

Research Briefing **The Assembly Commission**

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National Assembly for Wales
Research Service

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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The Assembly Commission

The Government of Wales Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”), as amended, creates an Assembly Commission: a statutory body that provides services to support Assembly Members which is legally distinct from the executive (the Welsh Government).

Section 27 of the 2006 Act provides for the establishment, membership and functions of the Commission and for it to provide the National Assembly (or to arrange for the National Assembly to be provided) with the staff, property and services required for its purposes.

The Commission consists of the Presiding Officer and four other Assembly Members. In the Fifth Assembly the Commission consists of the following Assembly Members, who each have distinct responsibilities:

- Elin Jones AM (Chair);
- Suzy Davies AM (Conservative);
- Caroline Jones AM (UKIP);
- Adam Price AM (Plaid Cymru); and
- Joyce Watson AM (Labour).

The staff of the National Assembly for Wales are employed by the Commission.

Appointment of Commission Members

After an Assembly election the National Assembly must consider a motion tabled by the Business Committee proposing the names of the four Members to be appointed as members of the Commission under the Act.

So far as is reasonably practicable, members of the Commission (other than the Presiding Officer) must belong to different political groups.

If there are four or more political groups in the National Assembly, it is for the leader of each of the four largest political groups to inform the Business Committee of the name of the nominee from their political group.

If there are fewer than four political groups in the Assembly the leader of each political group must inform the Business Committee of their nominee and the Business Committee will determine the name of any additional Members to be nominated.

If there are two or more political groups with the same number of members, the Presiding Officer, having regard to the level of electoral support of each of the political groups in question, determines which of those political groups is to be regarded as the larger.

Resignation or Removal from Office

A member of the Commission resigns from the Commission by giving notice in writing to the Clerk, but the Presiding Officer cannot resign from the Commission.

Any Member may table a motion proposing that a particular Member (other than the Presiding Officer) be removed from the Commission. If the motion is agreed to in a **Plenary meeting** the Member is removed from the Commission with immediate effect.

Finance and Annual Report

Paragraph 9 of Schedule 2 to the 2006 Act requires the Assembly Commission to, after each financial year, publish and lay before the Assembly a report on the exercise of its functions during that financial year.

The Assembly Commission is required to prepare accounts for each financial year which are submitted to the Auditor General Wales, who then reports to the National Assembly.

Other duties and powers

Paragraph 8 of Schedule 2 to the 2006 Act requires that the Assembly Commission must apply the principles of sustainable development, equality of opportunity and equal treatment of the English and Welsh languages to the exercise of its functions.

Paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 provides a power for the Assembly Commission to promote public awareness of devolved government in Wales, and the system for the election of Assembly Members.

Further information

For further information on any aspect of the constitution, please contact Alys Thomas (alys.thomas@assembly.wales).