delivery and the development of an ICT strategy for the Assembly and Commission. Commissioners will receive a regular update on both of these areas of work.

7. Assembly Commission rolling programme

The rolling programme was noted.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.