

Concise Minutes - Remuneration Board

Meeting Venue:

Meeting date: Thursday, 15 March 2018

Conference Room A - Tŷ Hywel

Meeting time: 09.00 - 16.05

WRB(15)

Attendance

Category	Names
Board members:	Rt Hon Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair) Ronnie Alexander Trevor Reaney Michael Redhouse Dame Jane Roberts
Officials:	Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation Matthew Richards, Head of Legal Services John Chick, Head of Members' Business Support Rebecca Hardwicke, Members' HR Business Partner Martin Jennings, Research Team Leader
Committee Staff:	Lleu Williams, Clerk Sian Giddins, Deputy Clerk

1 Chair's introduction

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting on 25 January.
- 1.3 The Board noted the statement made by the Chair of the Standards of Conduct Committee during Plenary on 7 March regarding its work on developing a dignity and respect policy. The Board agreed to review the relevant policies in place for support staff once the policies for Members is agreed to ensure both policies are consistent.
- 1.4 The Board agreed to review how it engages with the Representative Groups.

- 1.5 The Board considered the provisional meeting dates and draft forward work programme up to July 2020 and agreed to return to the issue at a future meeting.

2 Item for decision: Annual review of the Determination 2018-19

Assembly Member support staff salaries 2018-19

- 2.1. The Board considered the consultation responses received on the proposals to increase support staff salaries for 2018-19 by 2.3 per cent in line with the provisional 2017 figures for ASHE median earnings in Wales.
- 2.2. In light of the consultation responses received, the Board agreed to increase support staff salaries for 2018-19 by 2.3 per cent.

Office cost allowance for 2018-19

- 2.3. The Board considered the consultation responses received on the proposals to:
 - increase the office cost allowance by 5 per cent in line with the CPI rate for September 2017 and to address the additional cost demands which Members are expected to fund from their budget;
 - offer an uncapped allowance which will be confined to the criteria which is currently used to allow Members to implement security recommendations.
- 2.4. In light of the consultation responses received, the Board agreed to increase the office cost allowance by 5 per cent for 2018-19 and the new provisions for implementing security recommendations.

Residential Accommodation Expenditure for 2018-19

- 2.5. The Board considered the consultation response on its decision that the current allowance for outer area Members of £9,200 per annum/£775 per calendar month, the maximum amount for essential repairs of £882 per annum and the maximum amount of rental costs for Members with dependents of £120 per month should be maintained.
- 2.6. The Board agreed to maintain the provisions within the Determination for this allowance but to consider the issues raised in the consultation response as part of its review of the Determination for the Sixth Assembly.

Action points:

The Board agreed to consider the other issues raised in the consultation responses during relevant pieces of work.

The secretariat to:

- publish the amended Determination;

–formally write to Assembly Members and support staff confirming the changes to the Determination for 2018-19.

3 Item for discussion: The report by the Welsh Governance Centre on the barriers to and incentives for running for election to the Assembly

- 3.1. The Board noted, that in light of the recent industrial action and the adverse weather conditions, representatives from the Wales Governance Centre were unable to attend the meeting to discuss the report.
- 3.2. The Board considered the report and agreed to invite representatives from the Wales Governance Centre to its meeting in May to discuss the next steps of the review.

Action point:

The secretariat to invite representatives from the Wales Governance Centre to its meeting in May.

4 Item for discussion: Reviewing the Board's strategy one year on

- 4.1. The Board reviewed its past, current and future work programme against the four strategic priorities it agreed in its January 2017 report.

Action point:

The Board to publish a summary of its discussion in its annual report for 2017-18.

5 Item for decision: Review of staffing support for Members: Consideration of evidence received

- 5.1. The Board considered the evidence it had received to date for its review of staffing support for Members. The Board discussed what matters may warrant further consideration and what matters could be addressed sooner.
- 5.2. The Board agreed to consult on the following issues immediately:
 - budgeting Staffing Allowance at actual pay points;
 - publishing the expenditure each individual Member makes on their Staffing Allowance;
 - removing the 111 hour cap on permanently employed support staff;
 - increasing the flexibility of viring between budgets.
- 5.3. The closing date for the consultation would be Friday 11 May 2018.
- 5.4. The Board agreed to re-consider the other issues raised during the review at its May meeting.

Action points

The secretariat to:

- issue and promote the consultation;
- prepare a summary of the responses for the Board's consideration.