

---

The Independent  
Remuneration Board of the  
Senedd:  
Governance Principles and  
guidance on the conduct of  
business

---

# The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

---

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.

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

**Clerk to the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd**  
**Welsh Parliament**  
**Cardiff Bay**  
**Cardiff**  
**CF99 1SN**

Tel: **0300 200 6565**

Email: **Remuneration@senedd.wales**

---

The Independent Remuneration  
Board of the Senedd:  
Governance Principles and  
guidance on the conduct of  
business

---

# Contents

|    |   |    |
|----|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction.....                                 | 5  |
| 2. | The Board's principles .....                      | 7  |
| 3. | Roles and Responsibilities .....                  | 8  |
| 4. | Effectiveness.....                                | 10 |
| 5. | Openess and Accountability.....                   | 12 |
| 6. | Accountability.....                               | 13 |
| 7. | Engagement .....                                  | 14 |
|    | Annex A: Guidance on Conduct of Business.....     | 16 |
|    | Annex B: Seven Principles of Public Life .....    | 19 |
|    | Annex C: Working with the Senedd Commission ..... | 20 |

# Introduction

- 1.1 The Independent Remuneration Board (“the Board”) is an independent Board established by the National Assembly for Wales (as it was then named in 2011). It aims to ensure that Senedd Members and Senedd office holders, are remunerated appropriately and are equipped with the financial resources necessary to operate effectively in a modern parliamentary institution.
- 1.2 The National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010 (“the Measure”) provides the statutory framework for the Board’s work.
- 1.3 The Board may, from time to time, consider any other matter which is relevant to the discharge of its functions.
- 1.4 Good governance is central to the effective operation of any body. The Board is not a body corporate, but is publicly funded and does need to operate according to recognised precepts of good governance:
  - **Leadership** – articulating a clear vision for the Board and giving clarity about how activities contribute to achieving this vision, including managing risk;
  - **Effectiveness** – bringing a wide range of relevant experience to bear, including through offering rigorous challenge and evaluating performance;
  - **Accountability** – promoting transparency through clear and fair reporting;
  - **Sustainability** – taking a long-term view about what the Board is trying to achieve and what it is doing to get there.
- 1.5 The Board has therefore decided to adopt the governance principles and guidance on conduct of business in this paper. Together they:
  - Provide guidance to the Board on discharging its statutory functions in a manner reflective of independence, openness and inclusiveness;
  - Set standards in the way the Board functions; and
  - Enables the Board to be held to account.

1.6 This document will be reviewed and amended as necessary at the Board's discretion, in line with the Board's decision making conventions. As a minimum, it will be reviewed each Senedd term.

1.7 "Guidance on the conduct of business" can be found at Annex A.

# 2. The Board's principles

## Leadership

- 2.1 All Board Members will follow the Seven Principles of Public Life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life ("the Nolan principles"<sup>1</sup>) including treating others with respect. The Board is committed to upholding the Senedd's Dignity and Respect policy.
- 2.2 The Board's work will support the Senedd in developing solutions within a predominantly Welsh context.
- 2.3 The Board is committed to resourcing the specific needs of Members and responding to the requirements of the Senedd as it evolves. The system of remuneration and allowances shall be targeted to support the strategic purpose of the Senedd and the role of Members in that process.
- 2.4 The Board's decisions on financial support are underpinned by clearly defined principles:
- a) financial support and remuneration for Members should support the strategic purpose of the Senedd and facilitate the work of its Members;
  - b) decisions must be appropriate within the context of Welsh earnings and the wider financial circumstances of Wales;
  - c) the system of financial support for Members must be:
    - robust;
    - clear;
    - transparent;
    - sustainable;
    - inclusive; and
    - represent value for money for the taxpayer.

---

<sup>1</sup> See annex B

# 3. Roles and Responsibilities

## The Remuneration Board

3.1 Relationships between Board members will be characterised by a healthy level of trust, respect, good will, energy and an openness to debate and communication. The Board will act in accordance with the principle of collective responsibility.

3.2 The Board will set and review its strategic aims, ensure that the necessary financial and administrative support it requires from the Commission are in place to meet its objectives and review its performance.

3.3 The Board will be collectively responsible for implementing its objectives in the short, medium and long-term and considering the best interests of the Senedd, consistent with any statutory obligations.

3.4 The Board will ensure that they act in an open and transparent manner and will respond appropriately to complaints about their processes.

## The Chair of the Board

3.5 The Chair is responsible for leadership of the Board and ensuring its effectiveness in all aspects of its role.

3.6 The Chair will preserve order and will decide on all matters of practice and procedure, working closely with Board members and supporting staff.

3.7 The Chair will act on behalf of the Board as spokesperson and representative. The Chair may delegate this responsibility.

## Senedd Commission

3.8 The Board will receive a high standard of support from Senedd Commission staff.

3.9 **Senedd Commission staff** will provide comprehensive papers with information on policies and procedures to facilitate evidence based decisions.

3.10 The **Secretariat** will support the Board in delivering its work programme by providing effective procedural, administrative and practical support. The Secretariat will advise and assist the Board in exercising its statutory obligations. The Secretariat will also facilitate effective communication between the Board, Members, Support Staff and other key stakeholders.



3.11 Further information on the Board and Senedd Commission's respective responsibilities working together can be found at Annex C.

### **Equality, Human Rights and the Welsh Language**

3.12 In exercising its functions, the Board will have regard to the principle of equality of opportunity and seek to uphold human rights in all that they do. They will also give effect to the principle that, in dealing with the public, Members, their staff, the Welsh and English languages should be treated equally. The Board will conform to the Senedd Commission's Official Language Scheme Standards.

# 4. Effectiveness

## Meetings

- 4.1 The Board will meet sufficiently regularly to discharge its duties effectively, although the norm is likely to be 5 or 6 times a year.
- 4.2 Meetings will facilitate opportunities to allow for strategic thinking and to help to contribute towards the cohesiveness of the Board.
- 4.3 Attendance of Board members, at the meetings – virtual, hybrid and in-person - is critical to its success and there are clear expectations as to their commitment to attend.

## Handling information

- 4.4 The Board will have effective information management arrangements. All sensitive or confidential information generated or received by Board members will be dealt with in line the Senedd Commission's Information Governance Framework.

## Procurement

- 4.5 The Board shall adopt best practice across all areas of the procurement and contract management process. This practice will include regular evaluation to ensure that value for money is achieved.

## Managing Risks

- 4.6 Information will be provided in meeting papers to enable the Board to assess and manage risks as part of its decision-making.

## Evaluation

- 4.7 The Board will develop and encourage an environment where evaluation and continuous development is a deliberate and routine process.
- 4.8 Evaluation will also include a consideration of the support and services provided by the Secretariat and the Senedd Commission generally.

## **Learning and Development**

- 4.9 The Board will assess and consider the learning and development requirements of the Board as an entity and Board Members as individuals with resources allocated accordingly.
- 4.10 The Board shall develop and maintain engagement with other Remuneration Boards in the UK and overseas as appropriate, learn from other relevant organisations and maintain an awareness of developments in the wider world of political remuneration.
- 4.11 The Board is committed to improving its ways of working and Board members' performance in their role. The Chair will carry out annual appraisals with each member. The Board will seek feedback on its ways of working from stakeholders, including Senedd Members and their staff, Senedd Commission staff and others involved in giving advice to the Board and attending meetings.

## 5. Accountability

- 5.1.1 The decisions of the Board are final and not subject to ratification or approval by the Senedd Commission or Senedd.
- 5.1.2 The Board is not subject to the direction or control of the Senedd or of the Senedd Commission. It is the responsibility of the Senedd Commission to implement the Board's Determination.
- 5.1.3 The Clerk and Chief Executive of the Senedd has overall personal responsibility and accountability for the use of its public money and the stewardship of its assets. As such, on occasions it is right for the Board to seek or receive advice from the Clerk and Chief Executive on key issues.
- 5.1.4 The Board has autonomy to procure services and advice and is also responsible for its expenditure.
- 5.5. The Board is committed to delivering its work programme within the resources it reasonably requires and which are made available to it (see Annex C – Working with the Senedd Commission).
- 5.6 The Measure says that the Board must generally act in an open and transparent manner and publish on the Senedd's website such information as will enable the public to be kept informed as to its activities. This does not prevent the Board from considering a matter in private and from maintaining the privacy of its consideration of that matter if, in the opinion of the Board, the nature of the matter makes it appropriate to do so.
- 5.7 The Board must, before exercising any of its functions, consult those who are likely to be affected, unless the Board considers that there are circumstances that make it inappropriate to do so. The Board is committed to seeking regular engagement with stakeholders.

## 6. Openness and Transparency

- 6.1 The Board will meet in private but ensure openness and transparency by:
- Publishing on the Senedd website information which enables the public to be kept informed of its activities.
  - Implementing a consistent approach to publishing relevant materials such as minutes of meetings and communications to Members regarding the Board's activity.
  - Declaring relevant interests before taking part in Board proceedings including Board meetings. Any interests which are declared will be made publicly available.
- 6.2 The Board shall make a concerted effort to communicate its messages with the public generally as well as key stakeholders to enable those with an interest to understand the role of the Board, its Determination and how they can engage with its work.
- 6.3 Board members are required to be politically impartial in discharging its functions.
- 6.4 Effective communication is intrinsic to the work of the Board so that the Board effectively informs and, is itself, well informed.
- 6.5 The Board shall, at every opportunity, clearly set out its remit, values and standards and ensure that its obligations to the Senedd and others are understood and met.
- 6.6 The Board is committed to positioning itself as clearly independent of the Senedd in the eyes of the public.
- 6.7 The Board will further develop an effective communications approach, which identifies and seeks engagement with all its key internal and external stakeholders to support its work.

# 7. Engagement

- 7.1 Good, regular stakeholder engagement is critical to the Board's effectiveness. The Board's reviews and consultations shall be:
- Participative;
  - Transparent; and
  - Iterative.
- 7.2 The Board will communicate its work plan in a timely manner in order to facilitate effective engagement in its processes and consultations.
- 7.3 The Board will consult those likely to be affected, in line with its duties under the Measure, namely:
- Senedd Members;
  - staff employed by Senedd Members (or by groups of Senedd Members);
  - relevant trade unions; and
  - others as considered appropriate.
- 7.4 In addition to formal consultation processes, the Board will establish regular engagement opportunities with Members and their staff. The Board shall establish regular engagement with Senedd Members individually and with their representatives by a variety of methods. This is both to ensure they are kept up to date with the Board's deliberations and for the Board's decisions to be informed by any concerns and issues that Members might have .
- 7.5 Likewise, the Board shall establish regular engagement with Senedd Member Support Staff, providing a range of opportunities to engage with the Board on an ongoing basis. In addition to the formal channels of engagement, this will enable the Board to listen to stakeholders and develop its awareness and understanding of relevant (immediate and emerging) issues outside the formal consultation processes.
- 7.6 The Board will maintain regular communication and dialogue with the Senedd Commission. This is in recognition of the importance of the Senedd Commission in providing support and services to Senedd Members and of the interdependency of the roles of both bodies.
- 7.7 Given the Board's statutory role in relation to the Senedd Pension Scheme, effective communication will also be maintained between the Board and the Senedd's Pension Trustees as set out in a

Memorandum of Understanding to be agreed by the Board and the Trustees (known as the Pensions Board).

- 7.8 It will also be important for the Board to consult with the Standards Commissioner where appropriate, in particular when producing guidance on the use of resources.
- 7.9 Each Board Member should ensure that the views expressed by any stakeholder are communicated to the Board as a whole.
- 7.10 The Board will ensure that feeding back to stakeholders and those who contribute to consultations will be an intrinsic element to its engagement work.

# Annex A – Guidance on Conduct of Business

## Meetings

- 1.1 Board meetings will take place in Ty Hywel, Cardiff Bay unless Board members are informed otherwise. The meetings take place in private unless otherwise agreed by the Board.
- 1.2 The Board will determine the regularity of its meetings, although it will normally meet approximately 5 or 6 times a year.
- 1.3 The Board may also meet informally to gather evidence.

## The Chair

- 1.4 The Chair of the Board is responsible for the following:
  - To set the agenda for each meeting with support from the secretariat;
  - To preserve order and ensure that the Board and advisers have sufficient opportunity to express their views on any matter under discussion;
  - Subject to these rules, to decide on all matter of practice and procedure;
  - To ensure that the Board's decisions or resolutions are clearly expressed to key remit groups; and
  - Summarise the discussion for the purposes of the minutes.

## Quorum

- 1.5 The quorum for any formal meeting is three members. A member attending via videoconference or teleconference will be considered as present.

## Attendance

- 1.6 Board members should, where practical, inform the Secretariat in advance if they are unable to attend a particular meeting.



- 1.7 If a Board member is, for whatever reason, unable to attend a meeting then he or she may submit written comments with views on any of the issues under consideration.
- 1.8 In addition to Board members, other Senedd Commission officials may attend meetings as required by the Chair.
- 1.9 The Board may if appropriate, invite individual Members to attend for specific meetings or individual items of business.
- 1.10 Where, in the opinion of Board members, an issue is particularly sensitive or confidential in nature, the Chair may recommend that the item be considered without Commission officials or advisers.

### **Papers**

- 1.11 Senedd Commission staff supporting the Board will prepare papers for consideration at the meetings. Draft papers will be authorised by the Chair for circulation to the rest of the Board.
- 1.12 The Clerking team will issue papers electronically to Board members by email, where practical, no later than one week before the meeting. Board members will be informed of any delay.
- 1.13 When a draft paper or report is issued to all Board members, it should clearly state a closing date by which comments are required. It will be presumed that if a Board member does not respond by the closing date, it will be interpreted that approval has been given to the draft document under consideration.
- 1.14 Board minutes will be considered and agreed at the following meeting and will be published on the Board's pages on the Senedd's web site.

### **Decisions and voting**

- 1.15 Only Board members are entitled to vote. The Chair will seek to reach a consensus view where possible on all decisions.
- 1.16 Where this is not possible, the Chair will call for a vote. Votes will be taken by a show of hands. The Chair reserves the right to exercise a casting vote.
- 1.17 The Board has collective responsibility for its decisions.

1.18 Decisions of the Board concerning the salaries, allowances and pensions of Members and the Welsh Ministers (including the First Minister, Counsel General and deputy Welsh Ministers) and support to party groups must be approved by at least three Board members.

### **Disclosures of interest**

1.19 A Board member or expert adviser must officially disclose any financial interest in any matter under consideration at a meeting.

1.20 Where a Board member has an interest, other than financial (e.g. family), advice should be sought as to whether the interest may be regarded as significant.

1.21 A Board member may seek advice from the Senedd Commission's Legal Services in relation to any particular circumstances which he/she believes may constitute a direct or indirect interest in a matter before a meeting.

1.22 All declarations of interest must be recorded in the minutes.

1.23 The Board will maintain a register of members' interests and ensure it is accessible and reviewed annually.

### **Correspondence**

1.24 The Chair will be responsible for approving and signing all outgoing correspondence and media releases, unless input is specifically requested from Board members.

1.25 The Chair will recommend whether correspondence received from stakeholders should be considered as a paper or paper to note at Board meetings.

### **Amendments to the Governance Principles and Guidance on the Conduct of Business**

1.26 The procedures and principles in the Governance Principles and Guidance may be varied, revoked or added to by the Board at a meeting where due notice has been given.

# Annex B – Seven Principles of Public Life

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for awards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

# Annex C – Working with the Senedd Commission

1. The Commission is required to provide secretariat support and resources for the Board to enable it to operate effectively.
  - 1.1 The Board will request any additional resources it requires of the Commission in line with its annual budget planning cycle. The Board will provide accompanying information which enables the Commission to assess the reasonableness of its resource needs.
2. Regular communication and dialogue between the Commission and Remuneration Board is important. This is in recognition of the statutory roles and interdependency of the two bodies in providing support and services to Members of the Senedd and is important in enabling effective decision-making.
  - 2.1 It is the responsibility of the Commission to administer the Board's Determination. Commission officials manage the application of the Determination and advise Members of the Senedd and their support staff on issues relating to it. They will also provide information to the Board on relevant aspects of its work to help inform the Board's decision-making and advise where appropriate.
  - 2.2 The Chief Executive and Clerk, in his/her capacity as Accounting Officer, is responsible for oversight of the use and stewardship of public funds and resources. The Board may seek or receive advice from the Accounting Officer on issues relevant to Accounting Officer duties. Commission officials may advise the Board on affordability when it makes a determination.
  - 2.3 The Board will formally request any additional information it requires which the Commission may be able to provide it to inform its decisions, other than information/data which is routinely collated and provided to the Board, by writing to the Chief Executive and Clerk to the Senedd.
  - 2.4 The Board, through its secretariat, will share any relevant information with Commission officials, as appropriate, to enable it to prepare its budget for Determination related costs.