Remuneration Board

Strategy 2026 - 2030

July 2026

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.

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Chair's foreword

The start of the Seventh Senedd marks a new chapter for Welsh democracy. The expansion of the Senedd, alongside changes to constituencies and ways of working brings new expectations, new pressures and new opportunities for Members.

For newly elected Members, these changes will be felt in practical ways every day: how to represent new constituencies, and work locally and engage with their constituents, as well as how to recruit and employ staff. In preparation for this period of change, the Board undertook a comprehensive review of the Determination on Members' pay and staffing and business costs during the Sixth Senedd. The revised framework provides clearer, more accessible and more flexible support for Members, while retaining proportionate safeguards, transparency and value for money for the public purse.

Our strategy sets out how the Board intends to work over the next four years. At the outset of the Seventh Senedd, our focus will be on stability, learning and feedback. We recognise the need to allow the Determination to embed, for new and returning Members to adapt to new ways of working in an expanded Senedd and for arrangements to bed in. and for new business, scrutiny and legislative arrangements to become established.

As the Seventh Senedd settles into new ways of working, the Board will take a deliberative and evidence-based approach to its role. We will *engage* with Members and Support Staff*, review* how the Determination works in practice*, adapt* where necessary *and sustain* a framework that supports effective representation and public confidence.

Our priority throughout will be to ensure that Members have the support they need to serve the people of Wales effectively, and that our decisions continue to reflect fairness, transparency and value for money.



Dr Elizabeth Haywood

Chair, Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

Strategy at a glance 2026 - 2030

Our Purpose



Our status:
As an independent body, established in legislation*, we are required to provide a framework for Members' pay and support that helps facilitate the work of the Senedd, enabling effective democratic representation and delivers value for money for the people of Wales.



What we do:
We determine how much Members of the Senedd are paid, reflecting what is expected of them as elected representatives.

We determine the business costs they can claim including for running their offices and employing their staff.



We work with others:
We work with the Senedd Commission and Senedd Commissioner for Standards to ensure our decisions support a successful Senedd.

Our Guiding Principles



Value for the people of Wales:
Our decisions will reflect the economic and financial circumstances of Wales, including in the context of people's earnings.



Success:
Our decisions will support the long-term success of the Senedd, enabling Members to undertake their role in the Senedd and effectively represent all their constituents.



The Future:
Our decisions will be transparent and sustainable, promote probity and reduce financial barriers for all potential candidates to stand for election.

Our Goals



To provide the funding and support framework for Members to effectively undertake their role in the Senedd and represent all their constituents.



To ensure the Determination remains fit for purpose and delivers value for money, reflecting changes in ways of working and administrative practices, set in the economic context of Wales.

Our Strategic Objectives



Engage:
We will engage proactively and continuously improve how we involve stakeholders before and during decision making.



Review:
We will review how our decisions operate in practice, informed by data, evidence and feedback, ensuring the Determination is clear, simple, fit for purpose, and working as intended.



Adapt:
We will adapt to changes in Senedd business and ways of working, ensuring the Determination supports diversity and inclusion, facilitates innovation and modernisation, and reflects the evolving role of the Senedd and its Members.



Sustain:
We will ensure our decisions are fit for the future, promote accountability, remain financially sustainable, and contribute to a successful Senedd.

Full details of the Board's functions and responsibilities are set out in the Government of Wales Act 2006 and the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010.

1. Introduction

1. Our strategy sets out how we will approach our work during the Seventh Senedd and how we will prepare for the Eighth Senedd.

2. We recognise that the Seventh Senedd will operate in a changed parliamentary landscape, with more Members, different constituency arrangements, new ways of working and possible changes to Senedd business arrangements.

3. During the Sixth Senedd, we reviewed and simplified the Determination on Members' Pay, Staffing and Business Support with the aim of providing flexibility to enable Members to respond to the new demands of a new Senedd. At the same time, we have reviewed and retained appropriate safeguards to ensure public money is used responsibly, supporting probity and value for money.

4. The Determination may not require substantial revision in the Seventh Senedd. We intend to reflect on how the new Determination embeds and how new Members and a new Senedd operate, while retaining flexibility to respond where change is needed.

5. Our strategy builds on the observations and recommendations of the independent end of term review of the previous Board. The review concluded that the Board was 'high functioning and effective' and that the governance framework was 'proportionate and fit for purpose'. It also made several recommendations including the development of a 'feedback loop' to assess whether the Determination was meeting the Board's policy objectives on the ground, and a review of the Board's stakeholder engagement strategy.

6. As the Seventh Senedd progresses, the Senedd will determine its working arrangements and the Senedd Commission will set its strategic approach for the term; the Board will review its approach in light of those developments to ensure the Determination and support framework continue to meet Members' needs and support a successful Senedd.

The Board's status and functions

7. The Board's responsibilities and powers are set out in the **Government of Wales Act 2006** and **the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010**.

8. As an independent body, we decide on the pay, support and business costs available to Members of the Senedd.

9. We have statutory objectives which include:

- ensuring there are no financial barriers to standing for election in order to attract a diverse range of capable candidates;
- and to provide adequate remuneration and resources to help Members do their jobs, while ensuring accountability, probity, transparency and value for money for the public.

10. Our decisions are set out in the **Determination**, which provides a framework of financial support that Members can receive and the rules for what they can claim to help them carry out their role.

11. Although independent of the Welsh Government, the Senedd and the Senedd Commission, we work with others in delivering our functions and our objectives, including the Senedd Commission (which administers the Determination) and Senedd Commissioner for Standards to ensure our decisions support a successful Senedd.

2. Strategic context

12. In developing our strategy and focus we have considered the context in which the Seventh Senedd will operate.

13. We have undertaken a 'horizon scan' to consider the key global and Wales specific drivers and strategic risks that may influence our work during the Seventh Senedd. We have summarised the Welsh and global issues into five key strategic factors that will shape our work.

14. Across all five factors, the Board's work will be shaped by external conditions within and beyond Wales, including global economic and geopolitical instability, pressures on household finances, rapid change in the information environment, the growing impact of Artificial Intelligence and increased scrutiny of democratic institutions and those who serve within them.

A Reformed and Enlarged Senedd

15. The Senedd will operate in a period of significant institutional change and 70% of Members are new to their role. A bigger Senedd, evolving devolution settlement and changes to ways of working are likely to affect how Members discharge their legislative, scrutiny, and representative roles. These changes are also taking place in a changing political and public environment, which may shape expectations of Members and the institutions that support them.

16. The Board will need to retain flexibility to respond to changes to Senedd Standing Orders, working practices, and constituency boundaries ahead of the Eighth Senedd. Across its workstreams, the Board will consider whether the Determination continues to provide appropriate and responsive support for Members' functions, including their scrutiny and legislative activity.

17. The Board is also sensitive to and considers the human dimension of what is a unique and demanding role; Members and their staff will have diverse needs, they face the threat of face-to-face and online abuse and intimidation, and some may need future financial and wellbeing support given the electoral cycle and insecurity of the role.

Public Confidence and Value for Money

18. A larger Senedd has seen an increase in the overall cost of the Senedd, which includes Members' support; the overall cost of the Senedd is 0.37% of the Welsh budget, however, the 'costs of democracy' inevitably receive significant

scrutiny. Turnout at the 2026 Senedd elections at 51.6% was a historical high but public understanding of the Senedd's role remains limited, and confidence in political probity cannot be assumed. This is occurring in a wider context of global economic uncertainty, continued cost of living pressures, and heightened sensitivity to public expenditure.

19. The Board will continue to place particular emphasis on explaining its decisions, using evidence and data to demonstrate probity, transparency and value for money, and communicating in ways that are accessible to the public in a fast-moving and increasingly contested information environment. The Board will also consider the long-term sustainability of the Determination in the context of the Welsh economy and public finances.

Members as Employers in a Changing Workplace

20. Members are individual employers of staff and are subject to statutory employment responsibilities. The revised Members' Code of Conduct also sets out new employment standards expected of Members.

21. High turnover of Members and support staff following the election, the introduction of a new employment framework, and changes in technology, artificial intelligence, working practices and statutory requirements present ongoing operational and governance challenges as well as opportunities.

22. The Board provides the framework for staff pay and terms and conditions funded from public resources.

23. The Board will consider whether the framework supports Members to be good employers and offers adequate protection, taking account of the new Code of Conduct, implementation of the Family Friendly Review, and the changing political climate.

The Board within a Wider System

24. The Determination operates alongside the Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources and the Members' Code of Conduct. While the Board does not administer the Determination, it is required to understand how it is operating in practice in order to assess whether the Board's policy intent is being achieved and whether the framework remains appropriate.

25. A simplified Determination for the Seventh Senedd increases reliance on principles and guidance. The Board will therefore seek improved data and

feedback on implementation and support to assess the operation of the Determination in practice.

A Shortened Electoral Cycle

26. The move to a four-year electoral cycle reduces the time available to prepare the Determination for the Eighth Senedd. This requires a disciplined approach to prioritisation and sequencing of work.

27. The Board intends to limit changes to the Determination during the Seventh Senedd to essential fixes and routine updates, while progressively shifting focus towards preparing a robust and workable Determination for the Eighth Senedd.

28. The aim is to allow sufficient time for engagement and consultation, decision-making, and the development of guidance to aid implementation. The Board will need to be responsive to any Senedd reviews of business practices or post-legislative review as well as further changes to constituency boundaries ahead of the Eighth Senedd.

3. Our Goals, Principles and Ways of Working

Our Goals

29. In discharging our statutory functions and informed by the strategic context for the coming period, our goals for the Seventh Senedd are to:

> *Our goals:*
> *provide a funding and support framework that enables Members to undertake their role effectively in the Senedd and represent their constituents, and*
>
> *To ensure the Determination remains fit for purpose and delivers value for money, reflecting changes in ways of working and administrative practices, set in the economic context of Wales.*

Our Principles

30. Our guiding principles, which underpin our work and decision-making, are set out in the Determination and reflect the Board's statutory functions as set out in section 3(2) of the **Measure**.

31. In setting our strategy, we have reviewed the principles to reaffirm our remit, intent and purpose when considering policy and making our decisions:

> *Our guiding principles*
>
> *Value for the people of Wales*
>
> *Our decisions will reflect the economic and financial circumstances of Wales, including in the context of people's earnings.*
>
> *Success*
>
> *Our decisions will support the long-term success of the Senedd, enabling Members to undertake their role in the Senedd and effectively represent all their constituents.*
>
> *The Future*

Our decisions will be transparent and sustainable, promote probity and reduce barriers for all potential candidates to stand for election.

Ways of working and Feedback loop

32. The Board will use three core questions to understand how the Determination is operating in practice:

1. How is the Determination being used by Members?
2. Is the Determination delivering the policy objectives intended by the Board?
3. Is the Determination considered to be effective by others?

33. These questions will inform a 'feedback loop' which builds on the Board's established evidence and feedback mechanisms; we will continue to be informed by published claims data and will seek timely informal and formal feedback from Members, their staff and union representatives as well as from the Senedd Commission about how the Determination is being used.

34. Our approach addresses a core theme identified in the End of Term report: to ensure the Determination is reviewed against and informed by the experience gained from the operation of the Board's decisions.

35. While we make decisions about the framework of support and what Members can claim, the Senedd Commission is responsible for administering the Determination, including how Members may make claims and publishing the details of Members' claims.

36. Our strategy seeks to build on the constructive working relationship with the Senedd Commission, to identify and explore issues of common interest and insight, and ensure the Board is informed about the effectiveness of the Determination and its decisions, particularly in light of the significant changes introduced for the Seventh Senedd.

37. As part of this work we will also update and review our own Governance Principles and Conduct of Business which sets out how the Board will work.

Stakeholder Engagement

38. Engagement with our stakeholders is essential if we are to deliver our strategic aims and fulfil our statutory duties of independence, openness and inclusiveness.

39. Early in the Seventh Senedd we will renew our stakeholder engagement strategy to support our goals and gather useful feedback on the Determination and how we are delivering our strategic aims. This will also help us strengthen and maintain relationships with key stakeholders.

40. As the Seventh Senedd begins, our engagement will focus on new key stakeholders: Members of the Senedd (including new office holders and new Senedd Groups), Members' support staff, and the Senedd Commission.

41. Our approach to public relations and engagement will also seek to provide assurance to the public that decisions about Members' pay and support are independent and evidence-based, consider value for money and that accountability, probity and transparency are prioritised.

4.Our Strategic Objectives

42. Our strategic objectives set out how the Board will carry out its statutory functions and deliver its goals during the Seventh Senedd.

43. They explain how we will engage, review, adapt and sustain the Determination, using data, feedback and evidence to assess whether it remains clear, fair, sustainable and responsive.

44. We will develop a framework for measuring success and progress against our objectives early in the Seventh Senedd, review progress during the term, and report on progress via updates and our annual report.

Engage

We will engage proactively and continuously improve how we involve stakeholders before and during decision-making.

45. We have a statutory duty to consult those affected by our decisions, including Members and their staff, and the Senedd Commission as the body responsible for administering the Determination.

46. Beyond this statutory duty, the Board values the experiences and views of other stakeholders and the public. We will seek to involve them in reviewing the Determination, ensuring it provides sufficient support for Members, contributes to the success of the Senedd and provides value for money.

47. We will explain and evidence our decisions clearly to stakeholders and the public.

How we will do this

- Improve communications with stakeholders and review the information and evidence published on the Board's website, to raise awareness of the Board's role and the Determination.
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with:
    - Members, staff and trade union representatives, through Representative Group meetings and regular drop-ins; and

    - the Senedd Commission, to support the shared commitment to providing effective resources and support for Members and contributing to a successful Senedd.

- Review and update the Board's engagement strategy, adapting it as needed to reflect new ways of working and changing arrangements for Senedd business.

- Strengthen public-facing communication to provide assurance about the Board's independence, evidence-based decision-making, accountability and value for money.

Review

We will review how our decisions operate in practice, informed by data, evidence and feedback, ensuring the Determination is clear, simple, fit for purpose, and working as intended.

48. We have a statutory duty to review the Determination in light of experience and any changes to Members' roles. It is important that the Determination remains fit for purpose - clear and workable and delivering the Board's intended policy objectives - and continues to be responsive to the changing needs of Members, society and the Senedd.

How we will do this

- Develop an effective feedback loop with stakeholders, including with Members, Support Staff and the Senedd Commission, to understand how the Determination operates in practice.

- Monitor usage and take-up of provisions to assess whether the Determination is responding to, and supporting, Members' needs during the Seventh Senedd.

- Undertake post-implementation reviews of key changes introduced in the Determination for the Seventh Senedd, to ensure lessons are learned and changes are effective in achieving the policy outcomes intended.

Adapt

We will adapt to changes in Senedd business and ways of working, ensuring the Determination supports diversity and inclusion, facilitates innovation and modernisation, and reflects the evolving role of the Senedd and its Members.

49. Recognising that the Seventh Senedd will bring significant change to how Members and the Senedd work, we have a statutory duty to review the Determination in order to enable Members to undertake their roles and support a successful Senedd.

How we will do this

- Review and update the Board's horizon scan of the strategic context, reflecting relevant changes in the Determination where they may affect the Senedd or Members in their roles.
- Retain the same underlying principles to approach any reviews of the Determination: providing flexibility to the Determination, providing flexibility for Members to respond to business needs and preferred ways of working, with proportionate safeguards to support probity and value for money.
- Draw on learning from Members' changing ways of working and from the approaches of other organisations and Parliaments when developing innovative solutions and meeting diverse needs.
- Review and, where necessary, consult on the implications of changes to Standing Orders, Senedd governance or working arrangements where these are relevant to the Determination or support provided to Members.
- Use engagement and stakeholder feedback as evidence to inform decisions and support value for money.

Sustain

We will ensure our decisions are fit for the future, promote accountability, remain financially sustainable, and contribute to a successful Senedd.

50. The four-year Seventh Senedd term begins during a period of significant uncertainty in Wales and internationally. Conflicts in Europe and the Middle East

are likely to affect government policy, public expenditure, the Welsh economy and the cost of living.

51. Expectations of, and scrutiny on, elected Members, governments and public bodies will continue to grow, while public finances are likely to become increasingly challenging.

How we will do this

- Ensure Board decisions are considered in the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales.
- Allow the Determination to embed by prioritising only essential changes during the early period, informed by operational experience and changing economic circumstances.
- Review the Board's horizon scan to ensure decisions take account of Welsh and global influences and that the Determination remains fit for purpose.
- Work with the Senedd Commission in shared areas of interest to promote probity, accountability and transparency.

Risks

52. We will develop a proportionate internal risk framework to support clear, evidence-based decision-making during the Seventh Senedd. This will help us consider how best to respond to any important risks to our ability to deliver our statutory responsibilities. The framework will be kept under review and updated in our Annual Report.

5. Initial priorities

54. Our initial focus will be to allow the Determination and support framework to embed, ensure they remain fit for purpose for the Seventh Senedd, and make only limited changes to address any unintended consequences.

55. During the first 12 to 18 months, we will keep up to date with changes in Senedd business, Standing Orders and Members' ways of working, and adapt our approach where needed.

56. As the term progresses, we will engage with Members, support staff and the Senedd Commission to identify any changes needed for the Eighth Senedd Determination.

57. We will publish our work programme and priorities on our website and keep them up to date.