**Finance System**

29 March 2023

**Request for Information.**

Thank you for your request received on 22 February which you asked:

> *Could you please provide support to the following freedom of information questions?*
>
> *Expenses:*
> 1. *What finance system do you use?*
> 2. *What system do you use to manage and process your staff's expenses?*
> 3. *What is the expense submission & reimbursement process?*
> 4. *What is the current approval workflow for expense claims?*
> 5. *How long does it take to process one expense claim?*
> 6. *What is the current period of reimbursement (from submission) for staff expenses?*
> 7. *How many expense claims were made during your last financial year? And what was total value of expense claimed?*
> 8. *Can your staff submit expenses remotely?*
> 9. *Are staff able to submit claims on their mobile device via a dedicated application?*
> 10. *If you are allowed, how are you claiming VAT back on expense claims?*
> 11. *What percentage of expense claims are audited?*
> 12. *How many full-time-employees (FTEs) do you have processing expense claims?*
> 13. *Which department oversees / owns the expense processes/workflows?*
> 14. *Who is the named contact within the organisation who owns the expense process?*
>
> *Invoices:*

**Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh**

1. *What system do you use for managing/processing invoices?*
2. *What is your current invoice process for handling supplier invoices, from receipt to when it is posted in the ERP/finance system and ready for payment?*
3. *How many invoices were processed during your last financial year?*
4. *How many FTEs (full time employees) do you have in your accounts payable team who process invoices?*
5. *What percentage of invoices were paid late during your last financial year?*
6. *What is the approval workflow for Invoices?*
7. *Who is the named contact within the organisation that decides which systems are upgraded each year?*
8. *Do you use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to scan invoices?*
9. *Do you currently have a PO system or a non-PO system? If you use both types – what is the percentage of PO invoices vs. non-PO invoices?*
10. *Are you claiming VAT on invoices? If so, how are you doing this?*

Please see our responses to your request below.

As per your clarification email, you have requested information relating to Sendd Commission staff, Members of the Senedd (MSs) and Members support staff.

The Financial Services team have provided information relating to Commission staff whilst Members Business Support team (MBS) have provided information relating to MSs and their staff.

| | Commission Staff | MSs and their staff |
|---|---|---|
| **Expenses** | | |
| 1. *What finance system do you use?* | Business Central | Business Central |
| 2. *What system do you use to manage and process your staff's expenses?* | Business Central and Zellis | Business Central |

|  |  | **Commission Staff** | **MSs and their staff** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3. | *What is the expense submission & reimbursement process?* | For travel and subsistence (T&S) claims the staff member making the claim completes an electronic T&S form, provide receipts and get the form authorised by their manager to then forward the claim to Payroll who collate the claims. Taxable claims will be paid via payroll, other claims will be sent to the Finance team who pay the claims on one of the two, weekly payruns. For other reimbursement of expenditure, a 'Manual payment' form is completed and authorised by the budget holder before going to the Finance team for payment | The Member (or staff with delegated authority) submit a claim with supporting document to MBS. MBS review the claim and process the payment on the Members' behalf |
| 4. | *What is the current approval workflow for expense claims?* | Please see our response to question 3, above. | Each claim must be authorised by a MS, for their own claims (or claims for their delegated Member support staff (MSS)). For MSS claims the MS authorises claims for the delegated MSS, and the delegated MSS would authorise for the remaining MSS |
| 5. | *How long does it take to process one expense claim?* | This will depend on the employee/authorising manager and how long it takes them to send the claim to the Finance team. Once approved it will be added to one of two weekly payruns | MBS aim to pay accurate claims within 10 working days |

|  |  | **Commission Staff** | **MSs and their staff** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6. | *What is the current period of reimbursement (from submission) for staff expenses?* | The Commission has two payruns per week. When the claim is received by Finance, it will go on the next available payrun. The target is to pay invoices within 10 working days of receipt | MBS aim to pay accurate claims within 10 working days |
| 7. | *How many expense claims were made during your last financial year? And what was total value of expense claimed?* | 196 transactions.<br><br>Total value of expenses claimed was £13,000 | This information is published on the **Members' allowances database**.<br><br>Please let us know if you need any detailed instructions on accessing this information |
| 8. | *Can your staff submit expenses remotely?* | Yes | Yes |
| 9. | *Are staff able to submit claims on their mobile device via a dedicated application?* | No | No |
| 10. | *If you are allowed, how are you claiming VAT back on expense claims?* | Not applicable | Not applicable |
| 11. | *What percentage of expense claims are audited?* | We hold no recorded information relating to this part of your request. | During the 2021/22 financial year, detailed substantive testing was performed on a random sample of 34 transactions. |
| 12. | *How many full-time-employees (FTEs) do you have processing expense claims?* | 0 FTEs dedicated to processing expense claims. The Finance Team is made up of nine people, all undertaking a variety of roles – payments, | The team dealing with MSs claims and allowances have 6 FTE |

|  |  | Commission Staff | MSs and their staff |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  | financial management and accounts. |  |
| 13. | *Which department oversees / owns the expense processes/workflows?* | HR | MBS |
| 14. | *Who is the named contact within the organisation who owns the expense process?* | HR are responsible for the policy which governs reimbursement of expenses. Manon Antoniazzi, as accounting officer and Chief Executive | Allowances are set by the **Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd** and administered by MBS |
| *Invoices:* | | | |
| 1. | *What system do you use for managing/processing invoices?* | Business Central | Business Central |
| 2. | *What is your current invoice process for handling supplier invoices, from receipt to when it is posted in the ERP/finance system and ready for payment?* | - Supplier emails invoice to dedicated invoice inbox<br>- Invoice is scanned into Business Central (hard copy invoices will be manually scanned in to Business Central)<br>- If there is a PO number and the value of the invoice matches the PO number and the PO has been receipted in the system, the invoice will go on the next available payrun<br>- If there is a PO number and it doesn't match the value of the invoice, the department who raised the PO will be contacted for confirmation as to whether the invoice should be paid | - Member submit an invoice for payment with relevant paperwork<br>- MBS check the supplier details. Discrepancy are challenged with supplier<br>- new suppliers are sent a 'supplier set up form' which is returned to the Finance inbox who will carry out the relevant checks<br>- MBS process the claim for the Member<br>- Finance release funds for processed claims |

|  | | Commission Staff | MSs and their staff |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | - It there is no PO number, the department who should have raised the PO will be contacted to ask them to raise a PO against which the invoice can be matched and paid | |
| 3. | How many invoices were processed during your last financial year? | 2065 payments on payruns (Commission)<br><br>3447 payments on payruns (Members) | There is a difference between invoices processed and claims processed. Not all claims have an invoice, such as mileage claims |
| 4. | How many FTEs (full time employees) do you have in your accounts payable team who process invoices? | 3 FTEs | 6 FTEs dealing with claims and allowances |
| 5. | What percentage of invoices were paid late during your last financial year? | We aim to pay all invoices within 10 working days of receipt. 2% of payments were outside of this target in 2021-22 | No recorded information is held in relation to this part of your request |
| 6. | What is the approval workflow for Invoices? | Please see our response to question 2, above. | Invoices are submitted as claims by MSs (or their delegated staff) |
| 7. | Who is the named contact within the organisation that decides which systems are upgraded each year? | No recorded information is held in relation to this part of your request.<br>Contracts are re-tendered at the end of their contract term as detailed in our **contract schedule**. | No recorded information is held in relation to this part of your request.<br>Contracts are re-tendered at the end of their contract term as detailed in our **contract schedule**. |
| 8. | Do you use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) to scan invoices? | Yes | No |

|  |  | Commission Staff | MSs and their staff |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9. | *Do you currently have a PO system or a non-PO system? If you use both types – what is the percentage of PO invoices vs. non-PO invoices?* | Purchase order system. All invoices require a purchase order | Members claims are submitted via a non purchase order system |
| 10. | *Are you claiming VAT on invoices? If so, how are you doing this?* | The Senedd is able to reclaim VAT on certain invoices if eligible to do so under the Contracting Out Direction. The VAT reclaimed will form part of the VAT return | n/a |

Yours sincerely

**Buddug Saer**
**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 Welsh Parliament'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

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