

Members Leaving/Moving Political Groups

11 December 2020

Request for Information.

Thank you for your request received on 1 December in which you asked:

Under the Freedom of Information act, I'd like to know the costs that the Senedd Commission has incurred from the decisions that individual Members of the Senedd have made to leave political groups, and to form new political groups since May 2016, including the costs associated with the formation and dissolution of political groups in the Senedd.

This includes costs such as:

- 1. Rebranding stationery (letterheads etc);*
- 2. Rebranding external office signage;*
- 3. Redundancy payments to support staff (whether Group or individual Member staff);*
- 4. Moving of offices on the Senedd Estate and any remedial, structural or general moving (furniture etc) work that was needed for the office move;*
- 5. Administration costs;*
- 6. Any other incidental spending;*
- 7. Costs of reorganising committee structures and membership;*
- 8. An estimation of the administrative time such moves have taken up in relation to commission business.*

Here is a list of the Members that have switched groups / gone independent since the election in 2016:

- David Rowlands MS;*
- Mandy Jones MS;*

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- *Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas MS;*
- *Mark Reckless MS;*
- *Caroline Jones MS;*
- *Michelle Brown MS;*
- *Neil McEvoy MS;*
- *Gareth Bennett MS.*

Please see our response below

1. Rebranding stationery (letterheads etc);

The Branding Team provide stationery templates to Members of the Senedd (MS). There are standardised templates for all stationery (headed paper, business cards and compliment slips) so when a MS changes party, the templates are amended. This is business as usual for the team.

2. Rebranding external office signage;

If a MS has submitted a claim for rebranding external office signage, the information will be published on the **Members' allowances database**. Please note that expenses are published three months in arrears and will show in the financial year the cost relates to.

To enable you to search for the information requested, please follow these instructions:

- Select the financial year you wish to view e.g. '2019/20'
- Select the months e.g. 'April-March'.
- Select the Member or multiple Members.
- Select 'Office Costs Allowance'
- Select the following options:
 - 'Office equipment purchase – other ' and 'Office Maintenance'
- Click 'FIND'
- You can then search the results by clicking on 'Export to CSV' which will open an Excel file.

As this information is already published, your request is subject to section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) which exempts information that is already reasonably accessible by other means i.e. already published on our website.

3. Redundancy payments to support staff (whether Group or individual Member staff);

The total paid in redundancy payments to support staff was £4,200.00.

4. *Moving of offices on the Senedd Estate and any remedial, structural or general moving (furniture etc) work that was needed for the office move;*

Office moves were carried out as business as usual, with no other works required.

5. *Administration costs;*

No additional costs incurred.

6. *Any other incidental spending;*

No additional costs incurred.

7. *Costs of reorganising committee structures and membership;*

The costs of reorganising committee structures and membership was business as usual with no additional costs incurred.

8. *An estimation of the administrative time such moves have taken up in relation to commission business.*

No recorded information held.

Yours sincerely,

**Freedom of Information Manager
Welsh Parliament**

Your request has been considered according to the principles set out in the **Code of Practice on Public Access to Information**. If you have any questions regarding this response please contact me. If you feel you have cause for complaint, please follow the guidance below.

Cause for concern or complaint with your FOI response?

If you are dissatisfied with the Senedd's handling of your request, you can request an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Freedom of Information Manager at:

Information-request@senedd.wales or in writing to

Senedd
Governance and Assurance
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF