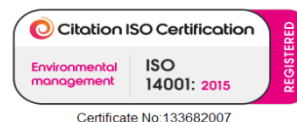
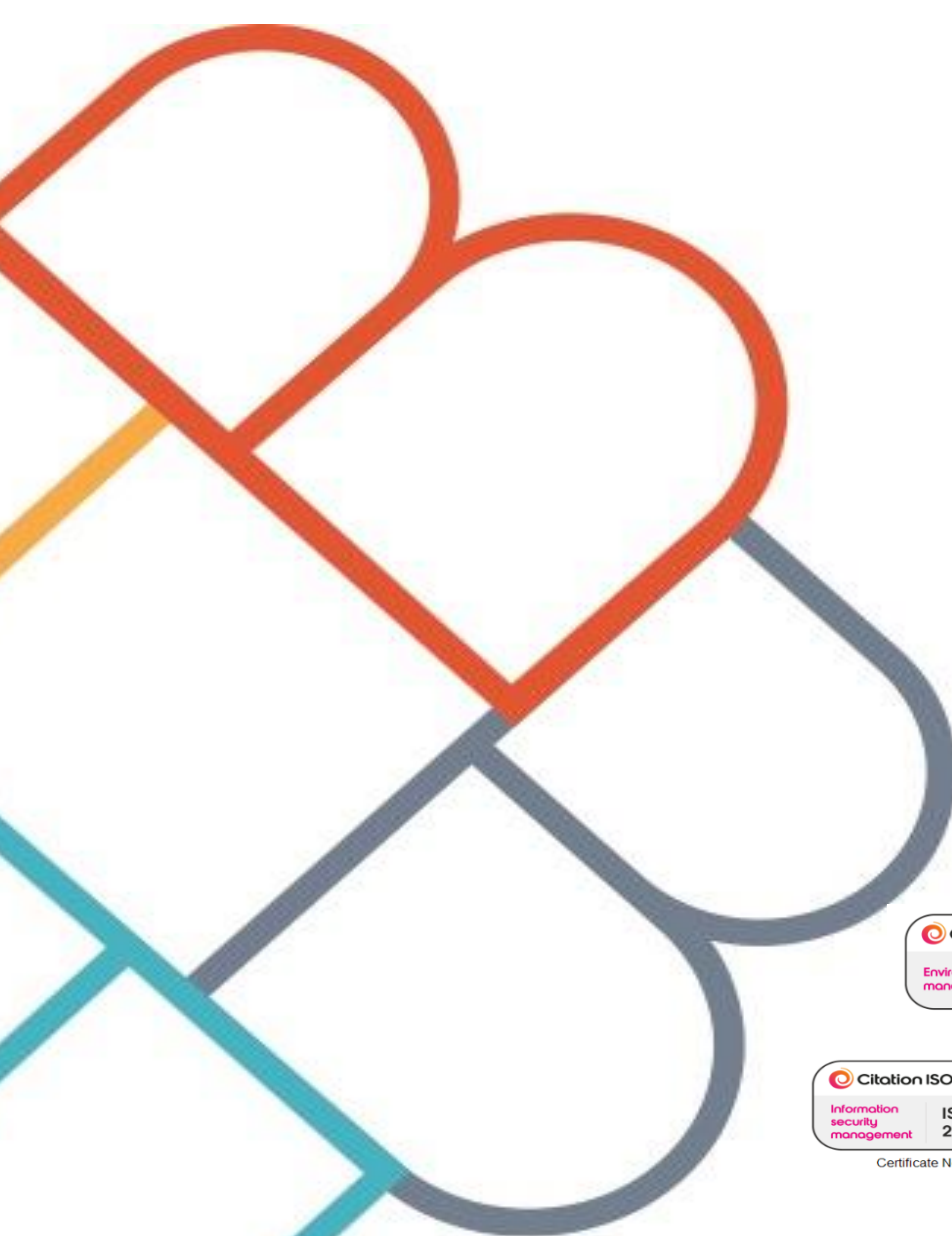


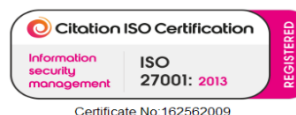
Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament

Pay and Grading Review of Members' Support Staff and Group Staff in the Senedd

March 2024



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE
We invest in people Standard



Beamans Ltd
PO Box 2380 | Watford
E: admin@beamans.co.uk
T: 01923 248322

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4 -13
--------------------------------	-------

SECTION 1

Introduction	14
Background & Objectives	14
Our Approach.....	14
Report Structure.....	15
Glossary	15
Acknowledgements	15

SECTION 2

The Pay & Grading Context	16
Introduction	16
Summary.....	17

SECTION 3

Job Evaluation & Grading	18
Introduction	18
The Pay & Grading Framework.	18
Job Evaluation	19
Job Evaluation Issues	19
Grading Issues	20
Types of Graded Structure	21
Job Family Approaches	22
Governance & Overlapping Job Weights.....	25
Review & Audit.....	27

SECTION 4

Pay Structure & Management	30
Introduction	30
Pay Ranges.....	30
Issues with Present Pay Management Arrangements	32
Internal vs. External Relativities.....	33
Job Families Framework	34
Pay Progression.....	35
Spot-rate Salaries.....	35
Competence based Pay Progression	36

Market-Rate Pay Surveys & Market Reference Points	39
Conclusions.....	40

SECTION 5

The Wider View	41
Introduction	41
Findings.	41
Members	41
Staff.....	42
Trade Union Representatives	43
Conclusions.....	43

SECTION 6

Options	47
Introduction	47
Option 1	48
Option 2.	52
Option 3	57
Conclusions.....	61

SECTION 7

Reward Principles	63
Introduction	63
Links to Reward Principles.	63

Glossary:	65 – 66
Annex A: Copy of Staff & Members' Surveys	67 – 73
Annex B: IPSA and SPCB Approaches	74 – 76

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This report was commissioned by the Independent Remuneration Board (the Board) of the Senedd in order to assist the Board in considering what changes should be made to existing pay and grading arrangements for Members of the Senedd Support Staff (MSS) and Group staff, and to inform the Determination for the Seventh Senedd (for implementation from May 2026).
2. The review revolved around three streams of work. The first was a programme of interviews with senior stakeholders, trade unions, MSS and Group staff, and Members. The second was a survey of Members, and separately and concurrently, a survey of all MSS and Group staff. The third, and principal stream, was a review of various documents and employment data relating to those arrangements together with research into the practices of external organisations in order to provide a wider perspective on existing approaches.

Survey Responses and Feedback

3. A summary of survey responses together with information gathered from our other engagement activities i.e. interviews and focus groups with both Members and staff, can be summarised as follows:
 - Banding (Grading) of Roles: responses from both Members and staff indicate there is a general lack of understanding and transparency around how roles are currently graded i.e. assigned to a particular salary band and paid. Staff also highlighted the fact that job descriptions linked to each pay-band did not adequately reflect the levels of responsibility and expectations of the role in practice, and that salary ranges for each band were out of step with the labour market.
 - Lack of flexibility within the Pay Framework: the majority of Members interviewed and surveyed highlighted what they perceived to be the inflexibility of the pay framework i.e. inability to increase the pace of pay progression, enhance the grading of roles, or recruit or retain roles within existing pay-band ranges. Staff also mirrored these comments particularly with regard to the pace (and length of time) of pay progression.
 - Funding (Staffing Expenditure Allowance): although outwith the terms of reference for this review, the level of the staffing expenditure allowance was the single issue that attracted the most comment from Members. Most Members regard the current level of allowance as inadequate to meet their business needs with staffing complements largely determined by the level of funding available to fund roles at particular levels. Staff also highlighted the point that assigning a role to a pay-band often owes more to the availability of funding than the relative job demands of the role.

Grading Framework – Job Families Framework

4. In an MSS and Group staff context, a pay-band is a de facto grade level with each successive grade level designed to represent an upward shift in accountability and relative complexity from the grade level below (Table A below). We could not identify a prima facie reason to consider a grading hierarchy with more than 5 grading levels. In our view, creating additional grades would lead to an overly hierarchical structure with more cliff-edges in terms of grade boundaries that would make it increasingly difficult to maintain equity and fairness.

Table A: 2023/24 Salary Ranges and Pay-points

Band (Grade)	Pay point 1	Pay point 2	Pay point 3	Pay point 4	Pay point 5
Chief of Staff	£41,846	£43,990	£46,247	£48,617	£51,113
Senior Advisor	£38,042	£39,990	£42,043	£44,196	£46,469
Band 1	£28,274	£30,805	£33,575	£36,598	£39,902
Band 2	£24,143	£26,556	£29,220	£32,152	£35,388
Band 3	£21,862	£23,555	£25,381	£27,353	£29,483

5. However, whilst we would support the continued use of a five-band grading hierarchy, the distinct and for the most part discrete areas of support activity undertaken by role-holders, in either a Member or Group support, context, lends itself to adopting a job family approach similar to the one adopted by Scottish and UK Parliaments. A job family is a cluster of jobs with common characteristics, being carried out at differing levels of skill and contribution. Our initial analysis shows that MSS and Group roles fall into one of a number of job families where the essential nature and purpose of the work is similar and for which it should be possible to articulate the different levels of contribution at each grade level:

- Communications
- Policy & Research
- Casework
- Business Management & Administration

As now, the Chief of Staff would represent the most senior level in the grading hierarchy with accountability for the over-arching management of all staff in their Group across all family levels.

6. That is not to say that each should be supported by distinct and separate job evaluation, grading and pay arrangements, each can share the same over-arching grade and pay structure. Adopting a JFF approach on the basis of the existing five-band grading hierarchy would simply mean that the classification framework outlined in para 13 would be compiled on a JFF basis such that each successive family and grade level clearly

describes the factors which differentiate one level of (grade) contribution from another in relation to each family.

7. A JFF framework will facilitate better and clearer distinctions between roles at each grade level which should in turn make judgements on the relative grade level of roles easier to determine. A JFF framework would also allow salary ranges for each job family to be differentiated in line with the external market for roles in that family.

Job Evaluation

8. The disposition of roles across each of the 5 existing pay-bands (grades) would indicate a degree of inconsistency in the grading of roles. The lack of any grade definitions or grading criteria means that roles are largely graded on value judgements as to the scale, scope and relative complexity of a role, and thus its grade level. And whilst it could be argued that Members Business Support (MBS) are supporting Members in making those grading judgements based on their working knowledge of the scale, scope and relative complexity of roles at each grade level, this is still nonetheless a value judgement unsupported by any objective criteria i.e. job evaluation process, against which the scale, scope and relative complexity of a role has been measured.
9. We would assert that this approach has led to grading inconsistencies; in job evaluation parlance, grade drift. Grade drift is a common feature of graded structures but unusually there is a degree of downwards drift. Thus, roles which should be graded at Band 2 have been graded at Band 3 level mainly due to the fact that there were insufficient funds available to grade posts at Band 2 level. In short, we would assert that in many instances the availability of funding is the principal driver of grading judgements when it should be the relative scale, scope and relative complexity of the role as measured through an objective job evaluation process.
10. Job titling is also both inconsistent and variable. There are approximately 118 different job titles across a job population of approximately 260 roles. We would assert that the proliferation of job titles is largely driven by a desire to reflect what are minor or granular variations in role content. We would also assert that this variability of definition has inhibited consistency of administration and created complexity around recruitment and pay determination with roles with identical job titles graded and paid at different levels.
11. The wider issue here is one of fairness and equity and ensuring that two role-holders essentially doing the same job albeit for two different employers are not being paid in different salary bands. In our view, this makes putting in place an objective job evaluation process and a mechanism to review and audit evaluation and grading outcomes essential.

12. We would therefore recommend developing a job evaluation and grading classification framework in which each grade level is defined in terms of its broad dimensions and job weight characteristics and the key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade level below - grade descriptors, ideally in a Job Families Framework (JFF) (see para 5). The grade descriptors should be underpinned by an appropriate and concise job evaluation factor plan which is aligned with the values and demands of MSS and Group roles. Given the relative size of the job population and the unique operating context, a factor plan linked to the following factors should suffice:
- Knowledge & Skills
 - Relationships & Influencing
 - Analysis & Decision Making
 - Planning and Managing Resources
 - Managing People
 - Impact
13. Taken together, the new grade definitions and new factor plan will form a classification framework which will allow new roles, existing roles and roles that change as the needs of Members and Groups evolve to be quickly and easily linked to the appropriate grade level by simply matching any new job description and the job demands of the role contained therein, against the grade and factor definitions. Moreover, as a published document, a new classification framework will bring greater transparency to the process of grading MSS and Group roles.

Pay Management Arrangements

Table B: Pay Structure Metrics 2023/2024

	Pay range width (as % of mid-point)	Mid-Point of Range	Pay Range Overlap (to Pay Range below)	% Differential between Increments (average)
Chief of Staff	90% - 110%	£46,480	11%	5%
Senior Advisor	90% - 110%	£42,255	5%	5%
Band 1	82% - 117%	£34,088	25%	9%
Band 2	81% - 118%	£29,765	22%	10%
Band 3	85% -110%	£25,673	n/a	7.75%

14. From a technical perspective there are three features of the present pay management arrangements we draw attention to:

- **Range Widths:** there is no consistency in the range widths established for each grade. The current range widths for the top two grades have the shortest range widths.
- **Range Overlap:** the overlap between ranges is larger than those you would typically expect to find. In the wider context of fairness and equity, eliminating over-time, the degree of overlap would help ensure that roles at higher grade levels are not paid substantially less than roles in the grade level below.
- **Pay Progression:** role-holders move up the incremental pay-range one point at a time on the anniversary of their commencement of employment until they reach the maximum salary for their band (subject to satisfactory performance). This incremental approach to pay progression is mirrored throughout the public sector in Wales and large parts of the public sector in the UK. It is also a feature of the pay structure for staff employed by the Senedd Commission and Welsh Government. However, it is not a feature of either the IPSA or Scottish Parliament's pay management arrangements for equivalent staff. In both these frameworks staff are appointed to a salary point within a salary range commensurate with the relative scope and complexity of the role but there is no incremental based progression within the range.

15. Going forward, and subject to wider affordability considerations and in line with any revised guidance the Board or Commission may wish to introduce, we would recommend, introducing:
- more consistent range-widths with reduced or no overlap (butt-ended ranges) with a reduced number of pay-points linked to a JFF framework (Option 2, page 12);
 - revised pay progression arrangements with the pace of progression a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability (and any revised Board or Commission guidance), that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
16. In reconfiguring the pay structure, we also draw attention to the fact that there is a high proportion of staff whose salaries have already reached the maximum salary point for their band. And whilst we cannot say whether the current salary maxima for each band represents a rate that could be regarded as a market informed reference point (or higher) for roles of similar job weight, in a conventional pay structure pay at 110% - 120% of the mid-point of a salary range for a grade is only typically achieved by exceptional performers.

Options for Change

17. Our report sets out three options for reforming present approaches to the pay and grading arrangements for MSS and Group staff. These options could be implemented sequentially over a period of time. Alternatively each could be implemented as a stand-alone option.
18. Option 1, (page 11), is essentially, a modified version of the existing framework with balanced pay ranges which do not overlap (butt-ended ranges), linked to shorter periods of incremental progression subject to satisfactory performance.
19. Option 2, (page 12), introduces the concept of differentiating roles according to job families. This option also seeks to introduce differentiated pay ranges (butt-ended ranges) for each job family which would need to be established through a market-rate pay survey. As now, pay progression for each family would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance although the pace of pay progression would be a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability and agreement by MBS that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
20. Option 3, (page 13) introduces the additional concept of competence based pay-progression to the job families framework outlined in Option 2. Whilst this would mark the end of existing incremental based progression arrangements based solely on satisfactory performance, it also opens up the option of faster based progression based on the acquisition of skills and competencies.

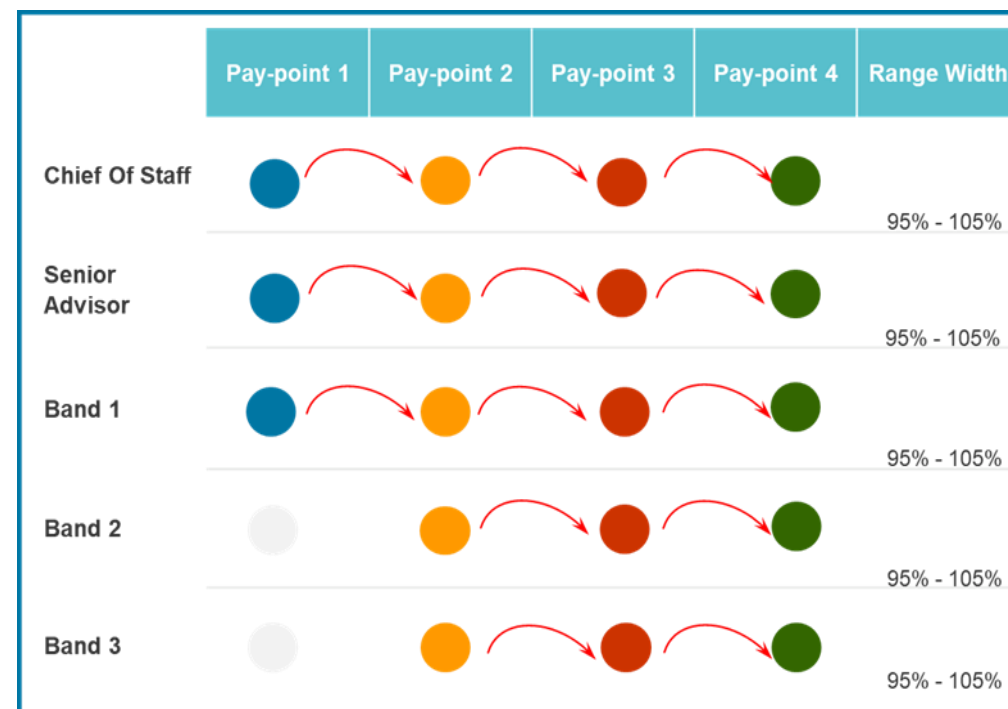
21. It may also be the case that the Board may wish to consider alternative options linked, for example, to spot-rates. However, in considering any alternative options there are core elements of the existing framework that will, in our view, need to be revised regardless of the approach that the Board may choose to adopt. These can be summarised as follows:

- The development of a job evaluation and grading classification framework in which each grade level is defined in terms of its broad dimensions and job weight characteristics and the key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade level below.
- An appropriate mechanism to audit evaluation and grading outcomes in the wider interests of fairness and equity, to ensure that two role-holders essentially doing the same job albeit for two different employers are not being paid in different salary bands.
- The update of job descriptions. More generic descriptors which detail the difference between roles at each successive grade level and summarise the key accountabilities of core roles but do not list all the tasks and activities that individuals need to fulfil their roles. In short, clear and consistent definition of roles linked to clear and consistent job titles.
- More consistent (salary) range-widths with reduced (no more than 5%), or no overlap and a reduced number of pay-points.
- A mechanism to progress individuals within salary ranges outwith the annual incremental system.

Option 1: Shortened pay-ranges – no overlap, balanced range widths

Option 1: Features








- A market-reference point for each pay-band would need to be determined and 95% to 105% salary ranges for each pay-band established from that point. Actual ranges would need to be determined by market-referencing and subject to overall affordability. Ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap.
- The number of points per salary range have also been reduced so staff will progress to the pay maxima for their salary range in a shorter period of time. Pay progression would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance. However, the pace of progression could be a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability and agreement by MBS that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
- Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter at these levels.
- Each band or grade would be underpinned by a grade descriptor that describe the characteristics of the work carried out at each grade level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise factor plan.



Option 2: Job Family Framework linked to shortened pay-ranges for each Job Family

Option 2: Features

- Salary ranges would reflect market-rated reference ranges for each job family. As with Option 1, ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap.
- The number of pay-points per job family level would be reduced so staff will progress to the pay maxima for their job family salary range in a shorter period of time. Pay progression would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance. However, the pace of progression could be a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability and agreement by MBS that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
- Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter.

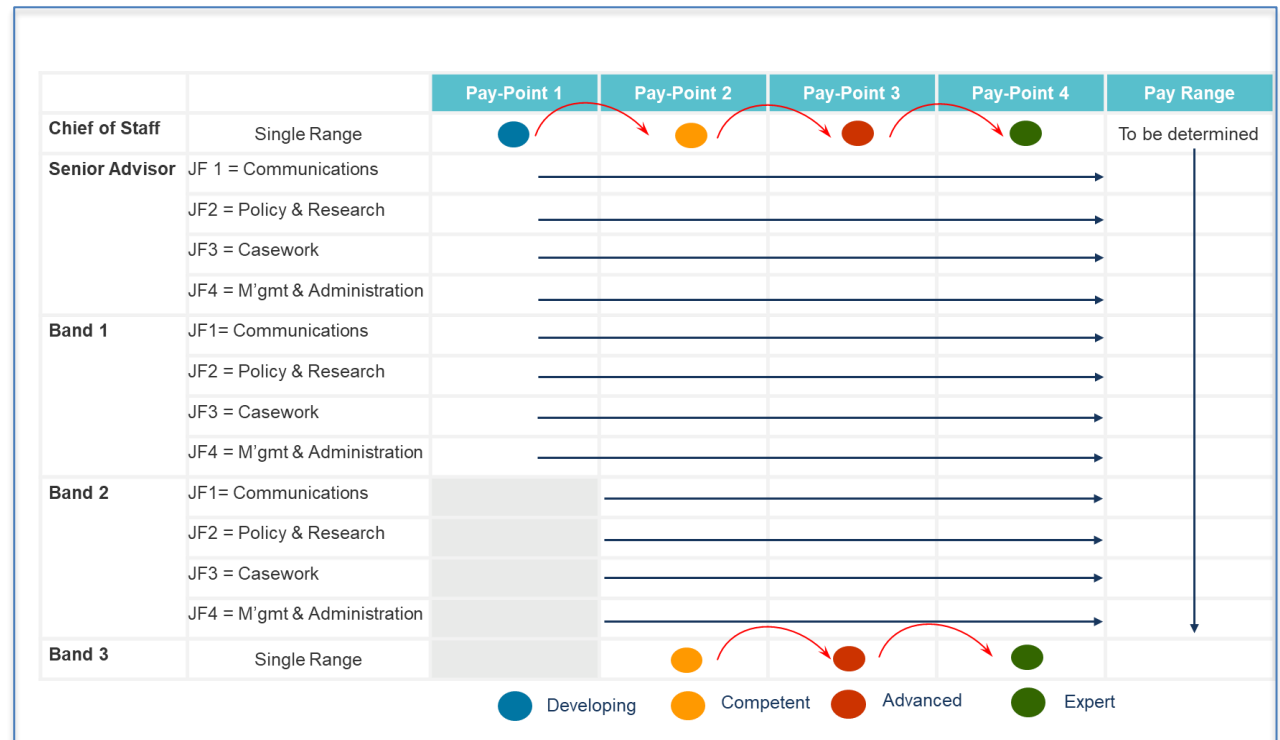
		Pay-Point 1	Pay-Point 2	Pay-Point 3	Pay-Point 4	Pay Range
Chief of Staff	Single Range					To be determined
Senior Advisor	JF 1 = Communications					
	JF2 = Policy & Research					
	JF3 = Casework					
	JF4 = M'gmt & Administration					
Band 1	JF1= Communications					
	JF2 = Policy & Research					
	JF3 = Casework					
	JF4 = M'gmt & Administration					
Band 2	JF1= Communications					
	JF2 = Policy & Research					
	JF3 = Casework					
	JF4 = M'gmt & Administration					
Band 3	JF1= Communications					
	JF2 = Policy & Research					
	JF3 = Casework					
	JF4 = M'gmt & Administration					
Band 3	Single Range					

- Each job family level would be underpinned by a job family grade descriptor that describes the characteristics of the work carried out at each job family level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated job family level and the job family level below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise factor plan for each job family.

Option 3: Job Family Framework linked to Competence Based Progression Points

Option 3: Features

- As with Option 2 each band would be segmented according to job family levels. Each job family level would represent a specified range of job weight underpinned by a level descriptor which sets out the key job demands characteristic of that job (weight) family level (see over).
- Salary ranges would reflect market-rated reference ranges for each job family. As with Options 1 & 2 pay ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap. However, progression through the salary range would be linked to the development of skills and competence. Role-holders would move to the next pay-point once they have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to operate competently at what would be a higher level for the job family level encompassing a broader range of tasks and activities.
- The pace of progression, although guided by a timeline indicating the typical period of work experience a role-holder would require to achieve the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point, would be a matter of judgment for the employer. This would be subject to both progression guidance and available funding.
- Staff would still typically be recruited to the Developing pay-point for their grade but with flexibility to recruit to the Competent pay-point depending on previous experience. Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter. Each job family level would be underpinned by a job family grade descriptor that describes the characteristics of the work carried out at each job family level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated job family level and the job family level below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise factor plan for each job family.



1. Introduction

Background & Objectives

- 1.1 This report was commissioned by the Independent Remuneration Board (the Board) of the Senedd in order to assist the Board in considering what changes should be made to existing pay and grading arrangements for Members of the Senedd Support Staff (MSS) and Group Staff, and to inform the Determination for the Seventh Senedd (for implementation from May 2026).
- 1.2 Within this remit the Board wished the review to consider the extent to which the current pay and grading framework is appropriate and:
- provides fair pay for Senedd MSS & Group Staff;
 - takes into account the roles and responsibilities of MSS and Group Staff in the context of similar roles in UK Parliaments, the Senedd Commission and suitable public and private sector comparators;
 - considers the skills required and range of roles that may be required to support Senedd Members and Political Groups in the Seventh Senedd, given changes in ways of working and the possible reform of the Senedd;
 - encourages and supports diversity amongst Senedd MSS and Group Staff;
 - enables Members to recruit and retain staff with the necessary experience, knowledge and skills; and
 - considers opportunities to simplify the current framework in order to develop a simpler Determination, providing an appropriate balance between achieving value for money and flexibility for Members.

Our Approach

- 1.3 The review revolved around three streams of work. The first was a programme of interviews with senior stakeholders, trade unions, MSS and Group staff, and Members. As part of that programme, we also undertook a number of employee focus groups with MSS and Group staff (see section 5). The second was a survey of Members, and separately and concurrently, a survey of MSS and Group staff. The aim of these two surveys was to gain staff and employer insights into the current arrangements and more importantly, the type and degree of change that each considered desirable. The findings of these surveys are discussed in more detail in section 5.
- 1.4 The third, and principal stream, comprised an analysis of current pay and grading arrangements. This included a review of various documents and employment data relating to those arrangements together with research into the practices of external organisations in order to provide a wider perspective on existing approaches.

Report Structure

- 1.5 We have structured our report around the following sections:
- The pay and grading context – section 2.
 - Approach to **job evaluation** and linked to this, approaches to **grading – section 3.**
 - Approach to **pay and pay management** – setting base salary levels and pay-ranges for grades or bands, pay management arrangements including starting pay on appointment and pay progression rules including links, if any, to contribution – (contribution related progression) – **section 4.**
 - **The views** of Members, staff and stakeholders – **section 5**
- 1.6 As it is intended that this report will identify possible areas for action (options), with additional, more detailed work to be undertaken to test, scope and implement those options should the Board be minded to do so, we have naturally focused our attention on what we believe should be the key areas of focus for the Board in improving the pay and grading structure for the longer term. In doing so, we have sought to provide options for change aligned with each core element of the pay and grading framework – **section 6.**

Glossary

- 1.7 For ease of reference a glossary of terms used in this report is included on page 65.

Acknowledgements

- 1.8 We are grateful for the co-operation and contributions we received from all the Members, staff and stakeholders including Trade Union representatives we spoke to during the course of the review. Particular thanks to Mike Redhouse, the Board member and lead for reward matters, for his helpful insights and commentary on existing approaches to reward.
- 1.9 Finally, we would like to thank Daniel Hurford, Natasha Davies and Ruth Hatton for their support in managing and co-ordinating all the logistical and administrative arrangements for the review.

2. The Pay & Grading Context

Introduction

- 2.1 The first point we must acknowledge is that the pay and grading arrangements of MSS and Group staff is a complex one. They have an unusual employment status; they are not public servants in the way that a civil servant is, and they are not employed by the Senedd Commission. Members are responsible for managing their own offices and employing their own staff directly. Thus, MSS are employed by individual Members who are responsible for the recruitment and selection of staff albeit under standardised conditions.
- 2.2 In the case of Group staff their funding comes in the form of Support for Political Parties. This funding is provided to all parties, according to a formula set out in the Determination. In this instance, the party leader is the employer, although as with staff of individual members, staff are employed under standardised conditions.
- 2.3 However, Members do not have complete freedom. The governance structure overseeing Members' and Group staffing provision is set by a statutory independent body, (the Board), created in 2010, that sets the framework within which Members and Groups employ their staff. The IRB has established pay (salary) ranges and standardised contracts, and sets certain employment requirements in order for Members to access the funding to employ staff and related expenses.
- 2.4 The provisions for Members (and Groups) and the framework under which they can claim for staff are set out in a very detailed document: the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances. The Determination goes through a revision before each new Senedd but is also subject to an annual review where recommendations for changes are made.
- 2.5 Day-to-day administration of the Determination is carried out by the Members Business Support (MBS) team who provide a range of advice and support for Members and Groups, including bilingual template job and person specifications for standard job types. Advice to Members and Groups on staffing is also offered through MBS, based on best practice, which Members can request if they wish but, in most cases, as independent employers, are not obliged to follow.
- 2.6 In 2023/2024 each Member was entitled to claim up to £121,759 to cover staff salaries. The sum is calculated on the basis of Members employing three members of staff at the highest pay point (pay point 5) for the three most senior bands (Senior Advisor, Band 1 and Band 2). The pay ranges for staff in each band are set out in Table 1, page 18.

- 2.7 Members are free to decide the mix of support staff in their office, in terms of numbers and salary bands, as long as the total cost remains within their overall allowance. There is no set list of roles or job titles that members must choose from. Rather, they can choose any role or job title they want. In December 2023 there were 118 different job titles in use. Figure 1, pages 28 & 29, highlights the various job titles in use across each pay-band.
- 2.8 New staff are appointed into one of four salary bands (the Chief of Staff is a stand-alone fifth band) and are normally paid at the minimum point of the pay range for their band (see Table 1, page 18). However, a higher starting salary for new staff may be determined by the employing Member or Political Party Leader subject to demonstrating the justification to MBS whose advice on this issue must be followed. Subject to satisfactory performance, individual staff will move up the pay scale one increment at a time on the anniversary of the commencement of their employment, until they reach the maximum of the pay range for their pay band.
- 2.9 The pay ranges for each band are increased annually in line with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) estimate of gross median earnings for full-time employee jobs in Wales, subject to a 3% cap and the proviso that the sum cannot fall if the adjustment would be negative. For the financial year 2022–23 staff received an additional cost of living payment and in 2023–24 staff received two additional cost of living payments.

Summary

- 2.10 As presently designed the pay and grading framework aims to strike a balance between retaining the flexibility needed by Members and the Group Leaders (Group staff) who, as the legal employers of their staff, naturally want to make their own decisions about who to employ and what they do, whilst being mindful of the cost to the public purse. Against that, there is also a need to ensure consistency so that two role-holders essentially doing the same job albeit for two different employers are not being paid in different salary bands.
- 2.11 In the following section we look at each element of the framework and consider what, if any, improvements might be considered by the Board whilst maintaining the flexibility needed by Members and the political parties. However, in considering each element of the framework, it should be noted that it is not within the scope of this review process to consider changes to the amount each member is entitled to claim to cover staff salaries. Nor the amount available for funding support for political parties.

3. Job Evaluation and Grading

Introduction

- 3.1 There is no compunction or legal requirement for any organisation or employer to use any form of job evaluation. However, there is a need for all organisations and employers to demonstrate that differences in pay can be objectively justified. For small employers – and Members would by definition be considered to be micro employers i.e. less than 9 employees – differences in pay can usually be objectively justified simply by the way jobs are defined i.e. jobs can be compared with other jobs in order to decide whether their value or job weight is greater, lesser or the same.
- 3.2 In an MSS and Group staff context the operating circumstances are more nuanced. So, whilst Members, or in the case of Group staff the Group Leaders (although in practice the is likely to be the Chief of Staff for that party), are free to choose any job title they want, and are also free to appoint staff for the roles they feel they require at a salary they can afford (affordability), they do so within an overarching framework provided through the Determination and supported by MBS.

The Pay and Grading Framework

- 3.3 The framework in which MSS and Group support staff are graded and paid, is shown in Table 1 below. Although each level in the hierarchy are not referred to as grades it is a de facto grading structure. That is to say, roles which have been assessed as broadly similar in terms of their job weight have been grouped together in one of 5 bands or grades with each band level intended to represent an upward shift in the level of job weight associated with the role from those in band (grade) below.

Table 1: 2023/24 Salary Ranges and Pay-points

Band (Grade)	Pay point 1	Pay point 2	Pay point 3	Pay point 4	Pay point 5
Chief of Staff	£41,846	£43,990	£46,247	£48,617	£51,113
Senior Advisor	£38,042	£39,990	£42,043	£44,196	£46,469
Band 1	£28,274	£30,805	£33,575	£36,598	£39,902
Band 2	£24,143	£26,556	£29,220	£32,152	£35,388
Band 3	£21,862	£23,555	£25,381	£27,353	£29,483

Job Evaluation

- 3.4 For the framework to operate effectively the use and application of some form of job evaluation is a necessity. In this regard, being able to demonstrate to MSS and Group staff that their role has been fairly and objectively evaluated and placed in a band (grade) that reflects appropriately the job weight of their role is important.
- 3.5 In graded structures such as the one currently used to grade MSS and Group staff, job weight is usually measured through some form of job evaluation which aims to measure the relative complexity of a role against a set of common criteria or factors.
- 3.6 However, there is no formal job evaluation process in place to underpin the MSS and Group staff pay-band structure. The Commission have produced job descriptions for core roles which are deemed to be indicative of roles characteristic of each grade. However, these job descriptions date back in some instances to 2011. MBS provide support to Members and Groups in grading roles i.e. matching the job description of a new role against an existing job description for a role considered to be appropriately graded. However, the final decision on grading i.e. the band (grade) in which a role is placed, rests with the individual Member or Group.
- 3.7 This informal process of job evaluation is typically referred to as internal benchmarking. It simply means comparing the role under review i.e. a job description, with a job description for any internal role that is believed to be properly graded and paid (an internal benchmark) and placing the role under consideration into the same grade as the benchmark. However, the fact that the job descriptions used as internal benchmarks are so dated means the job evaluation process for all intents and purposes relies on the knowledge and experience of the MBS team to identify the correct grade level of the post notwithstanding the fact it is the individual Member or Group who make the final grading judgement.

Job Evaluation Issues

- 3.8 In reviewing the present job evaluation arrangements our first aim was to establish the extent to which they are fit for purpose i.e. how far they provide a clear, logical, fair and generally acceptable basis for developing and maintaining an equitable grade structure that fits the Senedd's context of operation.
- 3.9 In our view, the informal approach to job evaluation presently in operation needs to be replaced. In reaching that conclusion there are a number of issues we would highlight both by way of reference to the existing informal approach, but also by reference to how that approach could be enhanced without imposing unacceptable costs or administrative burdens.

- 3.10 Firstly, each grade level needs to be defined in terms of the broad job demands and dimensions of roles at each grade level and the thresholds between them. Currently, there is no over-arching grade descriptor that describes the broad dimensions and job weight characteristics of each pay-band. In short, definitions that describe the characteristics of the work carried out in the roles positioned in each grade. A typical grade descriptor together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade level below is shown on page 49.
- 3.11 Secondly, an appropriate and concise job evaluation factor plan which is aligned with the values and demands made on all jobs also needs to be developed. Given the relative size of the job population and the unique operating context, a factor plan linked to the following factors should suffice:
- Knowledge & Skills
 - Relationships & Influencing
 - Analysis & Decision Making
 - Planning and Managing Resources
 - Managing People
 - Impact
- 3.12 In job evaluation parlance these factors would form a job evaluation factor-plan with each factor being defined for each grade as illustrated in on page 50.
- 3.13 Taken together, the new grade definitions and new factor plan will form a classification framework which will allow new roles, existing roles and roles that change as the needs of Members and Groups evolve to be quickly and easily linked to the appropriate grade level by simply matching any new job description and the job demands of the role contained therein, against the grade and factor definitions. Moreover, as a published document, a new classification framework will bring greater transparency to the process of grading MSS and Group roles.

Grading Issues

- 3.14 In tandem with considering approaches to job evaluation it is also important to consider the design of the grade structure which the job evaluation process underpins.
- 3.15 At present, the grade structure is defined in relation to 5 grades as illustrated in Table 1 on page 18. Therefore, the first question which arises is whether a 5 band grading structure represents the right hierarchy to support the work of Members and the Groups? And linked to that question, what type of grade framework would be best suited to meet Members and Group needs now and in the future?
- 3.16 Fixing grade boundaries is one of the most critical aspects of grade structure design. It requires judgement – the process is not scientific and there is no right answer. Grade boundaries and thus the number of grades can be determined through a job evaluation process where a rank-order of evaluated roles is analysed to identify any significant gaps in the scores thus constituting grade boundaries.

- 3.17 Alternatively, the job evaluation process can be used to validate an *a priori* decision on the number and definition of grade levels into which jobs will be placed. In a Senedd context 5 grades or job weight levels have been identified each of which represents an upward shift in accountability and relative complexity from the grade level below. Although we have not carried out a full benchmark job evaluation of roles in that grading hierarchy we have not identified or been made aware of, any fundamental issue with the number of grades in the existing hierarchy. Whilst some contributors sought to argue that a grade structure predicated on five levels of job weight was not sufficiently granular to support the work of Members and the Groups, we could not identify a *prima facie* reason to consider a grading hierarchy with more than 5 grading levels. In our view, creating additional grades would lead to an overly hierarchical structure with more cliff-edges in terms of grade boundaries that would make it more difficult to maintain equity and fairness.
- 3.18 Instead, commentary on grade related issues from both Members and staff largely focused on whether there should be one over-arching framework for both MSS and group staff, whether the structure needed to be more nuanced to represent the distinct and discrete roles of MSS and Group staff and more transparent in terms of how roles are graded.

Types of Graded Structure

- 3.19 There are many types of graded structures which can be summarised as follows:
- Narrow-graded structure: which consist of a sequence of narrow grades could possibly be 10 or more. Typical structure found in local government.
 - Broad-graded structure: one which has fewer grades typically four to six, more common in the private sector.
 - Job family structures: which consist of a number of families (groups of jobs with similar characteristics) each of which is divided into levels. Whilst there is a common grade and pay structure across all families the levels (grades) for each family are described in terms of key responsibilities and job characteristics for that family. These also serve to define career progression routes for each family grouping.
- 3.20 There are, of course, other types of graded structure which we have not sought to identify as they are mainly variations on the main type of structures identified above i.e. variations on a theme. However, as we outlined in para 3.15, the question we need to consider in this context is what type of grade framework would be best suited to meet Members and Group needs now and in the future?

Job Family Approaches

- 3.21 Whilst we would support the continued use of a five-band grading hierarchy, the distinct and for the most part discrete areas of support activity undertaken by role-holders, in either a Member or Group support, context lends itself to adopting a job family approach similar to that adopted by the Scottish and UK Parliaments.
- 3.22 A job family is a cluster of jobs with common characteristics, being carried out at differing levels of skill and contribution. Our initial analysis shows that MSS and Group roles fall into one of a number of job families where the essential nature and purpose of the work is similar and for which it should be possible to articulate the different levels of contribution at each grade level:
- Communications
 - Policy & Research
 - Casework
 - Business Management & Administration
- 3.23 That is not to say that each should be supported by distinct and separate job evaluation, grading and pay arrangements, each can share the same over-arching grade and pay structure. Adopting a JFF approach on the basis of the existing five-band grading hierarchy would simply mean that the classification framework outlined in para 3.13 would be compiled on a JFF basis such that each successive family and grade level clearly describes the factors which differentiate one level of (grade) contribution from another in relation to each family. As now, the Chief of Staff would represent the most senior level in the grading hierarchy with accountability for the over-arching management of all staff in their Group across all family levels.
- 3.24 In our view, a JFF framework will facilitate better and clearer distinctions between roles at each grade level which should in turn make judgements on the relative grade level of roles easier to determine. It will also support the development of wider career pathways which should provide opportunities for progression. In this latter respect, whilst a JFF will not in and of itself, deliver the grade progression that many would wish for, a JFF will provide a better means of supporting progression objectives. A JFF framework would also allow salary ranges for each job family to be differentiated in line with the external market for roles in that family (see para 4.12 *et seq*).
- 3.25 Looking ahead, if the Board were minded to adopt such an approach this would involve work to identify families and defining levels of contribution for each family grouping. The number and type of families is, of course, a matter for debate and Board consideration. However, from our initial analysis a 4 family JFF model as set out in para 3.22 would be sufficient to cover all core functional areas of Members and Group support roles.

- 3.26 One of the principal objectives of adopting a job evaluation and grading approach of the type outlined, is to ensure that grading judgements are robust and defensible but do not take up too much time to administer. In responding to questions about the existing arrangements many respondents commented that the principal driver of grading judgements was more often than not, the amount of money available to fund salaries, rather than the scale, scope and relative complexity of the role.
- 3.27 The disposition of roles across each of the 4 bands as illustrated in the job population map in Figure 1, pages 28 & 29, indicates that there is potentially a degree of inconsistency in the grading of roles. We say potentially, as job titles are often misleading, and roles with the same job title may well have the job weight characteristics which are indicative of a higher or lower grade.
- 3.28 However, as part of the review process we did seek to evaluate a small number of roles with similar job titles to validate their grading in terms of the pay-band they had been allocated to. Table 2 overleaf highlights the outcome of that process.

Table 2: Job Evaluation of Selected Caseworker Roles

Role Title	Current Pay Band	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Office Manager/Senior Caseworker (2) Senior Researcher/Caseworker Caseworker/Policy 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The office structure will dictate to some extent the nature of the casework element of the role at this level. Some role-holders will 'triage' incoming cases and allocate to other caseworkers, if there are any. Where there are more junior caseworkers those interviewed stated that they will pick up the more complex cases and monitor progress on others. In other situations, the role holder is the only caseworker but has additional responsibilities relating to the joint nature of their role e.g. people and budget management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworker (x 2) 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 20-30% of casework is classed as straightforward with a clear solution or limited range of options to choose from. The remainder of cases are more complex and can cover a range of issues where the solution or course of action is not always obvious. A degree of factfinding and analysis is needed in order to determine the best approach to take. Between 85-95% of total casework load is dealt with independently without asking for guidance or support from the Member or a more senior team member.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworker (x 2) 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One caseworker cited around 75-80% of work being progressed without guidance from the Senior Adviser. The other gave the same percentages as stated above. There was no discernible difference between the Band 3 and Band 2 Caseworker responsibilities.

Governance and Overlapping Job Weights

3.29 In considering these outcomes there are a number of points we would draw attention to:

- As outlined in para 3.6, the lack of any grade definitions or grading criteria means that roles have largely been graded on value judgements as to the scale, scope and relative complexity of a role and thus its grade level. And whilst it could be argued that MBS are supporting Members in making those grading judgements based on their working knowledge of the scale, scope and relative complexity of roles at each grade level, this is still nonetheless a value judgement unsupported by any objective criteria i.e. job evaluation process, against which the scale, scope and relative complexity of a role has been measured.
- We would assert that some roles have clearly been graded inconsistently which has led to a degree of grade drift. We would also assert that the principal reason behind these grading inconsistencies is the level of funding available to fund posts at the correct grade level. Thus, roles which should be graded at Band 2 have been graded at Band 3 level because there were insufficient funds available to grade the post at Band 2 level. In short, we would assert that the availability of funding is the principal driver of grading judgements when it should be the relative scale, scope and relative complexity of the role as measured through an objective job evaluation process.
- Job titling is also both inconsistent and variable. There are approximately 118 different job titles across a job population of approximately 260 roles. We would assert that the proliferation of job titles is largely driven by a desire to reflect what are minor or granular variations in role content. We would also assert that this variability of definition has inhibited consistency of administration and created complexity around recruitment and pay determination with roles with identical job titles graded and paid at different levels.
- Job descriptions compiled as far back as 2011 do not provide a sound basis on which to grade roles in 2024 and to support the grading of roles for the 7th Senedd.

- 3.30 Going forward, it will be important to ensure that in grading roles judgements should only reflect the job demands of a role as measured through an objective job evaluation process, and not on the availability of funding. If a role's predominant level of job demand indicates, for example, that it should be graded at Band 2 level, it should not be graded at Band 3 level, simply because there are only funds available to fund a Band 3 post. There may, of course, be other options that might be considered in such circumstances including the use of part-time roles (graded appropriately) or adjusting the duties of the role in question.
- 3.31 In what are widely regarded as core principles to be observed when reaching a judgement on the grading of a role, going forward it will be important to ensure these principles are front and centre of the grading process:
- Always think of the role and not a particular person performing that role.
 - Take a balanced view - do not assess a role only in relation to its most complex or least complex activities.
 - Consider the job demands of the role against each of the factors i.e. job evaluation.
 - Assess the quality of the workload not the quantity.
 - Pay levels or status are not indicators of grade – grading should be based on job demands.
 - Job titles may be misleading or used differently in different parts of the organisation.

Review & Audit

- 3.32 Changes to the grade structure notwithstanding, the need to control grade drift – up or down – is the reason most organisations will put in place mechanisms to audit evaluation outcomes to ensure grading judgments remain soundly based. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also recommends that organisations carry out on-going monitoring and maintenance of their job evaluation approaches.
- 3.33 In a Senedd context, where Members and the political parties are the employers, the question arises as to whether such a mechanism is either essential or desirable and if so, how would it work in practice? Indeed, it could be argued that this is solely a matter for individual Members or the Group Leaders as the employers.
- 3.34 However, the wider issue here is one of fairness and equity and ensuring that two role-holders essentially doing the same job albeit for two different employers are not being paid in different salary bands. In our view, this makes putting in place an objective job evaluation framework linked to a mechanism to review and audit evaluation and grading outcomes essential.
- 3.35 If the Board agrees, then the necessary protocols and procedures that will apply to the on-going job evaluation and grading of roles will need to be determined. Again, these protocols and procedures would need to be proportionate. We would therefore envisage that these would be based on a new classification framework for the job evaluation and grading of roles being put in place, supported by a suite of job profiles (descriptions) which reflect the core job demands of roles at each grade level.
- 3.36 In this latter respect, the update of job descriptions which date back to 2011 is long overdue. As outlined in para 3.29 (last bullet point) any update will need to reflect more generic descriptors which detail the difference between roles at each successive grade level and summarise the key accountabilities of core roles but does not list all the tasks and activities that individuals need to fulfil their roles. In short, clear and consistent definition of roles linked to clear and consistent job titles.

Figure 1: Job Population Map

	Group Office Staff	Member Support Staff
Chief of Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief of Staff (2) 	
Senior Advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief of Staff (1) Communications (1) Policy and Research (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Advisor (24)
Band 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Assistant (1) Policy and Research (1) Senior Communications (4) Senior Parliamentary Assistant (1) Senior Researcher (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caseworker/Policy & Research (2) Caseworker/Constituency (1) Senior Caseworker (2) Senior Caseworker/Communications (1) Communications (1) Senior Communications (9) Communications/research (1) Press Officer (1) Community Engagement (2) Community Engagement/Research (2) Community Engagement/Research/Admin (1) Design (1) Office Manager (25) Office Manager /PA (2) Office Manager/Senior Caseworker (4) Office Manager/Communications (1) Office Manager/Research (1) Parliamentary Assistant (1) Senior Parliamentary Assistant (1) Personal Assistant (1) Policy & Research (1) Senior Researcher (6) Senior Researcher/Communications (1) Researcher/Communications (1) Senior Administrator (1)
Band 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications (5) Researcher (6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator (2) Caseworker (16) Caseworker/Administrator (3) Caseworker /Constituency (3) Caseworker/Communications (5)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caseworker Policy & Research (2) • Senior Caseworker (7) • Senior Caseworker/Communications (1) • Communications (11) • Communications/Research (2) • Senior Communications (2) • Community Engagement (7) • Community Engagement/Research/Admin (1) • Design (1) • Office Manager (5) • Office Manager/PA (1) • Office Manager/Senior Caseworker (1) • PA (1) • Parliamentary Assistant (1) • Press & Research (2) • Press Officer (2) • Researcher (5) • Researcher/Communications (3)
Band 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary Assistant (1) • Researcher (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator (11) • Caseworker (10) • Caseworker/Administrator (1) • Caseworker/Constituency (5) • Cleaner (1) • Communications (4) • Community Engagement (13) • Parliamentary Assistant (5) • Press Officer (1) • Researcher (4) • Researcher/Administrator (1) • Researcher/Communications (1)

NB: Job roles have been grouped by MBS to avoid potentially identification of individuals. As such the above does not include specific job titles as some are very specific to 1 or 2 individuals.

4. Pay Structure & Management

Introduction

- 4.1 A grade structure becomes a pay structure when pay ranges, scales or salary points are attached to each grade level. Table 3, overleaf, outlines the current salary points for each grade and Table 4 outlines the key metrics associated with each range. Subject to satisfactory performance, role-holders move up the incremental scale one point at a time on the anniversary of their commencement of employment until they reach the scale maximum for their band. Pay-points are revalorised each year in line with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) undertaken by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and capped at 3%. However, the Board also take into account the wider context when considering annual pay awards. As stated earlier, for the financial year 2022–23 staff received an additional cost of living payment and in 2023–24 staff received two additional cost of living payments.

Pay Ranges

- 4.2 In a graded structure once all jobs are placed within a grade the first reference point to establish is the range of pay that should be attached to each grade (assuming a spot-rate salary model is not introduced (see para 4.18)). This is usually done through a market-rate pay survey (see para 4.25) which aims to provide information on market-rates for comparable jobs in similar organisations for each grade. A market-reference point is then established for each grade which usually becomes the mid-point of the pay range for the grade and is typically regarded as the competitive rate for a fully competent role-holder in that grade.
- 4.3 A pay range is then determined around the reference point. A conventional arrangement is to allow 20% on either side of the reference point; thus, if the reference point is 100% the range would be from 80% to 120%. The width of a range can, however, vary in accordance with policy on progression and the number of grades – the fewer the grades the wider the ranges. However, at the lower end of the grade range the range width is often narrower to reflect the fact that a role-holder at lower levels in the grading hierarchy would be expected to be fully competent in the role in a shorter period of time.
- 4.4 Having established the width of the ranges there is a need to establish to what extent if any, ranges should overlap. There are two schools of thought on this issue, the first being that ranges should be ‘butt-ended’ with no overlap, the second being that an experienced role-holder at the top end of a range may be making a greater contribution than an inexperienced role-holder at the lower-end of the range above. However, large overlaps of more than 10% can create equal pay problems where, for example, a role-holder in the higher grade is being paid less than a role-holder in the lower grade even though their role has been evaluated at a higher job weight (grade) level.

Table 3: Pay Structure Ranges 2023/24

Band	Pay point 1	Pay point 2	Pay point 3	Pay point 4	Pay point 5
Chief of Staff	£41,846	£43,990	£46,247	£48,617	£51,113
Senior Advisor	£38,042	£39,990	£42,043	£44,196	£46,469
Band 1	£28,274	£30,805	£33,575	£36,598	£39,902
Band 2	£24,143	£26,556	£29,220	£32,152	£35,388
Band 3	£21,862	£23,555	£25,381	£27,353	£29,483

Table 4: Pay Structure Metrics 2023/2024

	Pay range width (as % of mid-point)	Mid-Point of Range	Pay Range Overlap (to Pay Range below)	% Differential between Increments (average)
Chief of Staff	90% - 110%	£46,480	11%	5%
Senior Advisor	90% - 110%	£42,255	5%	5%
Band 1	82% - 117%	£34,088	25%	9%
Band 2	81% - 118%	£29,765	22%	10%
Band 3	85% -110%	£25,673	n/a	7.75%

Issues with Present Pay Management Arrangements

4.5 From a technical perspective there are a number of issues in relation to the present pay management arrangements that we would draw attention to:

- Range Widths: there is no consistency in the range widths established for each grade. And whilst range widths do not have to be symmetrical, they should be consistent. Range widths tend to be wider at higher grade levels as the scope, scale and relative complexity of roles is greater at these levels. It is also the case that range widths at lower grade levels tend to be narrower as time periods to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter. Yet, the current range widths for the top two grades have the shortest range widths.
- Mid-Points: conventionally the mid-point in a pay range is the point at which an individual role-holder is deemed to have reached a fully competent level of performance. Often referred to as the 'rate-for-the-job' or market reference point, the expectation is that role-all holders will, as a minimum, reach that point. Pay beyond the mid-point, or rate-for-the job, is usually reserved to those role-holders who can demonstrate levels of performance and competence beyond that which would be regarded as the norm (market reference point) for the role.
- However, in an incremental based pay-structure where progression is largely based on time served, subject to satisfactory levels of performance being achieved, the top of the salary range for the band becomes the de facto rate-for-the-job. We cannot say with certainty whether the present scale maximum for each band represents the market reference point for each grade. This could only be established through a pay survey (see para 4.25).
- Range Overlap: as can be seen from the metrics in Table 4, the overlap between ranges is larger than those you would typically expect to find. And whilst there are arguments for overlapping ranges butt-ended ranges that do not overlap (see para 4.4) provide a much easier way to manage pay relativities. More importantly, and in the wider context of fairness and equity, eliminating over-time, the degree of overlap would help ensure that roles at higher grade levels are not paid substantially less than roles in the grade level below.
- Pay-point differentials: the differentials in terms of pay-points are significant. Most incremental based structures feature steps between 2.5% and 5%. Our working assumption is that the percentage increases in pay-points at Bands 2 & 3 are greater (9% and 10% respectively) because the range widths are greater. However, this does mean if each pay-point is revalorised by say, 3% each year, the annual percentage pay rise for all staff who have not reached the salary scale maxima for their band would be between 8% and 13% per annum. Staff who reach the top of their salary range for their band will add between 22% per cent and 46% per cent to their starting salary, assuming they start at pay-point 1.

Internal Vs. External Relativities

- 4.6 From a technical perspective there is one more significant element of the present arrangements that we would draw attention to. Graded structures – and the pay ranges that are linked to each grade – such as the one currently in use for MSS and Group staff are based on the principle that all roles evaluated at the same grade level are paid within the same salary range. In effect, the grade and pay structure reflects an internal alignment of roles based on job weight (internal relativities).
- 4.7 However, in order to attach pay to an internally aligned structure you have to consider the external pay market – the process of assessing rates of pay by reference to market rates. In short, what similar organisations pay for comparable jobs (external relativities). The issue here is that the external market is rarely homogenous. For example, what comparable research roles, policy roles, managerial roles or administrative roles get paid, might be quite different even though the relative job weight of these roles may have been assessed as falling within the same grade. In some instances, those differences may be quite marked depending on the nature of the role and the sector in which they are employed – public sector, third sector, private sector etc.
- 4.8 In pay management terms this presents a dilemma: do you settle on a market-rate reference point that represents the broad spectrum of roles at each grade level? A one size fits all pay range which of necessity has to even out pay across a range of different roles in each grade? The risk here is that this approach may pose recruitment and retention difficulties for those roles whose skill sets carry a market premium. Even if an adjustment is made this could still mean some roles are overpaid and some roles are underpaid.
- 4.9 Alternatively, do you:
- sub-divide the pay-range to recognise that some roles – but not all – need to be paid at a higher level in the pay-range to support recruitment or retention – split ranges?
 - introduce a system of allowances e.g. market rate supplements, or as they are increasingly referred to in the public sector, pivotal role allowances, to recognise that the pay ranges for some roles might need to be exceeded to support recruitment and retention.
- 4.10 In the context of this commentary, we should acknowledge that many Members we spoke to during the course of the review cited challenges with recruitment and retention particularly with regard to what could be regarded as specialist roles – communication, research and policy roles. In considering this question we are not in a position to say how far, if at all, roles at any particular level are out of kilter with comparable roles in similar organisations as we have not sought to undertake a market-rate pay survey.

- 4.11 It also has to be acknowledged that setting pay ranges is as much an art as a science and in reality, a combination of both. It is also the case that in setting market related ranges a more holistic view of what attracts and retains staff has to be taken. It short, market informed can and does means more than salary. In our view, the issue here links to the 'one-size-fits all' approach to pay management and more importantly, how this approach can be refined to provide a more balanced approach to pay management and the management of internal and external relativities.

Job Families Framework

- 4.12 An alternative approach to dealing with external pay relativities between differing groups of staff would be to adopt a market related JFF as outlined in para 3.22. For each job family a market reference point – which may or may not be the same for each family – is established for each grade level for each family. That market-reference point may serve as either a spot-rate for that particular job family level, or alternatively form the basis on which a pay-range for that job family level can be established.
- 4.13 In many respects, this type of JFF model is similar to that adopted by the Scottish Parliament (see Annex B). Roles are linked to one of 4 job families with a spot rate for each role being established within a broad-band salary range. The broad-band pay ranges for each family differ based on a market-rate assessment of what similar organisations pay for comparable roles. The ranges are reviewed each year and a judgement taken as to whether and by how much, the ranges should be revalorised. In determining the appropriate individual spot-rate for a role, account will be taken of rates already established for similar roles, or in the case of a new roles, an assessment based on the relative scope, scale and complexity of the role in question.
- 4.14 IPSA also vary pay between what is, in practice, 3 job families – Administrative (2 levels of job weight); Executive (3 levels of job weight); and Research (2 levels of job weight). Pay is also varied according to geographic location with a London pay range and an outer London pay range (see Annex B).
- 4.15 In our view, a JFF framework as described in para 3.22 *et seq*, would provide a more equitable framework for managing both pay and grading relativities for MSS and Group roles. Such a framework would also support wider approaches in terms of pay progression as well as offering greater transparency and a means to establish to career paths.

Pay Progression

- 4.16 As outlined in para 2.8, role-holders move up the incremental pay-range one point at a time on the anniversary of their commencement of employment until they reach the maximum salary for their band (subject to satisfactory performance). This incremental approach to pay progression is mirrored throughout the public sector in Wales and large parts of the public sector in the UK. It is also a feature of the pay structure for staff employed by the Senedd Commission and Welsh Government. However, it is not a feature of either the IPSA or Scottish Parliament's pay management arrangements for equivalent staff. In both these frameworks staff are appointed to a salary point within a salary range commensurate with the relative scope and complexity of the role but there is no incremental based progression within the range. Pay is revalorised annually in line with ASHE.
- 4.17 In our view, a move away from an incremental based progression model would be difficult to achieve unless a decision was taken to move to a spot-rate salary framework similar to that used by IPSA and the Scottish Parliament. Moreover, in the wider context of the Welsh public sector where incremental based pay frameworks are the norm, it would be counter-cultural to adopt a model of pay progression that did not feature an incremental based approach. Again, in our view, this is more than simply a question of whether or not to adopt a spot-rate salary model or a progression based pay range. It is more a question as to whether one or other of these approaches (or variations of) would be most suited to the Senedd's context of operation and longer term, support delivery of a simpler Determination.

Spot-rate Salaries

- 4.18 Spot-rates are often used for senior management roles where the salary level is designed to attract, retain, and motivate a specific person. In these circumstances an appropriate base salary level is negotiated with the individual with future pay increases largely linked to performance based criteria. A base salary level may be revalorised if it is deemed to have fallen outside of its market-reference point. Bearing in mind that actual pay levels may vary between 10% -15% either side of the market-reference point, a role whose salary falls within 10% - 15% would typically be deemed to be appropriately rewarded.
- 4.19 Spot-rates are also often used at lower levels in the grading hierarchy where there is a need for a simple 'rate-for-the job' as role-holders can typically become proficient in the role in a short period of time. When applied, spot rate salaries are easy to administer and transparent with a need simply to revalorise the spot-rate each year to keep pace with market rates and inflation. The downside with a single spot-rate is there no formal structure for pay progression unless a higher spot rate is introduced.

Competence Based Pay Progression

4.20 In considering this pay progression issue organisations across the UK in both the private and public sectors have been looking at more holistic models of pay progression which seek to link pay progression to contribution.

4.21 Often referred to as competence based or capability enhanced pay progression, these models seek to define pay progression around three or four core levels of contribution at each grade or band level typically referred to as Developing, Competent and Advanced, or Developing, Competent, Advanced and Expert. The model on page 57 illustrates how such a model would translate in the context of an MSS and Group pay and grading framework.

4.22 Features of the model include:

- Role-holders are typically recruited to the Developing pay-point for their grade with flexibility to recruit to the Competent pay-point depending on previous experience.
- Criteria are set which illustrate the level of skills, competence and performance expected at each pay-point including the thresholds between them. A timeline indicating the typical period of work experience a role-holder would require to achieve the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point is also established.
- Role-holders would move to the next pay-point once they have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to operate competently at what would be a higher level for the grade or band which would typically mean undertaking a broader range of tasks and activities. Whilst the speed of progression would be supported by an indicative timeline i.e. how long it would typically take an individual role-holder to develop the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point, the decision to progress the role-holder to the next pay-point would rest with the employer subject to meeting defined progression criteria and available funding.

4.23 In many respects, the model is not dissimilar to the pay progression arrangements that are currently in place. Although in practice most roles would be appointed to the lowest point in the salary range staff could be appointed to a higher pay point subject to MBS approval (as is the case at present). However, in this model, the pace of progression, although guided by a timeline indicating the typical period of work experience a role-holder would require to achieve the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point, would be a matter of judgement for the employer.

- 4.24 If the Board was minded to move to a model of competence based pay progression there would need to be a better articulation of the knowledge, skills, experience and performance expectations linked to each pay-point. An exercise to establish market informed related pay-points for each grade would also need to be undertaken (see para 4.28).
- 4.25 In considering this, and indeed other options, for reforming the pay structure we would also draw attention to the fact that there is a high proportion of staff whose salaries have already reached the maximum salary point for their band - Table 5, overleaf. And whilst we cannot say whether the current salary maxima for each band represents a rate that could be regarded as a market informed reference point (or higher) for roles of similar job weight, in most conventional pay structures pay at 110% - 120% of the mid-point of a salary range for a grade (see para 4.5) is only typically achieved by exceptional performers.
- 4.26 The fact that such a high proportion of staff have already reached the top of the salary range for their grade also means that any salary point established which is less than that of the current salary point for their grade would effectively mean they are subject to 'mark-time' pay. Mark time pay means that a role-holder's basic salary will be frozen until the new, lower salary catches up through annually awarded pay rises or other increases.
- 4.27 In this regard, it will be necessary to review the impact of any decisions on revisions to pay-points to ensure that any changes do not adversely disadvantage role-holders who have reached the maximum salary point for their grade.

Table 5: Number of Staff at each Pay-point

Band	Pay Point 1	Pay Point 2	Pay Point 3	Pay Point 4	Pay Point 5	Total Number of Staff
Chief of Staff & Senior Advisor	1	2	3	4	19	29
<i>Pay-point as % of the Salary Range</i>	82%	86%	90%	95%	100%	
Band 1	4	3	12	4	54	77
<i>Pay-point as % of the Salary Range</i>	71%	77%	84%	92%	100%	
Band 2	11	19	13	10	46	99
<i>Pay-point as % of the Salary Range</i>	68%	75%	83%	91%	100%	
Band 3	22	10	7	4	16	59
<i>Pay-point as % of the Salary Range</i>	74%	80%	86%	93%	100%	
TOTAL NUMBER OF STAFF AT EACH PAY POINT	38	34	35	22	135	264
	14%	13%	13%	8%	52%	

Market-Rate Pay Surveys & Market Reference Points

- 4.28 As part of this review process we have not sought to undertake a market rate pay survey. In order to undertake a survey of this type we need to be able to match roles based not only on their tasks and responsibilities but on the relative size, scale and complexity of those tasks and responsibilities. This is normally measured through some form of job evaluation which provides a more accurate measure of relative job weight. Most of the large market rate pay surveys undertaken by the larger management consultancies – Korn Ferry Hay, Mercer, Willis Towers Watson, Xpert HR etc. are based on an assessment of the relative scale, scope and complexity of a role as measured through their individual job evaluation methodologies which in turn are translated into level descriptors to enable organisations to match their roles to an appropriate level and thus form a basis for comparison with roles at a similar level in other organisations.
- 4.29 In order for valid job weight comparisons to be made we would firstly need to determine an indicative job evaluation score or level for MSS and Group benchmark roles. We cannot do this from the job descriptions supplied because they are largely silent on the relative scale and complexity of the task base of a role. They are also dated. Therefore, any attempt to benchmark roles to facilitate salary comparisons would simply be on the basis of educated guesswork. This is not a criticism of the job descriptions compiled for MSS and Group roles. It is often the case that job descriptions which employers compile to support recruitment processes do not contain sufficient job information to support a job evaluation process which is why in undertaking salary surveys job capsules are often produced to increase the refinement of the job matching process.
- 4.30 There will, of course, be a requirement to undertake such a survey at some point particularly if the Board are minded to adopt a JFF approach to pay management where it will be necessary to establish salary ranges for each job family. However, it is important to remember that market related reference points does not mean higher pay.
- 4.31 In this latter respect, it is important to note that survey data is not intended to reflect the exact salary that individuals should be paid but rather data that may provide a basis for the Board to set its pay levels. There is rarely just one 'right' market pay analogue or source with which to draw on. Different surveys will produce different results depending on the sample of organisations covered, the quality of matching and the timing of the survey. There is also no single correct rate of pay for any job because different organisations have different policies on what they need to pay and what they can afford to pay.

Conclusions

- 4.32 Finally, we also recognise that any changes to the current pay management arrangements must be proportionate and recognise the Senedd's unique operating context and the needs of Members and political parties who are the employers. Looked at through this lens, a simple 5 band, graded structure linked to incremental pay progression has a lot of merit.
- 4.33 Against that, it also has to be recognised that there is a need to refine approaches to managing both grade and pay relativities to provide a more balanced approach to pay management, and the management of internal and external relativities. In section 6 we look at the merits of potential options for refining those arrangements.

5. The Wider View

Introduction

- 5.1 As part of the review process we sought to gain both Member and staff insights on the current approaches to grading and pay through a number of one-to-one interviews, staff focus groups and individual surveys of both Members and staff.
- 5.2 In total, we undertook 12 individual interviews with Members and 13 individual interviews with members of staff. Separate interviews with Trade Union representatives were also undertaken (see para 5.15). We also undertook 6 staff focus groups attended by 26 role-holders.
- 5.3 Two individual questionnaire surveys of Members and staff were also undertaken. A copy of each individual questionnaire survey is shown at Annex A. In terms of survey response levels, 25% of Members (15 individuals) and 33% of staff (86 individuals) responded to each survey.

Members

- 5.4 Banding (Grading) of Roles: responses indicate that there is a general lack of understanding and transparency around how roles are currently graded i.e. assigned to a particular salary band. The majority of survey responses from Members rated 'job responsibilities' as the 'should be' most important factor in determining the pay-band (grade) of a role with available budget being the least important factor. Yet, paradoxically, it would appear that in practice many grading judgements owe more to the amount of funding available to fund roles than the job demands of the role itself.
- 5.5 Lack of flexibility within the Pay Framework: almost all Members interviewed highlighted what they perceived to be the inflexibility of the pay framework. This was also borne out in survey responses, with all but one Member indicating that the pay framework needed to be changed either moderately or completely.
- 5.6 Incremental Pay Progression: the incremental nature of the pay structure was viewed positively albeit with some reservations about the width of the salary ranges. However, the inability to increase the pace of pay progression outside of the annual incremental cycle was highlighted as too restrictive. In this regard, the ability to be able to reward staff outwith the annual incremental cycle was viewed by many as desirable.
- 5.7 A separate but linked point in relation to progression was also highlighted. There was a common viewpoint that there should be in place a simpler mechanism for re-grading staff who take on additional duties and responsibilities that potentially move the role to a higher grade.
- 5.8 Funding (Staffing Expenditure Allowance): although outwith the terms of reference for this review, the level of the staffing expenditure allowance was the single issue that

attracted the most comment. Most Members regard the current level of allowance as inadequate to meet their business needs with staffing complements largely determined by the level of funding available to fund roles at particular levels. This was often compounded by the fact that the pay ranges for roles at Senior Advisor and Band 1 level were considered insufficient to recruit and retain staff with the appropriate level of skills and experience in specialist areas such as research and communications.

Staff

- 5.9 Banding (Grading) of Roles: more than 70% of staff surveyed were unsure or did not know how the (band) grade of their role had been determined. Staff interviews and focus groups also revealed a similar level of understanding. Although staff ranked the level of job responsibilities as being the most important factor in determining the pay-band (grade) of a role, with availability of budget as the least important factor, this factor i.e. availability of budget, was seen by staff as the factor that actually determined their pay-band.
- 5.10 Linked to these responses was a general theme that pay-bands and job descriptions did not adequately reflect the levels of responsibility and expectations of the role in practice, and that salary ranges for each band were out of step with the labour market.
- 5.11 Incremental Pay Progression: staff comments and responses to this issue largely mirror those of Members with the scope for salary progression other than via the annual increment process highlighted as a principal concern. The option to progress pay at a faster pace in order to recognise increased skills, knowledge and contribution was also seen as desirable.
- 5.12 Staff were more positive around annual progression being linked either fully or partially to performance (57%), although concerns were raised around how such a process could be managed fairly and consistently across a wide range of individual employers.
- 5.13 Broader Development Opportunities: a number of staff expressed dissatisfaction with the opportunities for career development and advancement available to them.

Trade Union Representatives

- 5.14 As part of the review process, we took the opportunity to engage with the recognised Trade Unions. Perhaps unsurprisingly a number of the issues raised mirror those of Members and staff. Concerns were raised about the lack of consistency in the way the pay framework was interpreted and applied. It was also suggested that in reviewing approaches, securing consistency of application i.e. ensuring roles are

graded at the appropriate level, should be a key requirement as should achieving pay and grading parity with Commission staff.

- 5.15 Moreover, given the employment horizon for many staff is unlikely to span a great many years, it was felt that the relatively short-term duration of that horizon should be recognised through higher salary levels linked to a faster pace of pay progression.
- 5.16 Regular meetings with the Board were acknowledged as being helpful. However, a principal issue raised in this context was the need to secure greater input into the decisions made by the Board that impact on staff. On this issue, it was suggested that some form of staff representation on the Board should be considered. It was also suggested that a process of collective bargaining in relation to pay and associated conditions of service should be considered.

Conclusions

- 5.17 It perhaps goes without saying that Members or the political parties cannot be a 'cradle to grave' employer in the same way as the civil service, the NHS or any other large employer. That said, there are role-holders who have worked, and continue to work, for Members (or a number of Members) or the political parties, over an extended period of time. Table 6, below, clearly illustrates the longevity of service of many staff.

Table 6: Average Length of Service all Staff

	Chief of Staff	Senior Advisors	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3
Average length of service	13 years 4 months	6 years	6 years 6 Months	4 years 6 Months	2 years 9 Months

- 5.18 However, the employment horizon for many staff is unlikely to span a great many years. This circumstance is not unique to Senedd Members or the political parties, the same is also true of many employers. It is for this reason that employers recognise that an individual joining them whilst not having an expectation of remaining in their employ for many years to come, will look to be given interesting and challenging work, and opportunities to develop their competence, skills and acumen, which will allow them to move to roles at a higher level elsewhere.

- 5.19 In return, role-holders will also expect that the horizon for rewarding their contribution will reflect both the time it takes to make that contribution and the natural growth in that level of contribution in the time spent with that employer. Of course, there will naturally come a point when the competency and acumen of the role-holder exceeds what is actually required for the role which for all intents and purposes is a cue for that role-holder to move to a role at the next level (should the opportunity exist) or seek opportunities elsewhere.
- 5.20 We raise this point specifically because many of the views expressed by staff in relation to the current pay and grading arrangements were linked to an expectation of progression either in terms of pay through the salary range (pay-band) or through a promotion to a higher band. Admittedly, for staff employed by the political parties the opportunities for progression may well be greater but for staff employed by individual Members their scope will naturally be limited and more often than not, subject to an individual member of the team leaving.
- 5.21 In short, no reward policy or linked pay and grading framework can offer opportunities for pay or grade based progression beyond what the organisation or in this instance what individual Members require.
- 5.22 The other principal theme emerging from our engagement process is the lack of understanding on the process for managing the pay and grading process. As things currently stand, the Determination on Members' Pay and Allowances (section 7, Staffing Support for Members) sets out what the policy is for staff allowances – in effect the policy framework. However, there is a need to go beyond the publication of a policy framework and publish a comprehensive document which sets out the processes and procedures for determining the grading and pay of staff. In this regard, it was noticeable that a number of Members we spoke to were unaware that a higher starting salary i.e. beyond the lowest pay-point for the band, could be agreed subject to advice provided by MBS (para 7.2.1 of the Determination) which states that Members must follow advice provided by MBS on starting salary criteria.
- 5.23 In highlighting this point we note that MBS have published a document *Support Staff Recruitment Guidance* which is quite explicit on the issue of starting salaries. The issue here is whether the guidance goes far enough particularly with regard to approaches to pay and grading.

Table 7: Summary of Survey and Interview/Focus Group Insights

Area of Focus	MSS & Group	Members
Grading/Banding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading structure considered inconsistent. Lack of understanding in what it means to be in each grade, in some cases staff could not say which pay band their role is in. Over 30% of staff did not believe that their role was correctly graded, a further 30% were unsure. "Transparency around pay but not around the grading". "Grades should take account of the responsibilities of a role, not the budget available". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of inconsistencies in some areas Overlap in accountabilities. Job descriptions not keeping pace with changes in the remit of the Senedd and increasing use of Social Media. "Staffing arrangements have to fit around the structure, rather than the structure enabling a good staffing setup". Banding "irrelevant, as everything driven by budget available".
Pay Ranges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong feeling that these are not reflective of the skills and experience needed at higher levels. Feeling that the ranges are lagging behind the labour market generally and particularly so for Communications & Research roles. Various views on organisations for salary comparison. MPs staff, Senedd Commission, wider Civil Service, Public and Third sectors all mentioned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need pay to reflect the skills and experience being brought to a role. Incremental steps too large, makes the budget less flexible. Not sufficient to attract skilled and experienced people at the higher levels or those with specialist skills (Research and Communications particularly) Overlaps in ranges cause problems, new higher graded staff being paid less than staff they manage.
Pay Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual increments are seen as a positive for those who are relatively new in post. No opportunity for progression if at the top of the pay band. Some views that progression should not be automatic but linked to appraisal outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Need the ability to review and adjust job descriptions and pay points". Lack of flexibility to move staff up pay points other than through annual increment process.

Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feeling that pay and grading are outside of the employer's control "everything determined by the Rem Board or Commission". Some uncertainty over Members ability to manage performance and how this would be monitored. Some staff previously employed under the IPSA system felt it was a better approach to employment but was less flexible in other areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Hard to feel like the employer when so restricted by others in terms of pay-bands". Need good HR advice on appraisals and performance management - "making it up as I go along". Variable views of MBS – "they are brilliant, very helpful" to "have to fight for everything" Members who have worked with the IPSA system like the flexibility around job descriptions and pay but feel other areas e.g. expenses. are more restrictive.
Career Progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities for learning and development are good but these are not reflected by opportunities for career progression. Reliance on staff turnover or restructures to offer progression. "My career depends on someone else leaving". "Nowhere to go other than leave". 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Losing staff because of lack of progression, although recognising that as a small employer those opportunities are limited. The ability to recognise increased skills & responsibility and promote staff is "a convoluted process" of internal restructure which means talented staff walk out of the door".
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed views on performance being a driver for progression but slightly more in favour of this approach than Members. Uncertainty around differences in approach by members and the possible inequity should a scheme be introduced. Some frustration that performance cannot be recognised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mixed views on performance being a driver for progression, somewhat along political lines. Time involved in performance management is an issue. Would like the flexibility to reward staff who have developed skills or taken on additional responsibilities. Would prefer the ability to pay overtime or offer other incentives when staff go "above and beyond".

6. Options





















Introduction

- 6.1 In previous sections we have provided commentary on each individual element of the current grading and pay framework. In this section we look at options from a holistic perspective that is to say, what would a potentially new grading and pay framework for MSS and Group staff look like. As with any models which are made up of a number of component parts it may well be possible to 'mix and match' those component parts to produce further options. For example, a different approach to job evaluation linked to an incremental pay-spine, or a contribution based pay-progression model linked to a greater number of job weight (grade) levels.
- 6.2 As these alternative models are essentially variations on a theme, we have not sought to highlight them as separate, individual options but recognise that there may well be alternative approaches that the Board would prefer to see developed and implemented.

Option 1: Shortened pay-ranges – no overlap, balanced range widths

Option 1: Features

- A market-reference point for each pay-band would need to be determined and 95% to 105% salary ranges for each pay-band established from that point. Pay ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap. Actual ranges would need to be determined by market-referencing and subject to overall affordability.
- The number of points per salary range have also been reduced so staff will progress to the pay maxima for their salary range in a shorter period of time. Pay progression would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance. However, the pace of progression could be a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability and agreement by MBS that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
- Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter at these levels.

	Pay-point 1	Pay-point 2	Pay-point 3	Pay-point 4	Range Width
Chief Of Staff					95% - 105%
Senior Advisor					95% - 105%
Band 1					95% - 105%
Band 2					95% - 105%
Band 3					95% - 105%

- Each band or grade would be underpinned by a grade descriptor that describe the characteristics of the work carried out at each grade level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise factor plan. An illustrative grade descriptor and linked factor definition is shown overleaf.

Option 1: Example Grade Descriptor

- Provide more complex operational or administrative support. Role-holders at this level work with limited supervision demonstrating a systematic, disciplined and analytical approach. They will assume responsibility for discrete areas of work. Tasks will require the role-holder to use judgment based on previous experience and precedent to provide the best outcomes. Skills and experience required to perform the role well will be gained through formal on the job training and potentially technical/vocational qualification.

Key differences between roles at this level and the level below

- Roles at this level provide more complex operational or administrative support. Role-holders at this level work with limited supervision demonstrating a systematic, disciplined and analytical approach. They will assume responsibility for discrete areas of work. Tasks will require the role-holder to use judgment based on previous experience and precedent to provide the best outcomes. Skills and experience required to perform the role well will be gained through formal on the job training and potentially technical/vocational qualifications.

Option 1: Example Job Evaluation Factor Matrix

Knowledge & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles at this level will require an understanding of the work area and a general understanding of the work of the organisation. Effective performance would normally be achieved after a short period (3 – 6 months) of in-house on-the-job training. Interpersonal, oral and written communication skills and a sound working knowledge of particular software applications are also key requirements. For some roles secretarial skills will also be required
Relationships & Influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts at this level will typically focus on providing clear information and guidance in relation to established procedures and processes, for example, responding to enquiries from institutions judging when to pass on or involve others; preparation of documentation following standard formats or templates; running straightforward reports; drafting standard letters and correspondence. Contacts are also likely to involve arranging internal and external meetings and events; arranging visits including itineraries
Analysis & Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst there will be a requirement to exercise some initiative and judgement the approach to most aspects of the work will be well established. Problems which do arise will tend to be fairly prescribed. Typical examples of problems encountered include: responding to routine calls for information; drafting standard letters and correspondence; responding to changing work priorities i.e. adjusting work schedules to accommodate more urgent requests for support.
Planning & Managing Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some planning and organisation of workload is required to maintain workflows and to ensure assigned tasks are prioritised and completed on time
Managing People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will share knowledge and expertise with new staff members. Will work effectively as part of a team, supporting their peers and senior staff. Contributes to team discussions and helps identify issues and potential solutions.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Main impact will primarily be on operational efficiency, for example, responding appropriately to enquirers; prompt dispatch and delivery of papers; all relevant scheduling and arrangements for reviews made; all administrative arrangements made for particular meetings/events etc. In short, decisions or actions are only likely to impact on the effectiveness of own work area and possibly on the work of others or the perceptions of internal colleagues or external contacts.

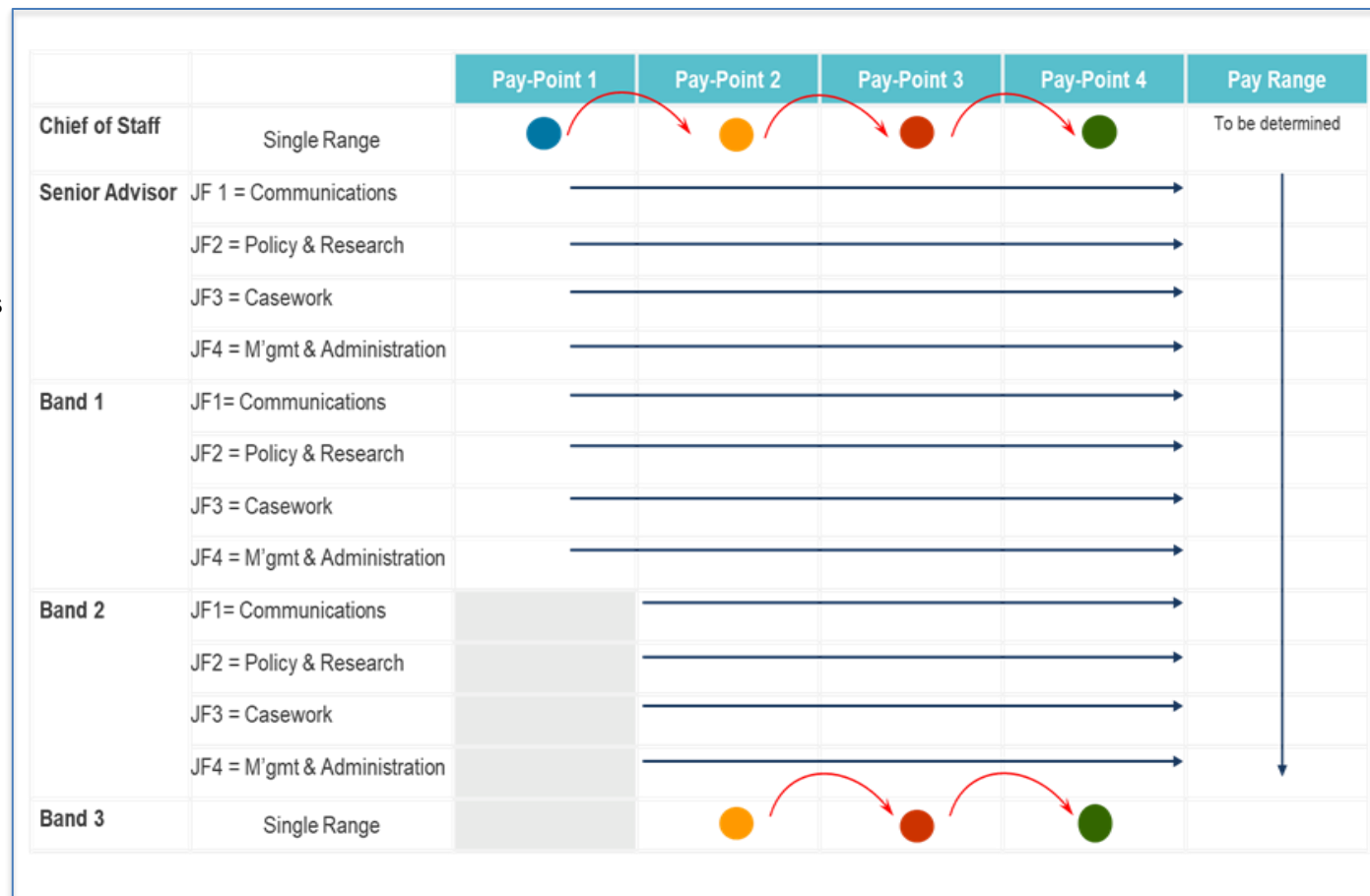
Option 1: Shortened pay-ranges – no overlap, balanced range widths

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Familiar and very straightforward and proportionate framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Affordability.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorter more balanced pay-ranges offers quicker pay progression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How far each band reflects market-reference points is unknown
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better grade descriptors (see example, overleaf) and articulation of grade thresholds offers more transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay-progression is still based on annual increments (which may also be viewed as an advantage).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on pay fairness for lowest paid staff e.g. Bands 2 & 3 – less increments, faster progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocols to support increased pace of progression i.e. not just on an annual incremental basis, would need to be established (which may also be viewed as an advantage)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No obvious mechanism for reflecting market rates for hard to recruit (or retain) roles.

Option 2: Job Family Framework linked to shortened pay-ranges for each Job Family

Option 2: Features

- Salary ranges would reflect market-rated reference ranges for each job family. As with Option 1 pay ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap.
- The number of pay-points per job family level would be reduced so staff will progress to the pay maxima for their job family salary range in a shorter period of time. Pay progression would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance. However, the pace of progression could be a matter of judgement for the employer subject to affordability and agreement by MBS that individual role-holders have demonstrated the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point.
- Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter.
- Each job family level would be underpinned by a job family grade descriptor that describes the characteristics of the work carried out at each job family level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated job family level and the job family level below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise factor plan for each job family. An illustrative grade descriptor and linked factor definition is shown overleaf.



Option 2 Job Families: Example Grade Descriptors

Corporate Enablers Family

- Roles at this level will typically manage discrete areas of operation or specialist service and is the first at which role-holders are required to exercise independent judgement in a truly qualitative or discretionary sense. Role-holders will be required to plan and progress work activities within prescribed limits.
- Roles at this level will often contribute to higher level decision making and will contribute to annual plans for their area of operation or service. They will also be responsible for achieving specific objectives and targets with a far greater requirement to plan ahead to achieve results. Management responsibilities at this level will vary but may involve large groups in operational areas, although smaller teams in corporate support areas are also common.
- In some areas a detailed knowledge and understanding of a subject or functional area of activity, and the procedures and techniques in a particular specialism will be required

Policy & Implementation Family

- Roles at this level will typically be responsible the collection, organisation and analysis of information and the filtering of issues for senior staff. Investigating specific policy issues, preparing reports for more senior staff and highlighting issues for further investigation will figure prominently. In this latter respect a key feature of these roles is undertaking research and analysis in order to identify and obtain further information to support the policy development process and the translation of policy into workable and effective processes.
- Role-holders will frequently be called upon to provide advice to others across the organisation on policy and related issues, and to compile first drafts of reports, papers, and policy briefings (including implementation plans) for senior management consideration.
- Role-holders will also be expected to work independently without close supervision, taking all day-to-day operational decisions relating to their own work. Role-holders will also keep up-to-date with issues relating to the work area, and exercise judgement and discretion in dealing with work issues.

Job Families: Key Differences between roles at the Job Family level below (example)

Key Differences

- There is a step-change in responsibility levels. Roles at this level have an executive focus (as opposed to administrative) involving a wider range of tasks which require role-holders to exercise initiative in determining how work should be progressed. In this regard, these roles are typically required to deal with non-standard work situations more regularly than staff at lower grades and exercise greater judgement and discretion in carrying out work.

Key Differences

- At this level, there is a greater requirement to apply more judgement and creativity to identify the best approach or solution to a particular issue or situation. There is also a greater requirement to see the bigger picture and to judge how developments link to and align across the organisation.

Option 2 Job Families: Example Job Evaluation Factor Matrix

	Job Family 1 – Corporate Enablers	Job Family 2 – Policy Advice & Implementation
Knowledge & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles at this level will require a full understanding of the detail of the work area as well as a good understanding of its links to other work areas. Depending on the nature of the role, specialist or professional knowledge and experience may also be required. In certain areas role-holders will hold professional qualifications relevant to the role. Additionally, analytical skills together with good interpersonal and representational skills are key requirements for these roles. For most roles management skills will also be a requirement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles will require a working knowledge of the policy process. Roles will require the ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse, understand and draw robust conclusions from evidence. Synthesise and present information in a clear, effective manner. Generate insights and advice from a range of sources. Establish effective relationships with people in different roles and with varying perspectives. Work independently using initiative and some knowledge of project management.
Relationships & Influencing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role-holders may attend formal or informal meetings alone or in support of senior staff, externally and internally. They will be expected to contribute to discussions and if necessary, explain issues or defend suggested approaches. Providing advice and guidance where the issues are not clear-cut is a key requirement. In many instances some interpretation may be required, and advice given as a result of this. Some roles will have extensive contacts with customers, consultants and suppliers. These contacts will mainly involve developing relationships and negotiating on costs, requirements and timeframes. For communication roles stakeholder engagement will figure prominently including day-to-day engagement with the media and counterparts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role-holders will assist more senior staff by providing analytical support and analysis. This may involve putting forward first drafts of papers on specific policy issues and providing oral advice, briefings, presentations, or written reports. Interactions with organisations and others may involve validating and cross-checking data sets and establishing facts from indefinite or uncertain sources. Role-holders will represent the business area effectively in meetings and in interactions with external organisations.
Analysis & Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In dealing with problems role-holders will be expected to analyse various options, collect information (possibly from a number of different sources), and draw appropriate conclusions. Initiative and judgement will be needed to determine how best to tackle issues and problems. Some problems may involve novel issues which may require more in depth fact-finding and analysis. In many instances analysis will focus on the investigation of specific issues where the course of action is not immediately apparent. Often the focus will be on identifying and satisfying internal customer needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role-holders will be expected to use a range of analysis techniques or methods to collect and analyse information (possibly from a number of different sources), present it in an appropriate format and draw-out conclusions. Role-holders will be expected to identify gaps in information, conduct analyses to highlight and prioritise issues for further investigation and prepare reports to support decision making by more senior staff. Role-holders will need to exercise a degree of initiative and judgement to determine how best to tackle particular issues and problems.

	<p>which may include challenging proposed customer approaches which may not be the most appropriate means of achieving desired outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions will relate mainly to determining priorities and deciding how best to tackle particular issues. For example, the degree of fact-finding required; how information should be presented and what conclusions can be drawn. For roles with management responsibilities, individuals will decide on work allocation and monitor outputs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some policy issues and problems may raise new issues which may require a greater degree of fact-finding and analysis in order to identify appropriate approaches. Such issues may require role-holders to interact with internal and external stakeholders in order to identify risks and options. Because the provision of advice and guidance forms a key element for many of these roles there is often an additional requirement to explain, justify and defend particular courses of action or proposals put forward for consideration.
Planning & Managing Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those roles which are managerially orientated the emphasis will be on resource planning in the short/medium term; determining priorities; dealing with resource constraints; ensuring standards of service delivery are met; and dealing with conflicting work demands. Role-holders may also be called upon to resolve matters referred by junior staff or others seeking advice and guidance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining relative priorities maintaining standards of service delivery, or meeting conflicting work demands. Similarly, individuals may also be called upon to resolve matters referred by more junior staff or others seeking advice and guidance.
Managing People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management responsibilities will vary according to the nature of the role. Some roles may have responsibility for managing large numbers of staff across a number of work groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some roles will manage the work of administrative staff in terms of co-ordination of workflow or tasks and activities.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roles at this level will contribute directly to the achievement of objectives. Contributions to business development, marketing, service developments etc. will impact internally and externally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on the immediate work area. However, in a policy context impact may extend to a range of internal or external stakeholders on issues that may not be entirely routine or transactional. Because role-holders at this level tend to work more collaboratively with senior staff on policy developments, decisions, actions or recommendations may have a wider impact.

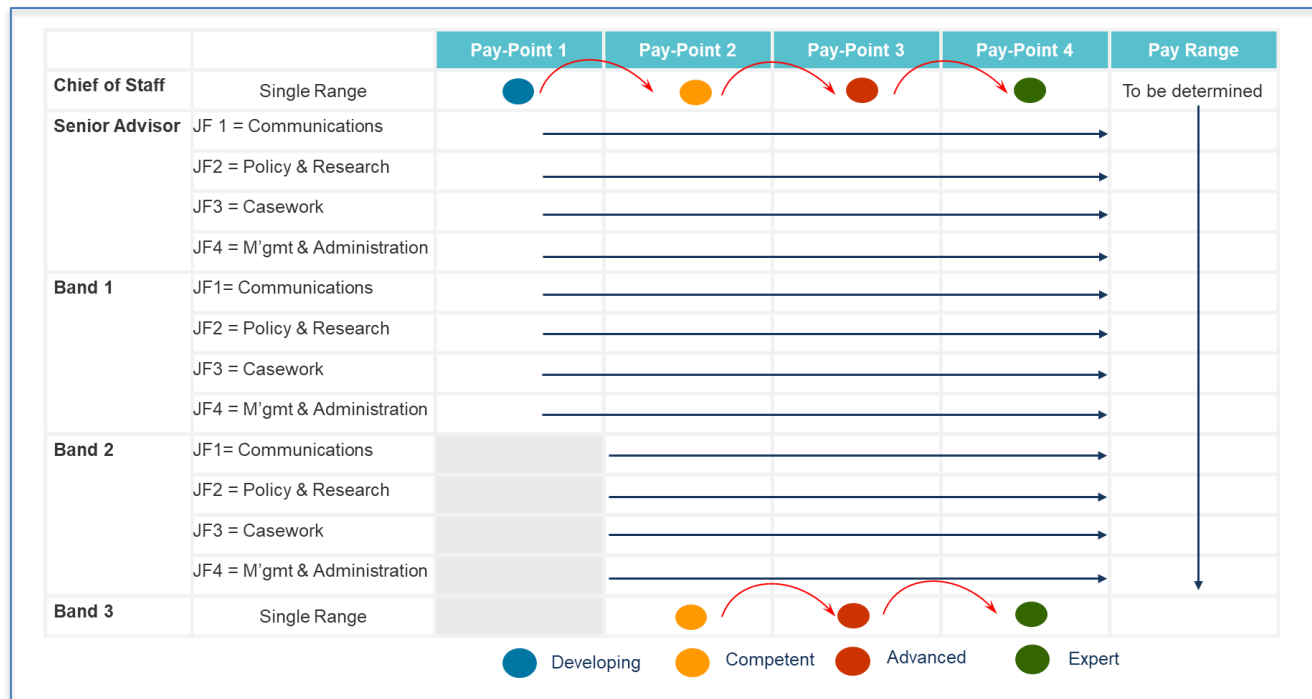
Option 2: Job Family Framework linked to shortened pay-ranges for each Job Family

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework better reflects the different type and level of contribution of roles in each job family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would mark a significant departure from the current 'one size fits all' grading and pay framework.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay ranges can be established which better reflect market reference points for different roles. More flexibility to vary pay for hard to recruit and retain roles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culturally different. Varying pay ranges for different job families potentially seen as divisive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better grade descriptors (see example, overleaf) and articulation of grade thresholds for each job family offers more transparency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Affordability. How far each salary range may need to vary for each job family is unknown.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better framework to support wider role development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay-progression is still based on annual increments (which may also be viewed as an advantage). Protocols as to which pay-point individuals are appointed to beyond the minimum pay-point for the range need to be established.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires work to define the JFF: Job families (how many); levels in each job family and thresholds between them; and salary levels for each job family and level

Option 3: Job Family Framework linked to Competence Based Progression Points

Option 3: Features

- As with Option 2 each band would be segmented according to job family levels. Each job family level would represent a specified range of job weight underpinned by a level descriptor which sets out the key job demands characteristic of that job (weight) family level (see page 53).
- Salary ranges would reflect market-rated reference ranges for each job family. As with Options 1 & 2 pay ranges would be butt-ended with no overlap. However, progression through the salary range would be linked to the development of skills and competence. Role-holders would move to the next pay-point once they have demonstrated that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to operate competently at what would be a higher level for the job family level encompassing a broader range of tasks and activities.
- The pace of progression, although guided by a timeline indicated the typical period of work experience a role-holder would require to achieve the knowledge, skills and experience to move to the next pay-point, would be a matter of judgment for the employer. This would be subject to both progression guidance and available funding.
- Staff would still typically be recruited to the Developing pay-point for their grade but with flexibility to recruit to the Competent pay-point depending on previous experience.
- Staff in Bands 2 & 3 have fewer pay-points to reflect the fact that the time period to reach a fully competent level of performance is shorter.



Option 3: Features (cont.)

- As with Option 2, each job family level would be underpinned by a job family grade descriptor that describes the characteristics of the work carried out at each job family level together with a definition of key differences between roles at the illustrated job family level and the job family level below. This would be linked to a more appropriate and concise definition of each factor for each job family.
- An illustrative grade descriptor and linked factor definition is as shown previously on pages 53 to 55.
- An Illustrative competence-based progression point matrix is shown below.

Example Progression Criteria

Executive Support:

Step 1 - Step 2

- Is able to take on a range of straightforward administrative tasks.
- Is able to respond to routine enquiries and know where to obtain information.
- Works effectively as part of the team.

Step 2 - Step 3

- Is able to take on a wider range of administrative and support tasks .
- Will undertake basic calculations and checks.
- Is proficient in Microsoft Office suite and other relevant software.
- Can use IT skills to maintain spreadsheets, compile PowerPoint presentations, etc.
- Undertakes basic research and information gathering.
- Is able to reply, in writing, to standard enquiries.
- Is able to take the initiative in developing procedures and taking on tasks.

Step 3 - Step 4

- Is able to undertake tasks requiring some discretion and procedural knowledge.
- May require technical expertise.
- Can complete more involved written work.
- Can complete tasks likely to involve identifying discrepancies and gaps in information, and reconciling data.
- Is able to deal effectively with internal and external customers in writing, face to face or by 'phone (for some roles).
- Is able to provide a full range of secretarial duties – managing diaries; prioritising post and e-mail; answering the phone and dealing with callers; and drafting and typing replies and acknowledgements, etc.
- Takes responsibility for a range of tasks and duties, and may supervise others

Option 3: Advantages/Disadvantages

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Option 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework better reflects the different type and level of contribution of roles in each job family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Radical departure from existing framework. Cultural shock. Could be viewed as too complicated and ambitious.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay ranges can be established which better reflect market reference points for different roles. More flexibility to vary pay for hard to recruit and retain roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will require work both to define the JFF (job families, levels and thresholds between them) and the competency framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better grade descriptors (see example, overleaf) and articulation of grade thresholds for each job family offers more transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More sophisticated model will require a higher degree of management skill (and will) and judgement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially a faster pace of progression with more ability to reflect the performance of an individual in role (retention) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To move from automatic progression to contribution based progression there needs to be a shift in the pay ranges (incentivised) which may not be affordable i.e. potential to earn more subject to appropriate levels of contribution
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progression linked to defined competence/capability 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework better reflects the different type and level of contribution of roles in each job family 	

Conclusions

- 6.4 We have set out three options for reforming present approaches to the pay and grading framework for MSS and Group staff. These options could be implemented sequentially over a period of time. Alternatively each could be implemented as a stand-alone option. Option 1 is a modified version of the existing framework with balanced pay ranges which do not overlap (butt-ended pay ranges), linked to shorter periods of incremental progression subject to satisfactory performance. The existing 5 grade, pay-band framework remains the same.
- 6.5 Option 2 introduces the concept of differentiating roles according to job families albeit within the existing 5 grade, pay-band framework. This option also seeks to introduce differentiated pay ranges for each job family which would need to be established through a market-rate pay survey. As now, pay progression for each family would remain incremental subject to satisfactory performance.
- 6.6 Option 3 introduces the concept of competence based pay-progression to the job families framework outlined in Option 2. Whilst this would mark the end of existing incremental based progression arrangements based solely on satisfactory performance, it also opens up the option of faster based progression based on the acquisition of skills and competencies.
- 6.7 The Board may also wish to consider alternative approaches linked, for example, to spot-rates. However, in considering any alternative approaches there are core elements of the existing framework that will, in our view, need to be revised regardless of the approach that the Board may choose to adopt. [In summary our recommendations](#) can be summarised as follows:
- A job evaluation and grading classification framework is developed in which each grade level is defined in terms of its broad dimensions and job weight characteristics and the key differences between roles at the illustrated grade and the grade level below (para 3.13) .
 - In the wider interests of fairness and equity an appropriate mechanism is developed to audit evaluation and grading outcomes to ensure that two role-holders essentially doing the same job albeit for two different employers are not being paid in different salary bands (para 3.34).
 - All job descriptions are reviewed and revised. More generic descriptors need to be developed which detail the difference between roles at each successive grade level and summarise the key accountabilities of core roles but do not list all the tasks and activities that individuals need to fulfil their roles. In short, clear and consistent definition of roles linked to clear and consistent job titles (para 3.35).

- The introduction of more consistent (salary) range-widths with reduced (no more than 5%), or preferably, no overlap with a reduced number of pay-points (para 4.5).
- Introduce a mechanism to progress individuals within salary ranges outwith the annual incremental system (para 4.20).

7. Reward Principles

Introduction

7.1 Most organisations in seeking to develop and implement a strategic and effective approach to reward, will seek to establish a reward strategy usually in the form of a number of key reward principles. In establishing those principles, the aim is to provide a clear basis for employee communication as well as a means of auditing the appropriateness of any proposed changes to pay and grading arrangements. Put simply, how far does the quantum of any proposed changes link to and support those reward principles.



















7.2 In a Senedd context this would be a tricky endeavour as there is no single employer. Moreover, trying to establish a set of principles across such a large group of linked but separate employers on which they all agreed would be no easy task. Yet, through the Determination and the work of the Board supported by MBS, there are what we would regard as some key reward principles which were embodied in the terms of reference for this review:

- provides fair pay for Senedd Member Support and Group Staff;
- takes into account the roles and responsibilities of Support and Group Staff in the context of similar roles in UK Parliaments, the Senedd Commission and suitable public and private sector comparators in the wider employment market in Wales;
- considers the skills required and range of roles that may be required to support Senedd Members and Political Groups in the Seventh Senedd, given changes in ways of working and the possible reform of the Senedd;
- encourages and supports diversity amongst Senedd Member Support and Group Staff;
- enables Members to recruit and retain staff with the necessary experience, knowledge and skills; and
- considers opportunities to simplify the current framework in order to develop a simpler Determination, providing an appropriate balance between achieving value for money and flexibility for Members.

Links to Reward Principles

7.3 The other reason for highlighting these principles is that in considering options for change it is often the case that organisations will consider how each option supports their reward principles. How far we consider each option matches the reward principles outlined in para 7.1 & 7.2 is shown overleaf.

Reward Principles – Option Alignment

Reward Principles	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides fair pay for Senedd Member Support and Group Staff 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options 2 & 3 more closely aligned to the Market.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes into account the roles and responsibilities of Support and Group Staff in the context of similar roles in UK Parliaments, the Senedd Commission and suitable public and private sector comparators in the wider employment market in Wales; 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. Options 2 & 3 are more closely aligned to the Market and would where necessary, recognise differences in external pay relativities. The extent that other UK parliaments are a relevant pay market comparator is moot.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers the skills required and range of roles that may be required to support Senedd Members and Political Groups in the Seventh Senedd, given changes in ways of working and the possible reform of the Senedd. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Options 2 & 3 are designed (JFF) to recognise the skill-sets of roles operating in different organisational or functional contexts.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages and supports diversity amongst Senedd Member Support and Group Staff 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In, and of themselves, no options would impact diversity. A JFF would create a more objective framework of levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enables Members to recruit and retain staff with the necessary experience, knowledge and skills. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As above. Options 2 & 3 are more closely aligned to the Market and would better support recruitment and retention for those with key skill-sets.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers opportunities to simplify the current framework in order to develop a simpler Determination, providing an appropriate balance between achieving value for money and flexibility for Members. 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1 provides a simpler model, transition to options 2 & 3 more complicated



Very aligned



Partially aligned



Marginally aligned

Glossary of Terms

Analytical job evaluation: A method of job evaluation which involves assessing the worth of a job by dividing it into factors. These are assumed to be present in the jobs to be evaluated.

Bespoke arrangements: A job evaluation scheme devised in-house for an organisation.

Classification Framework: Grade definitions and a factor plan which form a framework that allocates jobs to grades and allows new roles, existing roles and roles that change to be quickly and easily linked to the appropriate grade level by simply matching any new job description and the job demands of the role against the grade and factor definitions.

Competency based pay progression: A system that rewards the use rather than just the acquisition of knowledge, skills and experience.

Factors: A criterion for judging the value of a job in relation to one particular element or characteristic of the work involved, for example, skill, responsibility, complexity. The main elements or characteristics of jobs which can be defined and assessed.

Factor levels: A set of agreed criteria to allow each factor to be broken down into elements.

Factor plan: The combined number of factors against which jobs will be evaluated.

Grading: The boundary between one group of jobs and another where a difference in pay rate is applied following assignment of roles to that grade or band.

Job description: A factual written account of the purpose, major tasks and main activities carried out by a role-holder.

Job Families Framework: A grouping or classification of related jobs or roles within an organisation that groups jobs by the nature of the work, similar characteristics, skills, responsibilities and career paths.

Job weight: The value assigned to reflect selected characteristics of a job as measured through a job evaluation process.

Market median or Market rate: The value of the midpoint of comparator salaries in the relevant market for similarly weighted posts.

Median: The value of the midpoint in a series.

Non-analytical: A method of job evaluation which involves assessing a job as a whole without considering factors separately.

Pay progression: how an employee moves to higher pay within a salary band as distinct from salary rises linked to either inflation, cost of living, etc.

Pay ranges: Pay ranges, sometimes referred to as salary ranges or salary bands, are the spread of pay for role-holders at a given grade or level. Each range is usually defined by a midpoint (calculated based on market data), a minimum, and a maximum. A role-holder at the midpoint of their range has a range position of 50%.

Pay structure: a collection of grades, levels, or bands linking jobs within a hierarchy as a framework to implement reward strategies and policies.

Rank order: The hierarchical relationship of jobs to each other ranked by job weight.

Weighting: The process of differentiating between factors to reflect their importance relative to other factors.

Annex A: Copy of Staff & Members' Surveys

Staff Survey

Q1. How satisfied are you with your current salary?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
If dissatisfied/very dissatisfied, please outline why.

Q2 How satisfied are you with your salary when compared to similar roles in other organisations?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Which organisations do you consider when comparing your salary?

Q3. Do you feel that your role is graded at the correct level?

Yes
No
Not sure
If you responded no, please tell us why, including whether you have raised this as an issue with your employer.

Q4. Do you understand how the grade of your role has been determined?

Yes
No
Not sure
If yes, please tell us what criteria were used to determine the grade.

Q5 How satisfied are you that similar Member Support Staff and/or Group Office roles have been graded at the appropriate level?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
If dissatisfied/very dissatisfied please tell us why.

Q6. Please rank the importance of the individual factors listed in each column on a scale of 1-8 (1=the most important, 8=the least important).

How important is each factor in determining your current salary?	How important should each factor be in determining your salary?
• Your job responsibilities	• Your job responsibilities
• Your level of knowledge, skills and experience	• Your level of knowledge, skills and experience
• Comparison with salaries in your local labour market	• Comparison with salaries in your local labour market
• Comparison with similar roles in other organisations and sectors	• Comparison with similar roles in other organisations and sectors
• Your job performance	• Your job performance
• The cost of living	• The cost of living
• Length of service in the organisation	• Length of service in the organisation
• The budget available	• The budget available
• Please add any comments	•

Q7 How satisfied are you with the opportunities available for career advancement and development?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
If dissatisfied/very dissatisfied what changes would improve the current situation?

Q8 Do you think there should be one overall pay and grading framework for both Member Support Staff and Political Group Staff, or separate frameworks?

Same framework
Different frameworks
Don't know
Please briefly explain your response

Q9 Do you think that annual progression through pay points should be linked to personal performance or some other criteria?

Yes, fully linked to performance
Yes, partially linked to performance
Not linked at all
Should be linked to other criteria
Unsure

Q10 Are there any issues around pay equity and fairness that you feel need to be addressed. If so what are they?

Free text answer

Q11. Please indicate whether you work for a Member or a Political Group

Constituency Member
Regional Member
Political Group Staff

Q12 Where is your designated place of work

Constituency/Regional Office
Ty Hywel

Q13 Do you work full time or part time?

Full time
Part time (less than 35 hours per week)
If you wish to expand on your answer e.g., you have more than one part time role, please note below

Member Survey

Q1 To what extent are you satisfied that the current pay and grading framework for support staff meet your needs as a Member?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

Q2 Do you feel that the current pay and grading framework needs to change?

Yes, completely
Yes, moderate change needed
Minor changes only needed
No change needed
Don't know/not sure

Q3 Are you satisfied that the current pay and grading framework enables effective recruitment, retention and motivation of support staff roles?

Very Satisfied
Satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied

Q4 Do any of the following additional factors impact the recruitment, retention and/or motivation of your support staff?

Positive Impact	Negative Impact
Work Life Balance	Work Life Balance
The nature of the work	The nature of the work
Geographical location	Geographical location
Option of hybrid/homeworking	Option of hybrid/homeworking
Security of employment	Security of employment
Other (please specify below)	
Please explain the impact of any factors selected.	

Q5 What, if any, aspects of the current pay and grading framework operation cause you difficulties? Please select all that apply

Salary levels
Total staffing expenditure allowance
Other Budgetary Constraints
Number of pay bands and pay points
Overlapping pay points
Ability to offer progression opportunities
Ability to recognize high performance
No difficulties experienced
Other (please specify below)
Please outline briefly how this impacts on your ability to carry out your role.

Q6 Do you think that annual progression through pay points should be linked to personal performance or some other criteria?

Yes, fully linked to performance
Yes, partially linked to performance
No, not linked at all
Should be linked to some other criteria (please specify)
Unsure

Q7 How do you determine the appropriate grade and pay level for the roles you employ?

Judgement based on advice from Member Business Services (MBS)
Judgement based on the template job descriptions provided for different levels
Judgement based on availability of budget to fund the post
Judgement based on comparison with previous posts employed e.g., historic data or "like for like" replacement
Judgement based on the required knowledge, experience and/or specialism required
Judgement based on comparison with similar roles employed by other members/in other organisations/sectors
Personal judgement
Other
Please expand on your response below and if applicable note which organization or job roles you would use as comparators.

Q8 How important do you think the following factors should be when determining salaries? Please rank in order of importance (with 1 being the most important).

Job responsibilities
Level of knowledge, skills, experience and specialism
Comparison with salaries in your local labour market
Comparison with salaries of similar roles in other organisations and sectors
Job performance
Length of service
The budget available

Q9 To what extent are staff made aware of how the judgement was made in relation to their grade and level of pay?

Fully aware, communicated by me personally
Fully aware, through general communication e.g., appointment letter
Not made aware
Not Sure
Other (please mention below)

Q10 Do you agree that you have the information and guidance needed to make effective and fair decisions about the pay and grading of your staff.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

Q11 How often, on average, do you need guidance or support on matters relating to pay, grading and performance of staff you employ?

Weekly or more frequently
Fortnightly
Monthly
Quarterly
Annually
Depends on the situation
Please expand on your answer, including who you approach for this support or guidance?

Q12 Do you think there should be an overall pay and grading framework covering both Member's Support Staff and Political Group Staff, or separate frameworks?

Same framework for both
Different frameworks
Don't know
Please expand on your answer

Q13 Are there any issues around pay equity and fairness that you feel need to be addressed? If so, what are they?

Q14 Please indicate whether you are a Member representing a region or constituency.

Constituency Member
Regional Member
Hold additional office (as specified below)

ANNEX B: IPSA & SPCB Pay & Grading Approaches

IPSA	SPCB
Job Evaluation & Grading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal job evaluation in use. An external review of job descriptions, job families and pay levels in 2019, led to these being updated to better reflect the roles and responsibilities of MP's staff. Changes were also made to the job description tool ensuring that descriptors were commensurate with the job level and pay range. This framework remains in use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No formal job evaluation in use. There is a reliance on comparison to similar roles in the labour market.
Job Family Approach	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three job families in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative Executive Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four job families in use: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration & Office Management Casework Communications Policy and research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each job family has either 2 or 3 bands. Each band has a salary range intended to capture the range of roles and the skills and experience of staff recruited into these roles. <p><u>Administrative</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band 1: £21255 - £286349 Band 2: £24,567 - £35,740 Band 3: £30,445 - £49,711 <p><u>Executive</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band 1: £21,529 - £34,599 Band 2: £28,311 - £43,673 <p><u>Research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Band 2: £24,688 - £36,087 Band 3: £32,811-£49,624 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no incremental steps within the bands, this approach uses spot salaries only. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No grades within job families, instead a broad salary range intended to capture the breadth of responsibility in each family. SPCB People Services team have informally allocated 3 subscales to each salary range. These are used by the team when advising MSPs on the correct salary level for the job. This follows a discussion with the MSP to determine the scale, scope and complexity of a role and drafting of the job description by the People Services team. <p><u>Administration & Office Management:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £20,855 -£40,020 <p><u>Casework:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £25,239 - £39,048 <p><u>Communications:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £26,717 - £39,718 <p><u>Policy/Research:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £28,072 -£49,265

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no incremental steps within the pay range, this approach uses spot salaries only. • However, some MSPs have introduced their own incremental scale (within the relevant 1/3rd of the salary range) giving them some discretion to move staff within that range if the budget allows. Increases are minimal.
Pay Flexibility	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MPs determine the starting salary for their staff and are able to decide whether to progress a staff member further up the salary range if their budget allows. • MPs may allocate up to 2% of their staffing budget in order to recognise outstanding performance. No more than £1000 may be paid to an individual staff member. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSPs are expected to pay at the salary level advised by the SPCB. There is no discretion to progress staff further up the salary scale, unless, as described above, the MSP has devised their own incremental scale. • Any progression to a higher level of the salary range would be linked to a change in the content of the job description and SPCB staff would advise on the appropriate change (if any) to salary. • There is no mechanism to recognise and reward performance.
Annual increase	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined by the IPSA Board based on ASHE figures. Consideration is also given to the labour market comparison for the salary ranges of each job family and pay band. • The consequent cost of living increase is applied automatically to all salaries within the salary range. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined by the SPCB Board based on ASHE figures and taking account of the input from the salary benchmarking process described below. • The subsequent agreed increase is applied to the minimum and maximum salaries within a range and MSPs can choose whether to implement the increase to other salaries within the range. The majority choose to do so.

Pay Benchmarking

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Previously carried out every 3 years by an external consultancy. The last external review in 2019 recommended that the salary ranges be set by using +/-5% against the labour market salary range.• The latest review in 2022 was carried out internally utilising proprietary salary survey data mainly focussing on public sector comparisons. It is understood that the 5% variance is still in use. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The benchmarking process is carried out annually by SPCB People Services Team. This uses open source data relating to public sector and charity organisations e.g., the SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) published data on the third sector workforce. |
|--|---|