

# Management Board

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Meeting Venue: **Conference Room 4B – Tŷ Hywel**

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Meeting date: **Monday, 7 December 2015**

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Meeting time: **13.00 – 14.30**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



**Minutes:** MB (15-15)

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**Committee Members:**

Claire Clancy (Chair), Chief Executive and Clerk  
Nicola Callow , Director of Finance  
Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business  
Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation  
Non Gwilym, Head of Communications  
Bedwyr Jones, Head of ICT  
Elisabeth Jones, Director of Legal Services  
Kathryn Potter, Head of Research  
Mike Snook, Head of People and Places  
Craig Stephenson, Director of Commission Services  
Dave Tosh, Director of Assembly Resources  
Christopher Warner, Head of Policy and Legislation  
Committee Service  
Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber and Committee Service

**Committee Staff:**

**Liz Jardine (Secretariat)**

**Others in attendance:**

**Lowri Williams (Head of HR)**

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## 1 Introductions, apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Mair Parry-Jones (Head of Translation and Reporting Service) and Gareth Watts (Acting Head of Governance and Audit) for 30 November meeting. There were no apologies for 7 December meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

## **2 Communications – Note to Staff**

Elisabeth Jones would draft a note of the Management Board discussion for the staff news page.

## **3 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of 2 November meeting were agreed as a correct record.

## **4 Capacity Planning**

The Management Board meetings had been dedicated to workforce planning, as part of the annual capacity and resource planning cycle. The purpose was to discuss how each Service area was planning to address capacity and resourcing issues between now and the end of the Fourth Assembly and looking forward into 2016, and to identify what different or additional resources were needed to deliver service plans and the objectives of the organisation as a whole.

### *Workforce data*

Lowri Williams outlined key points from the workforce data that had been provided to inform discussions on capacity planning. Although the number of posts in the organisation had increased to meet requirements, in line with the previous year's planning discussions, headcount had remained relatively steady. Data showed that more posts had been advertised but there were challenges around turnover of staff, churn and backfill between roles within the organisation. Human Resources had started to address these challenges by reviewing staff policies and practice.

The Board also explored issues around absence levels, which were favourable in comparison to wider public sector organisations, but long term absence was a cause for concern.

The Board discussed how staff made use of flexi leave and sell back and asked HR to provide the following further analysis to assist in determining how these challenges might be positively addressed in the interests of both staff and the organisation:

- sell back of leave and use of flexi by grade;
- age compared with grade;
- average year on year snapshot of flexi leave as at financial year end;
- mental health absence – look for other contributing factors e.g. use of flexi;
- leave and absence by grade; and
- bilingual capacity – determine how to capture skills audit data in report.

**Actions:**

Service Heads to think about advice to staff about taking proper breaks (holidays and weekends) away from remotely accessing work emails etc.

### *Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES)*

The Management Board briefly discussed the VES that opened for applications at the end of November as part of the capacity planning work for the transition to the Fifth Assembly. The purpose of the scheme was to: allow the organisation to respond to shifts in skill requirements; facilitate organisational change, including within particular teams; improve workforce efficiency; and deliver long-term savings where possible, avoiding additional costs in meeting skill shortages.

Service Heads were asked to encourage staff that might be interested to talk to HR if they had any questions.

### *Capacity and resource plans*

Management Board began the scrutiny of service area plans with the Resources Directorate, which was generally adequately resourced excepting some temporary pressures which were discussed. These included temporary resources for ICT and EFM, to support the smooth transition of outgoing and incoming Members.

Security was undergoing a review, including benchmarking against external comparators, and this would continue over the following month or two before conclusions emerged. There was likely to be a need for additional resource, which would be presented to the Investment and Resourcing Board (IRB) once there was clarity about what the new service provision needed to be.

Governance and Audit had been examining its function to refocus its existing resource, in particular given the business analysis current and projected workload. The Board made recommendations for the business case to IRB.

Consideration was also being given to the arrangements and future needs for events management. A simpler and more flexible model was needed for the design, production and delivery of events.

Management Board noted the impact on the Front of House team where high quality, trained staff, who were often bilingual, progressed to other posts in the organisation. This was beneficial for the organisation as a whole, but consideration should be given to managing these development opportunities proactively.

Translation and Reporting Service (TRS) were managing on current resources, but future challenges would largely depend on the priorities for bilingual services of the new Assembly Members, Presiding Officer and Commissioners. Management Board noted that it was important for service areas to help TRS plan their workload in order to keep costs down.

There were no major changes currently required in Commission and Member Support Services, however, much would depend on the new Presiding Officer and Commissioners.

The Fifth Assembly would be increasingly busy for the Business Directorate, with any change to the pattern of Assembly business, such as to the working week having implications for a number of services. The flexibility there had been to bring in resources to deal with pinch points was essential and welcome. The Board agreed that a bid for further resources to support the Finance Committee should be supported, with the increase and changes in the scope of their future work. Increasing powers coming the Assembly would also impact on the Research Service.

Following a Digital Transformation workshop with staff to discuss the scope and potential of this work, it was recognised that resources would be required to take forward the Digital Senedd transformation work, which was considered a priority issue. The findings of the initial scoping would be presented to IRB shortly. Another strategic priority for the future was likely to be development of a parliamentary archive.

A number of the business functions had been centralised with a focus on added value work by making better use of technology.

Work to improve the Assembly website was underway but there was a need for further expertise to develop it quickly and effectively, including bilingual skills.

There were no bids for additional resources from the Legal Services Directorate. The previous year's capacity planning had anticipated demand well and included the recruitment of two trainees, who had been appointed the previous week.

The Finance team had also benefitted from agreement to additional resources as a result of the previous year's capacity planning round, including an additional Management Accountant post, which had not yet been needed but may still be required. There were challenges ahead with the new pension scheme and the change to the finance system, which could require temporary resource.

In summary, the last capacity planning round had enabled steady and measured adjustments to resources to match demands on the Commission. Until the new Assembly's requirements were known, it was not sensible to make changes, with a few exceptions to meet short term priorities. There were some important pieces of work underway that may require adjustments to resources next year – the security review, the approach to events management and the Digital Senedd work.

#### **Actions:**

- HR to provide further analysis of staff numbers compared with the actual cost of staffing. To be presented initially to IRB.
- Heads to validate their financial information as it is provided to them.

- Nicola Callow and Lowri Williams to produce a timetable for the capacity planning work to take place at an earlier stage in the next financial year, to ensure it fits with the budget planning process for the new Commission and to enable us to respond swiftly and flexibly to the requirements of the new Assembly.

## **5 Financial Management Report October 2015**

Nicola Callow provided an update on the organisation's financial position and particularly noted the quality of information flow between Service areas and the Finance team. The organisation was on track to meet end of year targets for underspend and value for money savings. To continue this, it would be increasingly important to have accurate information to base projections on in the last quarter of the financial year.

## **6 Any other business**

The next Management Board would be held on 25 January.