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# ANNUAL REPORT: 2019 - 2020

July 2020

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# The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

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The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd makes independent decisions on the pay and direct support for Members of the Senedd to attract a wide range of capable and diverse candidates and to enable those elected as Members to do their jobs effectively, ensuring value for money for the people of Wales. The Board was established by the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010.

## Members of the Board

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- Dame Dawn Primarolo DBE PC (Chair)
- Ronnie Alexander
- Trevor Reaney
- Mike Redhouse
- Dame Jane Roberts

## Secretariat to the Board

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- Llew Williams, Clerk
- Ruth Hatton, Deputy Clerk

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[www.senedd.wales](http://www.senedd.wales)

Copies of this report can also be obtained in accessible formats including Braille, large print, audio or hard copy from:

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# Introduction

As the Independent Remuneration Board concludes its term in office in September this year, the Board remains committed to providing Members with the resources they need to undertake their roles effectively. This commitment extends to the changing and challenging working environment that Members of the Senedd and their staff find themselves in during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Board has sought to apply the existing Determination in such a way as to help Members adapt to the circumstances posed by the current pandemic and ensure resilience in their work, and in the work of the Welsh Parliament. The scope and the work of elected Members of the Senedd in representing their constituents and holding the Welsh Government to account remains of steadfast importance in these challenging times.

The Board has met on seven occasions during the last financial year. The Board has also met on several occasions with Member and support staff representatives, as well as with individual Members or staff when required. I have also liaised on occasion with the Senedd Commission on different matters as they have arisen.

The majority of the Board's work during the past year has focused on delivering a Determination for the next parliamentary term. The document, which was published in June 2020, sets out new provisions specifically aimed at removing barriers to becoming a Member of the Senedd with the aim to help increase diversity within the membership of the Senedd.

As the outgoing Chair of the Board I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks, firstly to the Secretariat, the Commission, Members Support Services, Legal Advisers and of course the Board's Clerk and Deputy Clerk, current as well as those who worked with us through the past five years. We have been fortunate to have received excellent support and clear advice throughout. I would also like to thank everyone who has engaged with the Board's work, in particular the constructive support and criticism provided by the Senedd Members Representative Group and the Senedd Members Support Staff Representative Group. The Board was grateful for your commitment and contributions to our discussions.

Finally I would like to wish the next Board the very best wishes as it undertakes its work.

Best wishes for the future,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D Dawn Primarolo', written in a cursive style.

**Dame Dawn Primarolo**  
**Chair, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd**



# The Independent Remuneration Board

This chapter describes the Board's functions, remit and ways of working.

## 1.1 Establishment and Appointment

**1.1.1** The **Independent Remuneration Board** of the Senedd<sup>1</sup> is the independent body responsible for setting the remuneration and allowances of Members and their staff. The Board was established by the **National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010** (the Measure), which received Royal Approval on 22 July 2010.

**1.1.2** This Board was appointed by a transparent public appointments procedure undertaken in the summer of 2015. Biographies of all Board members can be found at Appendix A. Members of the Board have been appointed for a fixed period of five years, and may serve for no more than two terms of appointment.

**1.1.3** The then Assembly Commission formally approved the appointments of new Board members on 21 September 2015, and the Board held its first meeting on 17 and 18 September 2015.

**1.1.4** On 12 June 2017, the Commission formally approved the appointment of Ronnie Alexander to the Board, in place of Roger Williams who stood down in May 2016. Ronnie took his place on the Board with effect from 10 July 2017.

## 1.2 Functions and Objectives

**1.2.1** The Board's functions are to determine the level of remuneration and system of financial support for Members which enables them to perform their duties as a Member of the Senedd. The Board has a statutory responsibility to ensure probity, accountability, value for money and transparency with respect to the expenditure of public fund.

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<sup>1</sup> On 6 May the National Assembly for Wales became the Welsh Parliament, to be commonly known as Senedd. As a result, references in this document reflect the change of name, referring to the institution as the 'Assembly' in a historic context (prior to 6 May) and 'Senedd' thereafter.

**1.2.2** In carrying out its functions, **section 3** of the Measure obliges the Board to keep the implementation of its decisions and their effectiveness under review, taking particular account of the experience the Board gains from the operation of its decisions, any changes in the functions of Members, and any other circumstances deemed to be relevant.

**1.2.3** Whilst independent of the Senedd, and not subject to its direction or control, nor that of the Commission, the Measure obliges the Board to consult those likely to be affected by its decisions. This includes Members, staff employed by Members or by groups of Members, relevant trade unions and any other persons whom the Board consider to be appropriate.

**1.2.4** In accordance with the Measure, the Board meets in private and acts in an open and transparent manner by publishing information on the Senedd's website as well as its own website to enable the public to be kept informed of its activities. The **agenda and minutes** of each of the Board's formal meetings are available on the Board's pages on the Senedd website. The Board also publishes a post meeting note which is also shared with Members and their staff.

**1.2.5** In addition, **section 11** requires the Board to lay before the Senedd an annual report on activities, including its use of resources, during each financial year. The Board's costs and the expenses claimed by the Members are published in Appendix B.

## 1.3 Principles

**1.3.1** The Board's work to date has been underpinned by a set of clearly defined principles:

- financial support and remuneration for Members should support the strategic purpose of the Senedd and facilitate the work of its Members
- decisions must be appropriate within the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales;
- the system of financial support for Members must be robust, clear, transparent, sustainable, inclusive, and represent value for money for the taxpayer.

**1.3.2** During 2016, the Board developed a set of new governance principles and objectives, and subsequently published its **strategy** for delivering its work throughout the Fifth Senedd. The Board has reviewed its progress against this strategy as part of an end of term review of its work.

## 1.4 Methodology

**1.4.1** The decisions set out in the Determination are based on evidence gathered from Members, their staff, and other relevant individuals, organisations and sources. The decisions come from the transparent and participative review of the system of financial support and remuneration.

**1.4.2** As a result of the evidence received by the Board, it has sought to make changes to the system of remuneration which targets resources to support the Senedd's purposes and all aspects of a Member's role. In accordance with its remit, the Board responds as necessary to feedback by considering amendments to the Determination to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

**1.4.3** The early part of the Board's work gave Board members the opportunity to learn more about their role, how the Senedd works and the constitutional challenges that would face the Board and the Senedd in the future. Individual Board members used this experience to inform the Board's decisions throughout the first year and set a **strategy** for its work in the future.

**1.4.4** The Board has been committed to resourcing the specific needs of Members and responding to the requirements of the Welsh Parliament as it continues to evolve. It is important that the Board has targeted resources to support Members to fulfil their core functions: scrutinising policy and finance; holding the Welsh Government to account; legislating; agreeing Welsh taxes; and representing their constituents.

**1.4.5** This is not to say that the Board has not considered how its functions can contribute more widely to the strategic development of the Welsh Parliament, as the institution grows and develops and its requirements change over time.

**1.4.6** Where the Board has seen fit to contribute to issues of wider consequence, such as seeking to remove barriers for those considering candidacies, the Board is always mindful of its remit.

**1.4.7** The Board receives clerking and research assistance, legal and other advice, and administrative support from Senedd Commission staff (in accordance with section 9 of the Measure). This support is provided as part of the general duties of Commission staff, and therefore does not incur any additional costs to the Remuneration Board.

## 1.5 Consultation and evidence gathering

**1.5.1** Throughout its work, the Board has actively sought evidence to inform its decisions by engaging with a range of stakeholders including Members and support staff. The Board will recommend to the next Board the need to continue with this approach to ensure decisions are fit for purpose.

**1.5.2** During the course of this Senedd term, the Board has undertaken several engagement exercises with stakeholders in order to elicit feedback on the operation of the Determination in practice. These opportunities have included engagement events and meetings with Members and support staff, visits to offices across north and south Wales and surveys. The Board has also had regular meetings with its Member and Support Staff Representative Groups, whereby the Board meets with a nominated individual from each political party group to discuss issues arising.

**1.5.3** The Board values the input of both the Member and support staff Representative Groups and again will recommend the next Board continues to engage with these groups to promote decisions and consider issues and concerns affecting Members and their staff.



# The Board's work in 2019-20

This chapter explains the changes the Board has made to the Determination during this year following feedback and evidence from Members.

## 1.6 Reviewing Decisions

1.6.1 The Board is required to keep the Determination under review so that it continues to:

- provide Members with a level of remuneration which fairly reflects the complexity and importance of the role of Members and does not deter persons from seeking election to the Senedd;
- provide Members with the resources they need to perform their roles; and
- ensure probity, accountability, value for money and transparency with respect to the expenditure of public funds,

as per **section 3** of the Measure.

1.6.2 During the year, the Board reviewed decisions in a number of areas, as outlined below. Where necessary, amendments were made to the **Determination for the Fifth Senedd** in order to enable support for Members which would be fit for an institution with greater legislative and taxation powers.

## 1.7 Changes to the Determination for 2020-21

1.7.1 During 2019-20, the Board consulted on proposals for changes to the Determination that would take effect for 2020-2021 financial year. In light of the consultation, the Board decided to implement the following changes:

- increase the Residential Accommodation Expenditure allowance for outer area Members by 1.7 per cent in line with the CPI rate for September 2019 and to maintain the Essential Repairs Allowance and Carer's Allowance at the existing rate;

- increase the Political Party Support Allowance by 3.86 per cent. This change ensures that the total amount spent on salaries (circa 80.2 per cent of the total allowance in 2018-19) is increased by the ASHE index of 4.4 per cent (due to support staff pay being linked to this index), and that the remainder of the allowance is adjusted by the CPI rate for September 2019, which is 1.7 per cent;
- remove restrictions on Members' ability to recruit to fixed term contracts by amending the Recruitment Policy. Such recruitment would be subject to an 18-month limit instead of the current six month limit, thereby providing greater flexibility for Members on how their staffing allowances may be spent. The Recruitment Policy will continue to state that all appointments longer than six months in duration will be subject to an open and fair recruitment process.

**1.7.2** The Board also decided not to allow Members to claim back the costs for replacing items related to the institution changing its name from National Assembly for Wales to Senedd Cymru or Welsh Parliament prior to the next Senedd election (scheduled for May 2021). Such costs would have included office signage and web domains. This was not a matter which required any changes to the wording of the Determination.

## **1.8 Exceptional decision on Members' salary**

**1.8.1** As per paragraph 3.2.1 of the Determination for the Fifth Assembly, the pay of Members and office holders is adjusted in April of each year by the change in the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, annual gross Median Earnings for full-time employee jobs in Wales between March and March of the previous year. This adjustment for the financial year 2020-21 would be 4.4 per cent, and would automatically apply as a result of the operation of paragraph 3.2.1.

**1.8.2** On 30 March 2020, the Board **made a second exceptional decision** taking effect in this Senedd term in relation to Members' salary.

**1.8.3** The Board considered the highly unusual and unprecedented situation as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the subsequent unfavourable economic impact of it, and was of the

opinion that the situation constituted exceptional circumstances which made it just and reasonable to change the Determination for 2020-21<sup>2</sup>.

**1.8.4** The Board's decision, which applies in place of paragraph 3.2.1 of the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances, was that:

*The pay of Members and office holders will be adjusted in October 2020 by +4.4 per cent, and thereafter in April of each year, by the change in the ASHE (Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings), gross Median Earnings for full-time employee jobs in Wales between March and March of the previous year.*

**1.8.5** This means that the index would apply in October 2020 rather than 1 April 2020.

## 1.9 Responding to COVID-19

**1.9.1** Early on, during the emerging COVID-19 pandemic, the Remuneration Board committed to providing the necessary support to Members and support staff to ensure they were able to continue with their important work during the most challenging of times.

**1.9.2** The Board resolved to keep the situation under constant review in order to better understand how it was impacting on the working practices of Members and their offices. As such the Board decided very early on to follow a principle of being as flexible as possible with the support provided through the Determination.

**1.9.3** A homeworking allowance fund was set up effective of 2 April 2020, for a period of up to three months in the first instance. The purpose of the fund is to assist with the costs of homeworking for those support staff who are working from home as a result COVID-19 outbreak. Members can claim for up to £6 per week entitlement (or up to £26 per month for staff paid monthly) per member of support staff (as per the HMRC allowable rates for homeworking). This payment to staff will be tax free.

**1.9.4** In addition, the Board put in place **guidance to Members** to support the flexible working for their staff.

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<sup>2</sup> **Section 13(3)** of the 2010 Measure provides that the Board may not make more than one Determination that is to take effect in a Senedd term. Section **13(4)** allows the Board to make a further decision that takes effect in a Senedd term if the Board is of the opinion that there are exceptional circumstances which make it just and reasonable to do so.

**1.9.5** The Board continues to review the situation and will continue to do so over the coming months. It is also in regular contact with both Members and the Senedd Commission to ensure that any needs arising are addressed as early as required.

## 1.10 Review of the Determination for the Sixth Senedd

**1.10.1** The main focus of the Board's work during this last year has been on the Review of the **Determination for the Sixth Senedd**.

**1.10.2** In its strategy for its term in office, the Board committed to publishing its Determination for the Sixth Senedd one year before the Welsh general election in 2021. In order to meet this objective, the Board agreed to launch a review of the Determination for 2021 - 2026 in October 2018. The Board agreed the following terms of reference for this review:

- the suitability of the level of support provided within the Determination;
- the flexibility, prescriptiveness and accessibility of the provisions;
- the probity, accountability, reasonableness and transparency of the expenditure made available.

**1.10.3** The three-part review involved gathering further evidence from Members, their staff, Political Parties and Senedd bodies such as the Senedd Commission on the issues covered by each part of the review. Following the conclusion of the 3 part review, in **December 2019** the Board agreed to consult on a full draft Determination for the Sixth Senedd, in order to test the original terms of reference.

**1.10.4** The consultation on the draft Determination for the Sixth Senedd was issued on 5 February 2020. The responses to this consultation were discussed on 2 April and formed the basis of the Report on the **Review of the Determination for the Sixth Senedd** which was published alongside the final **Determination for 2021 – 2026** on 4 June 2020.



## 1.11 Review of the Board's Effectiveness

**1.11.1** In early 2020, the Board commissioned a review of its effectiveness over its five year term in office. The Review was undertaken by Gareth Watts, Head of Governance and Assurance, Senedd Commission.

**1.11.2** The review of the Board's work concentrated on the following key areas:

- Board composition;
- Board meetings;
- administrative arrangements;
- communications; and
- continuous improvement and development.

**1.11.3** Evaluation of the key areas was considered by a cross section of the Board's stakeholders. Feedback to the review was evidenced by meetings with Board members; the secretariat and the wider integrated team that support the Board; and Members of the Senedd and support staff.

**1.11.4** In considering the review report and considering actions to take upon receiving the report, the Board agreed to publish the review in order to maintain transparency and also to provide context as part of its legacy to the new Board. The full report on the Review of the Board's Effectiveness can be found at Annex D, of this report.

## 1.12 Policy, Research and Communication Fund

**1.12.1** Members and groups can claim up to £2,500 per annum in order to commission discrete pieces of research work from external sources. Members (but not groups) may also use the fund to engage with their constituents. This funding may not be used for party political engagement.

**1.12.2** During 2019-20, 37 Members used the Fund. A total of £60,111.04 was spent on work, details of which are outlined in Appendix C.

## 1.13 Consideration of exceptional payments

**1.13.1** The Board recognises that individual Members may face exceptional circumstances that affect their ability to fulfil their duties. These will often be of a confidential nature and can arise at short notice. The Board has a duty to support Members in all aspects of their role and is of the view that, if such circumstances are brought to its attention, it should come to a view as to whether there is a case for providing exceptional financial support. Clearly, any such requests need to be dealt with sensitively, while ensuring appropriate governance arrangements for reporting the Board's consideration and decisions. Where costs are ongoing, the Board will review each case regularly, to ensure that the personal circumstances remain the same and therefore, that the decision remains valid and provides value for money for the taxpayer.

**1.13.2** During 2019-20 the Board approved two applications, of which the total amount paid was £5,305.76. Other ongoing payments totalled £14,101.50 for the same financial year.

**1.13.3** The Board has agreed to review all of the existing payments on an annual basis (in cases where additional payments extend beyond 12 months). The reason for this is to ensure that the support that has been provided is still required, and whether there has been any change in circumstances. In 2018, the Board introduced a new application form and guidance for exceptional expense applications. The Board is confident that the introduction of these help clarify what information should be provided by the Member and in turn, ensure that the whole process is more efficient for all concerned.

## 1.14 The next Board

**1.14.1** The five year term of office for this Board ends in September 2020. The Chair, Dame Dawn Primarolo and Trevor Reaney will be stepping down at the end of this term. Following an open recruitment process a new Chair and Board Member were appointed by the Senedd Commission in June 2020. Those appointments will take effect in September 2020. The Commission has re-appointed two current Board members to remain on the Board for another five year term, Mike Redhouse and Jane Roberts. Ronnie Alexander will continue to be a member as well.

**1.14.2** The Board is proud of the work it has undertaken over the last five years and in particular the way its engagement with Members and support staff has evolved to inform its decisions. **The Determination for the Sixth Senedd** published in June 2020 is the culmination of the Board's efforts in working towards the objectives as set out in its strategy as

outlined in 2017. It also contributes to one of the Board's other objectives of doing what it can to attract more diverse candidates to stand for election in Wales.

**1.14.3** The Board is currently finalising its handover briefing to the next Board highlighting the issues that it believes will assist the new Board in carrying out its work over the next five years.

## Appendix A: Members of the Board



L-R: Michael Redhouse, Ronnie Alexander, Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair), Dame Jane Roberts, Trevor Reaney





### **Dame Dawn Primarolo (Chair)\***

Dame Dawn Primarolo, DBE, is a British Labour Party politician who was the Member of Parliament for Bristol South from 1987 until 2015, when she stood down. She was Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families at the Department for Children, Schools and Families from June 2009 to May 2010 and a Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 2010. She was appointed Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) for political service.

Born in London, Dawn was raised in Crawley, West Sussex. Returning to London in 1973 for work, she joined the Labour Party whilst employed as a legal secretary in an east London Law Centre.

She moved to Bristol in 1974 and her son, Luke, was born in 1978. As a mature student and single parent she studied a BA (Hons) in social science at Bristol Polytechnic, following which she conducted Ph.D. research into women and housing.

Dawn was first elected to Parliament at the 1987 general election and has held the following positions:

- 1992–1994: Opposition Spokesman for Health
- 1994–1997: Opposition Spokesman for the Treasury
- 1997–1999: Financial Secretary to the Treasury
- 1999–2007: Paymaster General
- 2007–2009: Minister of State for Public Health
- 2009–2010: Minister of State Children and Young People

Dawn was conferred a Peerage of the United Kingdom for Life in August 2015.



### **Trevor Reaney\***

Trevor Reaney served as Clerk and Chief Executive to the Northern Ireland Assembly from August 2008 until his retirement in June 2016. Trevor began his career in the hospitality industry and has held a number of management positions in both the private and public sectors. Before joining the Assembly, Trevor served as Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Policing Board from January 2004 and, prior to that, he held the post of Chief Executive of Craigavon Borough Council from 1996 to 2003.

Trevor now undertakes freelance consultancy work and is involved with a number of organisations:

- Board Member of the Security Industry Authority
- Member of the Police and National Crime Agency Pay Review Body
- Trustee of Tree Aid (an international development charity)



### **Michael Redhouse**

Michael Redhouse is currently Principal of EMES Consulting, which he founded in 2002, helping many major organisations with their remuneration and benefits issues. Michael graduated in mathematics from the Open University, and his career included spells as a Partner at Ernst and Young, and as Employment Policy Director at Diageo. Michael served as a Trustee of the APEX Trust, which supports offenders returning to work, and as Chair of Trustees of St. Luke's Hospice in Harrow.

Michael is a Member of the School Teachers' Review Body (STRB), which looks into pay, professional duties and working time of school teachers in England and Wales and reports to the Secretary of State.



### **Dame Jane Roberts**

Jane is Research Fellow in Public Leadership at The Open University Business School.

Jane was Leader of the London Borough of Camden Council from 2000 to 2005 following which she has served in a range of non-executive roles including as Chair of the Councillors Commission for the Department of Communities and Local Government, Chair of Parenting UK, a member of the Ofsted board, Chair of New Local Government Network and currently Chair of the charity, Living Streets. She is also a member of the Advisory Group of the Welsh Centre for Public Policy. Jane was appointed a DBE in 2004. Professionally, she is a medical doctor and is an Honorary Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist with experience of senior healthcare management in the NHS.

Jane has published a number of academic articles in paediatrics, psychiatry and politics. She co-edited 'The Politics of Attachment' (1996) with Sebastian Kraemer and is the author of 'Losing Political Office' (2017).



**Ronnie Alexander (July 2017 onwards)**

Ronnie is a former Chief Environmental Health Officer for Welsh Government. He is a Consumer Advocate for the Consumer Council for Water and is a member of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee. In addition, Ronnie is a Non-Executive Director for Estyn, Independent Chair of the Standards Committee at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and has membership of the Standards Committees for the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service and the Vale of Glamorgan Council. He also chairs the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members Allowances for Bath and North East Somerset Council and is a Panel Member for Bristol City Council.

Ronnie had a civil service career spanning over 20 years when the issues of climate change and sustainability were particular interests. Prior to that, he worked for a number of local authorities in Northern Ireland and England in areas such as enforcement and strategic support services. He has a considerable track record of engaging with the public, professionals and politicians at all levels to influence policy.

Ronnie's appointment to the Board was confirmed by the Assembly Commission in June 2017. He took up the position in July 2017.

\* The current Board's term of office ends in September 2020. Dame Dawn Primarolo and Trevor Reaney will stand down at the end of the current term. The Senedd Commission has appointed a new Chair and Board member, who will take office from September 2020.

## Appendix B:

# Board cost breakdown – 2019-20

The table below shows the direct costs incurred by the Remuneration Board in 2019-20 financial year. During this time there were seven formal Board meetings in addition to a number of engagement events with Members and support staff. Board members also undertook numerous engagement events with Members and support staff to inform its review of the staffing support for Members. The following tables outline the fees and expenses of Board members.

**Table 1: Board Member Fees (before tax)**

	Dame Dawn Primarolo	Dame Jane Roberts	Trevor Reaney	Michael Redhouse	Ronnie Alexander	Total
<b>Daily rate</b>	£333.00	£267.00	£267.00	£267.00	£267.00	
<b>Hourly Rate</b>	£44.40	£35.60	£35.60	£35.60	£35.60	
<b>Total Fees</b>	£5,521.86	£2,657.01	£3,257.97	£3,182.52	£3,904.80	<b>£18,524.16</b>

**Table 2: Board Member Expenses**

	Dame Dawn Primarolo	Dame Jane Roberts	Trevor Reaney	Michael Redhouse	Ronnie Alexander	Total
<b>Car mileage</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£16.50	£0.00	£126.02	<b>£142.52</b>
<b>Taxi/Car Hire</b>	£190.29	£39.60	£537.42	£20.43	£0.00	<b>£787.74</b>
<b>Air Travel</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£856.32	£0.00	£0.00	<b>£856.32</b>
<b>Train &amp; Tube</b>	£598.30	£678.47	£152.53	£383.91	£0.00	<b>£1,813.21</b>
<b>Tolls</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	<b>£0.00</b>



<b>Other Expenses</b>	£0.00	£0.00	£80.21	£0.00	£0.00	<b>£80.21</b>
<b>Accommodation</b>	£581.82	£714.73	£996.86	£364.50	£0.00	<b>£2,657.91</b>
<b>Subsistence (catering)</b>	£122.20	£216.91	£189.35	£117.24	£114.98	<b>£760.68</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,492.61</b>	<b>£1,649.71</b>	<b>£2,829.19</b>	<b>£886.08</b>	<b>£241.00</b>	<b>£7,098.59</b>

# Appendix C: Policy, Research and Communication Fund projects 2019-20

Member of the Senedd	Title of work
<b>Adam Price</b>	A National Gallery of Contemporary Art for Wales
<b>Alun Rhys Davies</b>	A future for town centres in Blaenau Gwent
<b>Ann Jones</b>	20 years of devolution
<b>Ann Jones</b>	20 years of devolution
<b>Bethan Sayed</b>	Taking out an advert in the 7 Day Sport Newspaper
<b>Bethan Sayed</b>	Removal of external sign and make safe
<b>Bethan Sayed</b>	Design & install new signage
<b>Caroline Jones</b>	Newsletter printing
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Annual Report
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Advertising Board
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Advertising Hoardings
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Advertising Hoardings
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Design & Install new signage
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Removal of external sign and make safe
<b>Dai Lloyd</b>	Advertising
<b>Darren Millar</b>	Constituent outreach leaflet
<b>Darren Millar</b>	Constituent outreach leaflet
<b>David Rees</b>	Sharing contact details with constituents
<b>David Rees</b>	Sharing contact details with constituents
<b>David Rees</b>	Sharing contact details with constituents

<b>Member of the Senedd</b>	<b>Title of work</b>
<b>David Rees</b>	Advertising Ground Board - Aberavon RFC
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitchwork & Programme Advertising - Treharris Athletic Western Football Club
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Dawn Bowden AM / AC - Newsletter
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Dawn Bowden AM / AC - Newsletter
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitch board Advertising - Merthyr Rugby Club
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitch board Advertising - Merthyr Tydfil FC Society Ltd
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitch board Advertising - Merthyr Rugby Club
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitch board Advertising - Merthyr Tydfil FC Society Ltd.
<b>Dawn Bowden</b>	Pitch board Advertising - Merthyr Tydfil Cricket Club
<b>Elin Jones</b>	Annual report 2019/20
<b>Elin Jones</b>	Annual report 2019/20
<b>Eluned Morgan</b>	Annual Report 2019/2020 - Eluned Morgan
<b>Eluned Morgan</b>	Printing of Annual Report
<b>Gareth Bennett</b>	Newsletter
<b>Hefin David</b>	Advertising boards at sports grounds
<b>Hefin David</b>	Advertising boards at sports grounds
<b>Hefin David</b>	Advertising boards at sports grounds
<b>Hefin David</b>	Advertising boards at sports grounds
<b>Huw Irranca-Davies</b>	Building Sustainable Food Networks in Wales: Cooperative Principles
<b>Jack Sargeant</b>	Update on work of AM – Community Bank
<b>Jack Sargeant</b>	Update on work of AM – Community Bank
<b>Jane Hutt</b>	Investigating the impact of embedded gambling promotions in football and rugby clubs on children in South Wales
<b>Janet Finch-Saunders</b>	Do you need any help?

<b>Member of the Senedd</b>	<b>Title of work</b>
<b>Janet Finch-Saunders</b>	Do you need any help?
<b>Janet Finch-Saunders</b>	Janet Finch-Saunders A5 Advice leaflet
<b>Jenny Rathbone</b>	Investigating the impact of embedded gambling promotions in football and rugby clubs on children in South Wales
<b>Jenny Rathbone</b>	Fridge magnets for students
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Investigating the impact of embedded gambling promotions in football and rugby clubs on children in South Wales
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Advert in Newport RFC Programme
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Advert for placement for Football Season
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Advert for placement for Newport RFC Season
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Advert in Newport County AFC Programme
<b>John Griffiths</b>	Cycling Newport Meeting - Room Rental
<b>Julie Morgan</b>	Julie Morgan AM's Annual report
<b>Ken Skates</b>	Summer newsletter/Constituency report
<b>Kirsty Williams</b>	News from Kirsty Williams AM
<b>Leanne Wood</b>	Route Map for the Rhondda
<b>Lee Waters</b>	Building Sustainable Food Networks in Wales: Cooperative Principles
<b>Lynne Neagle</b>	The effectiveness of school-based postvention strategies following a suicide: A rapid evidence summary
<b>Mark Drakeford</b>	Cardiff West Annual Report
<b>Mark Drakeford</b>	Cardiff West Annual Report
<b>Mick Antoniw</b>	Annual Report - Mick Antoniw AM
<b>Mick Antoniw</b>	Annual Report - Mick Antoniw AM
<b>Mike Hedges</b>	Building Sustainable Food Networks in Wales: Cooperative Principles
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	Oscar's Skills and Jobs Fair!

<b>Member of the Senedd</b>	<b>Title of work</b>
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	Oscar's Skills and Jobs Fair!
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	Oscar's Skills and Jobs Fair!
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	Reporting back A5 Card
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	Leaflet distribution
<b>Mohammad Asghar</b>	AM - Constituent Fridge magnets
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Facebook Post Nuclear Mud
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Promotion of Neil McEvoy's Facebook Page
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Coronavirus testing
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Coronavirus testing and advice
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Incinerator public meeting
<b>Neil McEvoy</b>	Lobbying video
<b>Paul Davies</b>	Facebook Targeted Advertising
<b>Plaid Cymru group</b>	Closing the Fiscal Gap
<b>Rebecca Evans</b>	Building Sustainable Food Networks in Wales: Cooperative Principles
<b>Russell George</b>	Votes for Prisoner's Survey
<b>Russell George</b>	Votes for Prisoner's Survey
<b>Sian Gwenllian</b>	Ystyried hyd a lled pwerau tal ac amodau athrawon (Teachers Pay and Conditions)
<b>Suzy Davies</b>	Bus service surveys
<b>Vikki Howells</b>	Promotion of Social Media activity
<b>Vikki Howells</b>	Vikki Howells 2019/2020 Annual Report
<b>Vikki Howells</b>	Promotion of Social Media Activity
<b>Vikki Howells</b>	Building Sustainable Food Networks in Wales: Cooperative Principles

# Appendix D: Effectiveness Review of the Remuneration Board of the Senedd

## Background and Context

1. I have been asked to undertake an effectiveness review of the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd (the Board).
2. The Board makes independent decisions on the pay and direct support for Members of the Senedd (Members) to attract a wide range of capable and diverse candidates and to enable those elected as Members to do their jobs effectively, ensuring value for money for the people of Wales. The Board was established by the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010.
3. The current Board is the second Remuneration Board and it met for the first time on 17 September 2015. Board members are appointed by the Senedd Commission and hold office for a fixed term of five years (which can be renewed for a further term).

## Scope

4. I have concentrated on the following key areas in undertaking this review:
  - Board composition;
  - Board meetings;
  - administrative arrangements;
  - communications; and
  - continuous improvement and development.
5. The evidence leading to this report was obtained from discussions with a cross section of Board stakeholders including:
  - Board members;
  - Board secretariat;



- staff who present at Board meetings; and
  - Members of the Senedd and Members' support staff.
6. Additionally, I reviewed a number of minutes and papers from Board meetings and the Board's Terms of Reference.
  7. This report will summarise my findings in each of the areas identified in paragraph 4 and highlight the strengths of the Board and potential areas for consideration for the incoming Board.
  8. I recognise that any areas of development to be taken forward are the responsibility of a new incoming Board and have not included any recommendations as part of this report. I will prepare a separate report outlining recommendations for the new Board.
  9. I am grateful to all those who assisted me with the review.

## Summary

10. Overall the Board has performed strongly over its five year term.
11. Board members are universally positive in reflecting on their experiences of the Board and this positivity is echoed by other stakeholders who are in attendance at Board meetings. They describe the Board meetings as being welcoming and members of the Board being approachable and highly engaged in their work.
12. The effective working relationships and mutual respect between the Board members is an important facet which has contributed significantly to its success during its term and is a pervasive theme throughout all areas of this review.
13. The review has identified a small number of areas where further development may be required. Where appropriate, details of these areas are highlighted in this report. As set out in paragraph 8 any recommendations raised in respect of these areas will be included within a separate document for consideration by the incoming Board.

## Key findings

14. This section of the report summarises the main findings from the review.

### **Board Composition**

15. The most important factor for the success of any board is ensuring that board membership includes the right people, with the right skill set. In respect of the Board composition, my review found as follows:

- The current Board has a broad range of skill sets which complement each other and ensures that the Board is able to discharge its functions effectively.
- Important skills and knowledge on the Board include but are not limited to: knowledge and experience of local and national politics; understanding of the workings of a legislature; knowledge and experience of Welsh public life; and expertise in technical areas such as pensions.
- Cumulatively the contributions of these skills, knowledge and experience add value to how the Board operates, gives credibility to the Board in its dealings with its various stakeholders and leads to a positive and mutual respect between the different members of the Board.
- In recognising the different skills sets at the Board's disposal, the Chair has helped to foster an environment of inclusivity and respect by delegating responsibilities for leading on areas of work to other Board members based upon their own areas of expertise.
- This positive working relationships of the current Board extend beyond the confines of the formal meetings and the board room itself. The work outside of the meetings is significant and vital to the effectiveness of the Board.

### **Board Meetings**

16. Effective Board meetings provide high levels of constructive challenge. They utilise time the time available and are well organised and attended. This section outlines the characteristics of the Board's meetings.

- Of particular value to the Board are pre-meeting dinners which all Board members attend the night before the commencement of the formal meetings. This allows any potential areas of contention or difficulty to be addressed in advance of the meeting itself and also contributes to the effectiveness of how meetings run on the day. This aspect of the Board's unofficial working practices is a highly significant contributory factor to the success of the Board.
- All interviewees commented on the significant amount of other work, preparation and research, in the many areas within the Board's responsibility, that they undertake outside of the meetings. This in-depth preparation and the diligence displayed by all members is a great strength of the current Board and helps to ensure that meetings run smoothly.
- The assumption is made that all papers have been read in advance of the meeting and the focus of the meeting is to reach decisions.
- Owing to the vast amount of work done in preparation outside of the meeting, this is almost always achieved through consensus without having to defer to a vote
- As referred to in the previous section, the Board has clearly defined strategic priorities and guiding principles on which all decisions have been based. This has led to consistency in the decisions taken and has also provided a clear rationale for decisions.
- Meetings are well chaired with a robust level of challenge and discussion at meetings. The Chair is given much credit by her colleagues for creating an inclusive and constructive atmosphere. They particularly appreciate her ability to encourage contributions from all Board members; she shares her views but does not dominate. The Chair's management of an extensive and, at times, crowded agenda is also praised by many.
- Board members are also satisfied that they have an opportunity to discuss and complete all agenda items during meetings.
- Those who attend the Board and present papers described the Boardroom environment as being welcoming but at the same time providing robust challenge where this was seen as necessary.
- The Board demonstrate the ability to be flexible and agile in the way it operates holding virtual meetings even before they became a necessity as a result of the Covid-19

pandemic. This culture allowed a smooth transition to more regular on-line meetings once during the pandemic period.

- During the early days of the Board's term there was sometimes a feeling that the Board, on occasions, were being asked to make reactive decisions or provide a steer on interpretation of the Determination on very specific areas which sometimes focussed on resolving issues arising from one or two Members.
- Through its term the Board has sought to take a more holistic view of the whole Determination, making a number of changes during the course of its term, which have minimised the number of issues which they needed to consider at an individual level. The Board has developed and utilised meeting to devote time and discussions to 'bigger picture' initiatives.
- An example is its holistic approach to the process around the guidance and framework of policies around Members employing their staff. The change of focus and contribution of the Board in supporting Members' Business Support develop a staff handbook to be introduced in the Sixth Senedd marks out the way in which the respective role of the Board and Member is being clarified.

### **Issues for incoming Board to consider - meetings**

- To agree early on how Board meetings should be run in the future to manage expectations.

### **Administrative Arrangements**

17. A successful Board benefits from thorough organisation, high quality papers and robust administrative arrangements.
18. The National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010 specifies that: The Assembly Commission must provide the Board with such administrative support as the Board reasonably require, to enable it to discharge its functions. This section focuses on the level and nature of support the Board is currently receiving:
  - Board members are very appreciative of the support and commitment they receive from Commission officials.

- An effective working relationship is in place with Board members and the secretariat which is provided by Commission officials.
- A structured induction programme was put in place for all members at the start of their term.
- An away 'strategy day' was also held in north Wales, for those members who began their term in 2015 (four of the five current members). This session was reflected on positively by all those who were present on that occasion. This helped to forge relationships between Board members and set the Board's direction at the start of their term. This strategy has been revisited throughout the Board's term of office.
- Generally, the Board is content that they receive meeting papers in good time in advance of meetings.
- On occasions it is felt that some detailed papers are not distributed until a few days prior to the date of the meeting. This significantly reduces the opportunity for members to fully digest the information.
- For papers, which include information is of a particular technical or complex nature, members would prefer a more concise summary of the issues involved. It is recognised that the template and format of Board papers has improved during the lifetime of the current Board, making it clearer the purpose of the paper and the action required by the Board. However, on occasions, members receive the detailed analysis of the experts and inform me they would benefit from Commission officials distilling this information or consider different techniques and processes for sharing information such as presentations, info-graphics and charts.
- Clear minutes and actions are distributed in a timely manner following every meeting of the Board.
- The Board highlight that they particularly value the constructive relationship they maintain with specialised areas of the Commission staff including Legal Services and Members' Business Support who are able to provide value added knowledge and expertise to the Board.
- The Board occasionally contracts with specialised 'third parties' who provide additional advice and proposals for the Board. The outputs of such commissioned work, which are presented at Board meetings have not always met the Board's expectations.

### **Issues for incoming Board to consider – administrative arrangements**

- The format and style of papers being prepared for Board meetings, including guidance on the length of papers and possibility of using different formats such as presentations to share information.
- There are opportunities to learn from commissioning advice from third parties to ensure the Board realises the full benefits of the advice provided and to deliver value for money.
- The Secretariat is currently exploring different ways in which information and papers can be disseminated and shared with the Board. Work will need to be undertaken in conjunction with the Commission's ICT service to identify the most suitable solution going forward.

### **Stakeholder Engagement and Communications**

19. I canvassed opinion from some of the Board's key stakeholders and asked Board members to share their own reflections on the approaches they adopt for communication. This section outlines the findings from this.
- In previous sections I have already described the effective ways in which the Board members communicate effectively with each other and collectively with Commission officials.
  - Stakeholders interviewed were generally positive about the lines of communication with the Board. All interviewees suggested that they viewed the Board as being approachable and they understood how the Board the ways in which the Board could be contacted.
  - Members and their support staff particularly value the face-to-face meetings with the Board through reference group meetings and drop in sessions. These occasions are described as informal and welcoming and this demonstrates the Board's willingness and eagerness to listen and understand the concerns which Members and their staff may face.
  - The Board has adopted a consultative approach in its dealing with stakeholders, helping to review each aspect of the Determination in line with its strategy and forward programme.



- There is a plurality of views from stakeholders in considering the effectiveness of the approach that the Board has adopted. There is appreciation that views are being sought but feeling amongst some stakeholders of consultation ‘fatigue’ and not always being clear about what is being asked from them during all consultations.
- The subject area included within the Board’s narrow remit is a highly sensitive and contentious one. Inevitably, those directly affected by decisions including Members and support staff are not always supportive of the decisions made. However, they are understanding of the rationale which has been used to reach those decisions as the Board clearly explains its reasoning.
- There are some stakeholders who feel improvements could be made to the levels and format of communications and a new Board term may present a window of opportunity to reassess this area. Some of the suggestions were: offering more question and answer sessions and possibly more virtual interactions with support staff who may be based in constituency or regional offices.
- The Board makes a concerted effort to engage and communicate its messages with its primary stakeholders. It uses one to one sessions and on one occasion used a colloquium, which the Board considers an effective tool of communication.
- In the past, there has been some concern about the level of understanding within the Welsh media in respect of the Board’s role and remit. The levels of understanding seem to be improving but there remains some opportunities for further work to develop in this area with the possibility of creating a more proactive relationship with the media and by extension the wider public.
- There remains a low level of response rates to Board consultations from wider Welsh civic life. There may be opportunities to develop more proactive relationships with such groups in this area too.

### **Issues for incoming Board to consider – communications and stakeholder engagement**

- Re-engage with Members and support staff to canvass views about different forms of communication.
- Explore ways of enhancing relationships with the Welsh media.

- Consider the root causes of lack of consultation responses and explore opportunities for the Board to engage with and become an integral part of wider Welsh civic life.

## **Continuous Improvement and Development**

20. Effective Boards should encourage an environment where self-evaluation and continual development is a deliberate routine process.

- All members of the Board have significant and valuable experience from which they can draw from sitting on boards and committees elsewhere in both the private and public sectors.
- Discussions with members of the Board explored the potential use of metrics in measuring the Board's success and progress. It was recognised that this is a difficult for any board to develop meaningful measures to measure success. For this Board it is about delivering on its strategy and fulfilling its forward programme. Additionally, the Board reflects on the feedback from Members and support staff survey. I conclude that given the nature of the Board such an approach is an acceptable way of meaningfully measuring its success.
- The Commission has funding to help support the training and development of Board members should this be required but the current Board have not seen the need to utilise such funding. However, where appropriate third party experts have been used to provide the Board with advice.
- Throughout the report I have emphasised the work done away from the Boardroom both at the commencement of the Board's term and then continuing throughout the lifetime of the Board. Cultivating these relationships and drawing on the strengths of individuals is a hallmark of effective boards and has contributed significantly the effectiveness of this Board.
- Another area of discussion was around performance management and Board members gave their views on this area. I would agree that the development of an approach to performance management arrangements for the Board should not commence simply to be a box ticking exercise. During the lifetime of this Board there are no indications that such a mechanism has been required. It is also recognised that the Board is very small in size so there are close relationships between each member and the Chair. However, good practice would dictate that an element of performance management

review should be established in order to formally manage expectations between the Chair and the other members of the Board and safeguard the risk of underperformance going unaddressed during a future Board.

### **Issues for incoming Board to consider – continuous improvement and development**

- Review of the informal meetings of the current Board and identifying if this can be applied to the new Board.
- Possibility of introducing a performance management system.
- Identifying any training needs or gaps in skills from the new Board's membership.

## Concluding Comments

21. The Board are invited to consider and discuss the findings of this review.
22. I re-iterate my thanks to all who helped to contribute towards this review and wish the Board well for the future.

**Gareth Watts,**  
Head of Governance and Assurance  
July 2020