

Report on the Consultation on the Determination for the Seventh Senedd

30 March 2026

Background

1. The consultation on the Determination for the Seventh Senedd was published on 15 December 2025 and closed on 4 February 2026.
2. The Board sought views on the revised and simplified draft Determination for the Seventh Senedd, a limited number additional proposed policy changes, and the annual inflationary uprating of financial support for 2026–27; the consultation did not seek views on the substantive policy content which the Board had already agreed and published in July 2025.
3. The Board is grateful to those organisations, groups and individuals who took the time to respond. A list of those who were consulted and who responded is at Annex 1.
4. The Board has considered the feedback received, which was overwhelmingly supportive of the revised and simplified Determination document and has made its final decisions which are included in the [Determination for the Seventh Senedd](#) published on 30 March 2026, which will be in force from 7 May 2026.
5. This report summarises the consultation feedback and the Board’s considerations in response on each of the proposals.
6. A number of minor amendments have been made to the final Determination, to further clarify or simplify the Determination and where substantive amendments or insertions have been made, these are referenced in this report.
7. The Board also produced an addendum to its equality impact assessment published in July 2025, setting out an assessment of subsequent policy proposals. The addendum is available [here](#). The Board also produced a Welsh language impact assessment of the Determination, which is available [here](#).

Draft Determination and Simplification

Background

8. Simplification of the Determination has been a key Board objective and one of the Board's core thematic reviews during its past term.

9. Underlying principles and controls in the Determination have been reviewed, and, in some areas, the Board has sought to provide Members with greater flexibility to determine how they manage their resources in order to meet their or their constituents' needs or their preferred ways of working, whilst retaining a robust balance of accountability and commitment to value for money for the taxpayer.

10. The revised draft Determination included several revisions to simplify and streamline the document:

- Changed terminology and titles
- Removing of duplication between chapters
- Inserting a clear and consistent purpose in each chapter
- Removing references to Senedd Commission processes or policies, as the administration of the Determination is a matter for the Commission
- Insertion of http links to relevant legislation, documents or publications for ease of reference, to aid Members and support staff with their understanding and application of the Determination.
- Moving all salaries and claimable staffing and business costs into a table in an Annex
- Inserting a summary of the enhancements to statutory entitlements in the Terms and Conditions of Support Staff in an Annex.

11. The word count of the final Determination is 10,936 compared to the 2025-26 Determination which was 19,880 words.

Summary and consideration of consultation feedback

12. Those consultation responses that commented on the revised drafting or simplification were either supportive or welcomed the revised approach.

13. The Senedd Commissioner for Standards noted that:

'...the increased clarity of the draft Determination...will reduce the risk of Members under investigation seeking to avoid responsibility for their misconduct by asserting that they had misunderstood the provisions.'

14. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd confirmed that:

'The structure of the document is clear and simple to follow. The simplification works well to make the provisions being made more user friendly and accessible.'

15. The Plaid Cymru Group noted that the draft Determination:

'...is a clearer, more accessible document - one that is easier to read, interpret and apply in practice for Members, their staff and the Senedd Commission, whilst also providing a document that is more transparent to the public.'

16. The Plaid Cymru Group also welcomed

'...the Board's comprehensive work to review and address issues identified with previous Determinations in terms of ensuring equality and diversity.'

17. The Welsh Labour Group 'welcomed the work to simplify the Determination, reduce its length and improve the accessibility and clarity of the annexes'. It also noted that:

'We recognise the need to remove references to the administration of the Determination in order to avoid confusion, but would welcome further work to ensure that the details of how the Determination is implemented - and particularly the guidance issued by MBS - are easily accessible to Members and staff and set out arrangements in a clear, accessible and comprehensive way to aid understanding and awareness.'

Outcome: Drafting Changes

A number of minor drafting amendments were made to the final Determination to further improve accessibility and readability or in response to points of clarification raised in the consultation.

The Board has written to the Senedd Commission regarding preparation of new or updated guidance materials relating to the Determination, given these are a critical part of the Member claims framework alongside the Determination.

Chapter 1: Principles, general rules, exceptional costs and interpretation

Background

18. The consultation set out a revised draft Chapter 1, which was simplified and removed duplication and specific sections relating to the role and responsibilities of the Senedd Commission.

19. The Interpretation section has been updated to reflect the new terminology and was also moved and incorporated within the body of the Determination as part of Chapter 1 to ensure that it is read and referenced when using the Determination.

20. The revised draft also included a new 'Equality of Representation' principle, consistent with the principle which was included in the Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources during the Sixth Senedd, to state that 'Members must treat constituents equally, regardless of their party-political opinions (actual or perceived)'.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

21. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd agreed that

'Bringing together the purpose, principles, general rules and interpretation into a single chapter improves usability by having a consolidated starting point.'

22. The Welsh Conservative Group welcomed the proposed insertion of the 'equality of representation' principle.

23. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd noted the Board's intention to insert the 'equality of representation' principle which replicated wording from the Rules on the Use of Senedd Resources and confirmed:

'Inclusion in the Determination seems more appropriate, as the issue relates to constituent engagement, and the general duty in the Rules relating to equality of opportunity is contained in Rule 2. I will therefore take the opportunity to remove duplication from the Rules.'

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting amendments and updates to the Interpretation section were made to the final Determination to further improve accessibility and aid interpretation.

Chapter 2: Remuneration of Members and Additional Office Holders

Background

24. The Board made its determination for Members' and additional officer holders' salaries in July 2025 and the consultation did not include any further proposals.

25. The drafting changes included additional information relating to pensions entitlement, changed terminology relating to Leader of a Senedd Group and moving of the salaries to a table in an Annex.

Summary of responses

26. No comments were provided on the revised drafting of Chapter 2, however, the Plaid Cymru Group restated its view that Members' pay should not be a matter for Members and '...must remain an independent decision for the Remuneration Board'.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

A limited number of drafting amendments were made to provide clarity or consistency with other chapters of the Determination.

Job Share Committee Chairs

27. The Senedd voted on 25 February 2026 to introduce a temporary Standing Order 17A to enable job share committee chairs for a trial period.

28. The draft Determination did not provide for the sharing of committee chair salaries and the Board therefore issued a brief consultation on the remuneration of job share committee chairs.

29. The Board set out that the collective salary of job share chairs should not exceed the salary of a committee chair as set in the Determination (£16,212 from 1 April 2026) and a committee chair salary should be shared on an equal basis between the job share chairs (£8,106 per job share chair).

30. The Board noted that the temporary Standing Order is a 'pilot' and the approach may be reviewed by the Senedd and further experience and evidence may inform any longer term approach to remuneration.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

- 31.** The Welsh Conservative Group did not comment on the proposal for remuneration but stated its objection in principle to job sharing arrangements in the Senedd.
- 32.** The Plaid Cymru Group agreed with the Board's proposal.
- 33.** The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd noted '...that the collective salary of job share chairs should not exceed the salary of a committee chair as set in the Determination, appears to me to be a pragmatic approach to the 'pilot'.
- 34.** The Business Committee of the Senedd '...agreed with the Board's proposal that the collective salary of job share chairs should not exceed the salary of a committee chair as set in the Determination' and '...noted the Board's view that an equal sharing of the salary is appropriate for the purposes of simplicity and transparency, and that this approach could be reviewed in the future on the basis of any experience and evidence gained during the trial of job-sharing for committee chairs during the next Senedd'.

Decision: Job Share Chair Salary

The Board determined that the salary of job share committee chairs would be an equal share of a committee chair salary as set in the Determination (£8,106 per job share chair from 1 April 2026).

The Board has published a [statement of exceptional circumstances](#) as the Board made its determination on additional office holder salaries in July 2025 and may only make one such determination per Senedd term unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Insertion of job share committee chairs' salary in Table 2 of Annex A.

Chapter 3: Additional Support

Background

35. The consultation document set out drafting changes to the Chapter on Additional Support which sought to simplify and clarify the arrangements and reduce administrative burden on Members and support staff.

36. The Board also consulted on a proposal to increase the maximum claim of £350 per dependant for costs of care by the January 2026 CPI rate from the start of the Seventh Senedd.

Summary of and consideration of consultation responses

37. The Plaid Cymru Group welcomed the Board's commitment to aligning the Determination with the social model of disability and

'...believe that the proposals outlined align well with the work to ensure that the Senedd is family friendly and inclusive to both encourage greater diversity in representation and reduce barriers to becoming a Member of the Senedd.'

38. Although it did not submit a response to the Board's consultation, the Family-Friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review of the Senedd gathered a range of evidence and made a range of recommendations for the Seventh Senedd. It published its report on 3 March 2026¹, which stated:

'The Independent Remuneration Board, which sets Members' pay and allowances, ...leads the way in terms of the provision of "out-of-hours" childcare costs, by ensuring that in future these can be claimed during recess periods and on weekends as well as in the evenings. The Board has also enhanced the provision for Members' dependents to travel, as well as enabling eligible Members to accommodate additional dependents at their accommodation in Cardiff.'

39. The report also recommended that the Senedd Commission should

'Continue to ensure that claims relating to caring responsibilities are anonymised and aggregated to avoid individuals being identified and consider equalities matters when deciding on the policy relating to publication of costs.'²

¹ [A Senedd for all: Report of the Family-Friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review](#)

² **Recommendation 20**, [A Senedd for all: Report of the Family-Friendly and Inclusive Parliament Review](#)

40. The equality impact assessment addendum noted that current references to the ‘anonymised and aggregated’ publishing of such claims would no longer be included in the Determination, as the responsibility for publishing claims is a matter for the Senedd Commission. It noted however that individualised publication could be a barrier to claims being made; the Board has written to the Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd drawing attention to this drafting change and seeking information on how the Senedd Commission intends to publish Members’ claims for costs of additional support in the Seventh Senedd.

41. The Office for National Statistics confirmed that the January 2026 CPI rate was 3% on 13 February 2026.

Decision: Costs

The cost of care rate from the beginning of the Seventh Senedd will be £361 per dependent (up to a maximum of 3 dependents).

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

Sections 3.1.7 and 3.3.5 relating to which budgets any costs would be claimed from have been combined and moved to a new section 3.5 at the end of the chapter; this approach is consistent with other chapters in the Determination.

Section 3.3.4 relates to additional support staff costs claimable where a Member is taking parental leave. References to costs for staffing accommodation, subsistence and travel in Chapter 7 have now been captured as well as other costs and sections relating to staffing. This was an omission in the draft and makes clear that all relevant claims relating to all staff pay, terms and conditions as set out in Chapter 7 would apply to any temporary staff appointed to provide support to a Member on parental leave.

The Board has written to the Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd drawing attention to the drafting change relating to publication of costs under Chapter 3.

Chapter 4: Overnight Accommodation

Background

42. The consultation included several changes to the drafting, including changing the Chapter title to 'Overnight Accommodation' from 'Residential Accommodation Expenditure.'

43. The revisions also included moving all costs to the table in Annex A, and a new section 4.9 with current sections 7.16 and 8.5B, relating to support staff and group staff accommodation respectively, being simplified and included in this chapter so all UK overnight accommodation-related matters are in one place.

44. The consultation also noted that applications for consideration of 'borderline cases' relating to location of main homes in the Outer Area or Inner Area and that exceptional circumstances relating to additional Inner Area member accommodation would be matters considered by the Board, rather than the Senedd Commission as is currently the case.

45. The consultation set out a proposal to remove 'Option B', which currently provides for Members to claim for non-rental/capital costs such as council tax and utility bills in relation to a 'home in the Cardiff area provided at the Member's own expense'. The Board's view was shaped by the principle that there should be 'no personal benefit' in relation to any Determination claims and that 'Members must not make claims that give rise to the perception of an improper, direct or indirect personal financial benefit to a Member or any other person'.

46. The consultation also set out the following proposed uplifts to overnight accommodation:

- The maximum overnight accommodation rate in the United Kingdom (Cardiff and elsewhere, new section 4.7) increased by the CPI figure for January 2026,
 - The maximum overnight accommodation rate in London increased to £230,
 - The overnight accommodation budget for Inner Area Members (new section 4.1.1) will continue to be the equivalent of 6 nights at the uprated maximum overnight accommodation,
 - Subsistence rates will increase (new section 4.8.1) to £30 for a 24 hour period from the start of the Seventh Senedd,
 - The maximum annual amount for overnight accommodation in Cardiff by Members whose main homes are in the Outer Area will increase by 3.4% from the start of the Seventh Senedd, and
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- Additional overnight accommodation costs available to Members in the Outer Area with caring responsibilities will remain unchanged.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

47. The Office for National Statistics confirmed that the January 2026 CPI rate was 3% on 13 February 2026.

48. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd sought clarification regarding what items subsistence claims may reasonably include, given there was some scope for interpretation based on different definitions in use in the public sector. The Board therefore agreed to specify that subsistence meant 'food and non-alcoholic drink'.

49. The Board considered the need for additional rules relating to subsistence claims, including that subsistence claims would be permissible only for travel outside a Member's constituency and/or beyond the Senedd in Cardiff Bay.

50. The Board however recognises that several new constituencies are geographically large, and some Members may be required to attend constituency meetings late in the evening or a significant distance away from their home or constituency office. The Board recognised that some Members may live close to the boundary of their constituency and 'outside the constituency' criteria could be lead to unreasonable claims being made.

51. The Board also noted that Members' claims for subsistence during the Sixth Senedd have been limited:

- The latest published claims data for 2025-26 (up until end November 2025) shows a total of £1,300.61 in subsistence costs have been claimed, by 22 Members at an average claim of £19.41.
- During 2024-25, a total of £937.24 in subsistence costs were claimed, by 24 Members at an average cost of £18.38.

52. The Board therefore decided not to set out additional rules but reminds Members of the principles of personal benefit, reasonableness and value for money in Chapter 1 when making claims for subsistence. The Board will keep the subsistence provisions under review during the Seventh Senedd.

53. The Welsh Conservative Group noted that there remained challenges '...finding suitable accommodation within the overnight claim limit' and that the new proposed limit was not sufficient to address this issue.

54. The Board's proposals were informed by independent analysis of the local rental market, including monthly rental costs for one and two bedroom flats in the Cardiff Bay area, as well as current Members' rental costs:

- In October 2025, 60.7% of one-bed properties in the Cardiff Bay area (excluding the top 10% most expensive 'luxury' apartments) were advertised at or under the £1,075 per month allowance during this period.
- During the past financial year, 18 Members claimed for a property in Cardiff Bay, 14 of whom claimed below the monthly limit and 4 of whom claimed over the monthly limit (and therefore covered the additional costs themselves).

55. The Board is therefore of the view that there is sufficient availability and choice of a range of one and two-bed properties in the Cardiff Bay area and the Board keeps the costs under review on an annual basis.

56. The Plaid Cymru Group agreed with the proposed uplifts but noted that they should be kept under review; the Group also agreed with the removal of Option B costs and welcomed the additional flexibility for borderline cases to be reviewed. The Plaid Cymru Group also agreed with the uplift to subsistence rates.

57. A submission noted that the removal of Option B could have a negative impact on current and/or future Members who have a family and caring responsibilities. The response also noted that claims under Option B were lower and offered better value for money compared to Option A (where Members could rent a property in addition to 'non-rental/capital' costs).

58. The Board carefully considered the feedback and the implications of the proposed removal of Option B for Members who have families or other caring responsibilities, as set out in its addendum to the [Equality Impact Assessment](#).

59. The Board concluded that the removal of Option B could have a negative impact on Members who have a home in Cardiff at their own expense and could have a disproportionate impact on those with certain protected characteristics. The Board however is required to balance the statutory objective regarding 'ensuring probity' and the core remuneration principle that there should be 'no personal benefit' in relation to any Determination claims and that 'Members must not make claims that give rise to the perception of an improper, direct or indirect personal financial benefit to a Member or any other person' with other statutory objectives, including value for money and providing adequate resources to enable Members to exercise their functions, as set out in section 3(2) of the Measure.

60. The impact of the removal of Option B is mitigated given there continues to be alternative support for Members to claim for overnight accommodation through the Determination, including additional costs for those who care for dependants and exceptional costs, where applicable..

61. The Board however recognised the financial implications of its decision for any Member who currently claimed reimbursement of costs under Option B and the challenges and disruption to a Member's family, should alternative accommodation arrangements need to be arranged at short notice. In line with previous precedents in the Determination, the Board agreed to provide for transitional arrangements for any Member who was claiming Option B at the end of the Sixth Senedd until the end of the Seventh Senedd.

Decision: Costs and Provisions

From the start of the Seventh Senedd:

- Members will no longer be able to claim expenses in relation to a home in the Cardiff area provided at the Member's own expense (Option B under the Determination for 2025-26).
- A new section 4.4 has been inserted, which states that 'Where a Member was, at the end of the Sixth Senedd, claiming for a property under Option B of Chapter 4 of the Determination in force at that time, the Member may claim the costs set out in section 4.3.2(b) to (g) in relation to the same property until the end of the Seventh Senedd. - Maximum overnight accommodation rate in the United Kingdom (Cardiff and elsewhere, new section 4.7) will be £121.
- Maximum overnight accommodation rate in London will be £230
- Overnight accommodation budget for Inner Area Members will be £726
- Subsistence rates will be £30 for any 24-hour period
- Maximum annual amount for overnight accommodation in Cardiff by Members whose main homes are in the Outer Area will be £13,320 (based on a maximum of £1,110 per month).
- Additional costs for Members with caring responsibilities will be Up to £3,870 for the first dependant and up to £1,290 for each additional dependant, up to a maximum of two additional dependants.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

Redrafting of section 4.8 'Subsistence' to make clear that claims can be made when travelling and/or staying in overnight accommodation, and new section 4.11.2 clarifies that the 24-hour period commences at the start of any journey.

'Subsistence' has been defined in the Interpretation section of Chapter One as meaning 'food and non-alcoholic drink'.

A new section 4.9.2 has been inserted to clarify that subsistence is also applicable to Members support staff and Group support staff and a new section 4.10 has been inserted to clarify that a

Member or leader of a Senedd Group may claim for the costs of accommodation and subsistence outside the United Kingdom for support staff under Chapter 5.

Sections relating to overnight accommodation and/or subsistence reference 'within the United Kingdom' and a new section 4.10 has been inserted to more clearly distinguish arrangements 'outside the United Kingdom'.

Chapter 5: Travel

Background

62. The Board did not propose any policy changes to this chapter but included several drafting changes in line with simplification, notably removal of several sections relating to principles which replicated core principles set out in Chapter One.

63. The Board consulted on a travel-related proposal under Chapter 7: Staffing which proposed that, where a Member relocated an office as a result of the changes to the Senedd constituencies for the Seventh Senedd, any affected staff members may claim additional commuting costs (those costs over and above what they were paying to commute to the previous office location) for a period of three months.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

64. Limited comments were received on the revised draft chapter, however, the Welsh Conservative Group welcomed the removal of the limit on the number of journeys for constituency-based staff to and from Cardiff.

65. One submission welcomed the proposals for support for staff affected by changes to constituency office location.

66. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd noted the change in reference to international travel and the requirement that Members claim a 'Standard return fare', noting that international travel 'tends not to be sold with a descriptor of 'standard' and that alternative or additional wording would assist clarity.

Decision: Policy Proposal

The Board agreed to provide for claims for temporary additional commuting costs for support staff affected by relocation of a constituency office.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

The Purpose includes the insertion of 'subsistence' and new sections to clarify that subsistence is claimable by Members or their support staff when travelling.

Reference to a 'standard' return fare for international travel has been removed from section 5.2.1 (a); Members would however be expected to make a travel claim consistent with the reasonable and value for money principles in Chapter 1 and submit a business case in advance, as has been the case during the Sixth Senedd.

A new section 5.6 'Additional support staff commuting costs due to constituency changes' has been inserted to reflect the Board's decision to introduce such payments.

Original sections 5.6.3 and 5.7.3 relating to which budgets any staff-related costs would be claimed from have been combined and moved to section 5.10 at the end of the chapter (consistent with other chapters in the Determination)..

Chapter 6: Constituency Work

Background

67. The consultation included a redrafted and renamed chapter (currently 'Constituency Office and Engagement'). Among the drafting changes included the removal of the 'Office Accommodation principles' currently set out in section 6A.1 of the Determination, as these broadly replicate the general principles in Chapter 1 or relevant statutory requirements.

68. The draft chapter also included new footnote references to the relevant Rules on the Use of Senedd Resources, specifically Rules 7 and 8, reminding Members of the rules on equal treatment of constituents and communicating and engaging with constituents. It also set out the previously agreed increase in budget transfer limit (formerly 'virement') of 50% into the Staffing budget (currently 25%).

69. The Board's consultation also included specific policy proposals to

- Uprate the Constituency Work budget of £27,430 by the January 2026 CPI rate
- Uprate the Office Start-up budget (£6,500) and Office Refresh budget (£2,500) will be uprated by the January 2026 CPI rate.
- Remove the provision for Members to claim broadband costs at their main home will be removed from the start of the Seventh Senedd.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

70. The Plaid Cymru Group agreed with the proposed changes.

71. The Comisiynydd y Gymraeg noted that

"...the Scheme [the Commission's Official Language Scheme] sets an expectation that any materials funded by the Commission or the Remuneration Board will be produced bilingually, and it is therefore very relevant to this chapter. In a footnote within the chapter, you make reference to the importance of complying with the Rules and Guidance on the Use of Senedd Resources (the Rules)...Rule 9 which addresses compliance with the Scheme, should also be added to this footnote in order to remind Members of their linguistic duties."

72. As noted in the Board's Welsh Language Impact Assessment, the Official Languages Scheme of the Sixth Senedd³ (Standard 10) places a duty on Members that all materials produced with public money are published bilingually and simultaneous interpretation and translation support and costs are provided by the Senedd Commission. Members are also able to claim for some translation and interpretation costs through Chapter 6 of the Determination and Members may use the office start-up costs or refresh budgets to produce new bilingual signage.

73. The Board therefore agreed that references to Rule 9 (of the Rules on the Use of Senedd Resources) and Members' duties under Standard 10 (of the Official Languages Scheme) should be included in the footnote in Chapter 6 of the Determination.

74. The Board noted that the Official Languages Scheme may be updated in the Seventh Senedd and the Board will keep the relevant references under review to ensure they reflect the latest Official Languages Scheme.

Decision: Costs

From the start of the Seventh Senedd:

- The Constituency Work budget will be £28,250
- the Office Start-up budget and Office Refresh budget will be £6,695 and £2,575 respectively
- Members will no longer be able to claim broadband costs at their main home.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

References to Rule 9 of the Rules on the Use of Senedd Resources and Members' duties as set out in Standard 10 of the Official Languages Scheme have been inserted in the footnote to remind Members of the status of the Welsh language and their duties when using Community Work resources.

³ <https://senedd.wales/media/umofs3b3/gen-ld15324-e.pdf>

Original sections 6.6.2 and 6.7.4 relating to which budgets specific costs would be claimed from have been combined and moved to a new section 6.9 at the end of the chapter (consistent with other chapters in the Determination).

Chapter 7: Support Staff

Background

75. The consultation included a restructured and simplified chapter to provide greater clarity. Changes included combining several existing 'rules' relating to the employment of staff (and which help provide consistency and protection for staff) into a new section 7.1 at the start of the chapter and removal of duplication relating to staff travel and overnight accommodation.

76. The document noted that, as a result of the Board's previous decisions relating to staff salaries in July 2025, Members' Staffing Budget will be £148,382 for the Seventh Senedd.

77. The consultation included several policy proposals.

- Introduction of a new Additional Duties Payment for staff who take on additional temporary responsibilities
- Arrangements for short-term secondments between Members' offices and/or Group Offices
- Additional support to staff affected by a relocation of a Members' office due to constituency changes, including redundancy entitlement where necessary

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

Job Classification Framework

78. The Board confirmed its decision on the Job Classification Framework, including support staff salaries and annual uprating, in July 2025 and agreed to extend the implementation deadline to 30 June 2026 in January. Although this decision was not part of the consultation process, several responses provided views on the framework.

79. The Welsh Conservative Group noted that it continues to believe that:

"...the new job framework and pay grading system does not provide sufficient flexibility for Members. We also believe it doesn't address the issue of recruiting senior staff with experience of work in other parliaments. We continue to believe that existing staff should have the option to remain on current arrangements, and that there should be provision for appointments via an extenuating circumstances route."

80. The Plaid Cymru Group also commented the continuation of office budget based on 3 support staff salaries '...may not provide the flexibility required for Members in terms of staff

roles and responsibilities at an appropriate level to assist with Member's duties due to budget constraints.'

81. The Board's objectives are to set an employment framework which governs how public funds can be used with probity and promote value for money, while seeking an appropriate balance between flexibility for Members, ensuring that support staff salaries fairly reflect their level of responsibility and encourage consistency of pay and reward by Members, and avoiding unfair pay disparities for the same job level. The Board's view is that the new framework, particularly given the scope for 'hybrid' roles provides Members with sufficient flexibility.

82. The Board also considered a range of evidence and feedback when setting out its proposals for the staffing budget in April 2025⁴; its view was that the staffing budget remained sufficient but it would review the Members' staffing budget at an appropriate juncture in the Seventh Senedd when the implications of Senedd business and constituency changes as well as changes to Senedd Commission provided support for Members and political group support on Members' staffing support requirements are better understood.

83. The Plaid Cymru Group also reiterated its disappointment that Band 3 staff will have a reduction in pay points and a reduced maximum pay point and stressed the importance of the role of staff at Band 3.

84. The Board recognises the important role that Band 3 staff perform, across all job families. As set out previously, salaries in the new framework have been independently benchmarked against the Welsh jobs market which confirmed that the maximum Band 3 salary was above the comparable market rate for similar roles. Band 3 in the new framework sets out accelerated pay-progression, higher pay-increments and higher pay-point salaries compared to current Band 3 pay-points 1-4. The Board recognises the impact that this will have on those who are at the top end of the Band. It has sought to mitigate the potential impact on affected staff setting out pay-protection of up to two years for staff currently employed on pay-point 5 and who remain on Band 3 following the review.

Welsh language matters

85. The Comisiynydd y Gymraeg commented that neither the Welsh language nor the Official Languages Scheme were referenced in the Determination or the Job Classification Framework. The response noted that the Comisiynydd would expect '...Welsh language skills to be an

⁴ <https://remunerationboard.wales/media/nj1j4ue2/english-spring-consultation-310325-1632.pdf>

essential characteristic for a number of posts in which staff will be working with Members of the Senedd’.

86. Cymdeithas yr Iaith raised similar observations, and suggested that the Determination ‘must state’ that, when recruiting to new roles, Members must assess the linguistic requirements of every role and courtesy level Welsh should be a minimum. It also argued that Members must annually assess and report on the Welsh language skills of their staff and staff should be offered Welsh language training during working hours.

87. The Board conforms to the Senedd Commission’s Official Language Scheme⁵ and operates bilingually when corresponding, engaging or publishing materials. In so doing, the Board recognises the importance of Welsh as an equal and official language in the Senedd.

88. The Board also notes that Members’ support staff already have access to Welsh language tuition provided by the Senedd Commission during working hours.

89. The Board however is not subject to Welsh Language Standards, furthermore, as set out in the Welsh Language Impact Assessment, the Board’s functions relate to providing resources to Members which are defined and limited in statute and it does not have powers to place Welsh language requirements or standards on Members or their staff. The Board also notes that Members, as individuals, are not subject to Welsh Language Standards, other than the duties set out in the Senedd’s Official Languages Scheme.

90. The Board has therefore concluded that it is not able to set out Welsh language requirements on Members in the Determination or in accompanying frameworks such as the Job Classification Framework.

91. Furthermore, the Job Classification Framework sets criteria applicable when Members assess the specific grade or Job Family of a particular role, it is not designed to describe the range of experience, skills or competencies that may be required for particular roles. The Board recognises that Members might assess that a role requires particular proficiency in the Welsh language, but language proficiency would not be a factor affecting the grading of a role in the classification framework, as roles at any or all pay bands may be deemed as requiring Welsh language skills.

92. The Board notes that that the Senedd Commission uses a language skills matrix and agrees that Members should consider the language skills of a role when recruiting staff as a matter of good practice. The Board however cannot set such requirements and the Senedd Commission provides Members with recruitment guidance support and template job

⁵ <https://senedd.wales/media/umofs3b3/gen-ld15324-e.pdf>

descriptions for support staff. The Board has been advised that the Senedd Commission is considering the inclusion of references to Welsh language skills in revised recruitment guidance and template job descriptions for the Seventh Senedd.

Other comments

93. A response suggested that the Determination should set out that optional salary advances for support staff should be available before Christmas.

94. The Board noted that the Determination (in section 7.2.7) already provides for one salary advance per year.

Additional duties payment for staff who take on additional responsibilities

95. The proposal was supported by the Plaid Cymru and Welsh Labour Groups.

Arrangements for short-term secondment arrangements between Members' offices and/or Group Offices

96. The Plaid Cymru Group welcomed proposal.

97. The Welsh Labour Group agreed with proposal and also linked the proposal to external secondments and suggested the Senedd Commission produce '...comprehensive and consistent guidance.'

98. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd noted that Members were separate employers and therefore the reference to 'internal' secondments should be removed. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd also identified several areas which might be included in any agreement between Members.

99. The Board agreed with the Accounting Officer's comments, noting that any guidance regarding an agreement between Members might be produced by the Senedd Commission.

Additional support to staff affected by a relocation of a Member's office due to constituency changes

100. The Welsh Labour Group agreed with the proposal.

101. The Plaid Cymru Group welcomed the proposal but also noted that Members in such situations should be consider exploring working patterns / hours and working from home if appropriate.

102. The Board also sought external legal advice regarding the implications of the proposal for redundancy payments. The advice confirmed that under section 139 of the Employment Rights Act 1996, the relocation of a constituency office would satisfy the test for redundancy where *"...the employer has ceased or intends to cease ... (ii) to carry on that business in the place where the employee was so employed"*.

103. Furthermore, the legal advice noted that reasonableness of distance (as originally proposed in the consultation) is not directly relevant to whether an employee would be liable for a redundancy payment or not, but is only a consideration whether they had unreasonably refused an offer of suitable alternative work.

104. As noted in the section relating to Chapter 5 above, the Board will insert provisions for additional commuting costs of support staff (as a result of office relocation) in the Determination.

105. In light of the legal advice, the Board agreed that the relevant wording relating to redundancy in the Determination should be broadened to reference wider circumstances of redundancy as per section 139 of the Employment Rights Act, in order to provide clarity that redundancy payments as a result of office relocation are permissible.

106. The Board will not specify criteria such as 'reasonable distance' in the Determination, as relocation of offices and the adjustments, support and any decision regarding possible redundancy will be a matter for Members as individual employers taking into account the specific personal circumstances of any affected employee and consideration of alternative arrangements.

Provision for Employment Practices Liability Insurance

107. The Senedd Commission currently purchases Employment Practices Liability Insurance which covers all Members. The Senedd Commission has advised the Board that this insurance provision will cease on 30 June 2026.

108. This matter was not included in the consultation document as the Board sought further information about the Senedd Commission's approach.

109. Employment Practices Liability Insurance provides employers with cover for claims arising from alleged wrongful acts in the employment process, including discrimination, harassment, and wrongful dismissal.

110. Such insurance policies provide Members as employers with financial protection should a claim against a Member be made.

111. The Board therefore agreed to provide for Members to claim for Employment Practices Liability Insurance under the Determination, but the costs would not be deducted from the Members' staffing budget.

Extended deadline for the implementation of the new support staff pay and grading framework

112. The Board consulted between 22 December 2025 and 16 January 2026⁶ to extend the deadline for implementation of the new support staff pay and grading framework.

113. The Board agreed on 21 January 2026⁷ that Members the deadline for implementation for returning Members (i.e. those who were Members in the Sixth Senedd) would be extended to 30th June 2026.

114. The Board's decision is reflected in subsequent amendments to section 1.1.3 (and a footnote in section 7.1.1).

Decision: Policy Proposals

The Board agreed that the following provisions will be included in the Determination for the Seventh Senedd:

- Insertion of references in section 1.1.3 and a footnote in section 7.1.1 that Chapter 7 of the Determination 2025-26 (No.2) continues in force until 30 June 2026 for returning Members and their staff, or until the member of staff is employed in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Determination for the Seventh Senedd (whichever is sooner).
- insertion of new sections 7.2.4 and 7.2.5 setting out that Members may claim the costs of paying a member of staff, who has passed their probationary period, a 5% salary uplift for a period of up to 6 months where they are performing additional duties at a higher grade. This additional responsibility payment will be pensionable.
- insertion of new section 7.9 setting out that Members or Group Leaders may make arrangements for staff secondments, of up to 6 months, between Members' offices and/or Group Offices. Staff must have passed their probationary period, and a standard written agreement would be required between the two employing parties.

⁶ <https://remunerationboard.wales/media/kxlnlnnw/2026-01-21-decision-letter-consultation-report.pdf>

⁷ <https://laiddocuments.senedd.wales/gen-ld17782-en.pdf>

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

Sections on overnight accommodation, travel and subsistence (which were set out separately in the draft Determination) have been combined into a briefer section 7.3.

Section 7.9 Support Staff Redundancy has been amended, to clarify that the meaning of redundancy is as set out in section 139 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and may therefore be applicable as a result of a relocation of place of employment.

A new section 7.11 has been inserted to provide for Members to claim for Employment Practices Liability Insurance.

Original section 7.4.4 has been combined with other similar references to which budgets specific costs would be claimed from and moved to a new section 7.12 at the end of the chapter; this approach is consistent with other chapters in the Determination.

Reference in Annex B 'Terms to be included in support staff contracts of employment' has been clarified to note that the entitlements set out e.g. periods of sickness absence or parental leave, are not a full list but are those that exceed the statutory minimum and that the entitlements listed are inclusive of statutory entitlement.

Chapter 8: Senedd Group Support

Background

115. The consultation included a restructured and simplified chapter to provide greater clarity with the chapter title being changed to 'Group Support' from the current 'Support for Political Parties'.

116. The chapter had been redrafted to remove duplication and cross-referenced group staffing matters to relevant sections in Chapter 7 Staffing.

117. The consultation also included sought views on additional policy proposals, which included:

- Clarification of the circumstances and requirements when a Group obtains external services
- Clarification that where support staff are made redundant following the change of a group leader, such payments will be deducted from the Senedd Group budget

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

118. The Plaid Cymru Group agreed with the proposal to clarify arrangements for external services but requested that the Senedd Commission provide guidance to Groups to ensure consistency.

119. The Plaid Cymru Group expressed concern about the proposal that redundancy costs for group staff following the change of a group leader would be deducted from the Group budget, noting that 'it is not uncommon for political groups to change leadership in any political system, and the Board itself recognises that an incoming group leader may wish to change key personnel or restructure an office.' The Group expressed concern that a new Group leader should not be disadvantaged regarding the budget available to them as a result of such changes, if there is no change in the size of the Group.

120. The Board recognises that a new Group leader may wish to change key personnel in the group office, however, the Board's intention is to encourage Group leaders to retain the employment of the majority of group staff, where possible, with a view to minimise the risk and uncertainty for group staff generally and ensure value for money. The Board's view is that Group Leaders should have sufficient budget flexibility to make any such changes without having a significant impact on the wider staffing capacity and resources. The Board also notes

that applications for exceptional costs may be made where redundancy decisions and budgetary constraints may affect the employment of other group staff.

Decision: Policy Proposals

The Board agreed that the following provisions will be included in the Determination for the Seventh Senedd:

- Clarification of the circumstances and requirements when a Group obtains external services, as set out in sections 8.1.2 and 8.1.3 of the draft Determination.
- Clarification that where support staff are made redundant following the change of a group leader, such payments will be deducted from the Senedd Group budget, as set out in section 8.5.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination.

Insertion in of the corresponding changes as for Chapter 7 including a footnote in section 8.1 to reflect the extended deadline to 30 June 2026 for the implementation of the pay and grading framework.

Section 8.3.2, which cross-references which Members' staffing provisions set out in Chapter 7 are also applicable to Group Leaders or their staff has been broadened to incorporate 7.8 (support staff absences) and 7.9 (staff secondments), which were omitted in the draft Determination.

Sections on overnight accommodation, travel and subsistence (which were originally separate sections in the draft Determination) have been combined into a briefer section 8.4.

Section 8.5 (section 8.7 in the consultation version) has been amended to clarify that the meaning of redundancy is as set out in section 139 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 and text referencing which budgets any redundancy costs are payable from has been moved to new section 8.7.

A new section 8.6 has been inserted to provide for Group Leaders to claim for Employment Practices Liability Insurance.

A new section 8.7 summarising 'Costs under this Chapter' has been inserted (consistent with other chapters in the Determination).

Chapter 9: Members leaving office

Background

121. There were no substantive policy changes set out in the consultation and the chapter has been simplified, with various sections merged or removed.

Summary and consideration of consultation responses

122. One response was received in relation to Chapter 9. The Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd noted that the purpose of the provisions being made in Chapter 9 are clearly set out, but made some suggestions to improve the clarity of section 9.1.

Outcome: Drafting Changes

Minor drafting/textual amendments have been incorporated to further clarify or simplify the Determination, including section 9.1 in response to the Accounting Officer's observations.

Annex 1: Respondents to the consultation

The Board issued the consultation on the draft Determination for the Seventh Senedd to all Members of the Senedd, Members' support and group staff and their trade union representatives, political parties and several stakeholders, including business representative organisations, equality representative organisations, public sector bodies and academics.

The Board published a press release and the consultation document was published on the Board's website and on X.

The following individuals and groups responded to the consultation:

Senedd Commissioner for Standards

Welsh Conservative Group

Welsh Labour Group

Plaid Cymru Group

Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

Llywydd and Chair of the Senedd Commission

Member of Support Staff (anonymous)

PCS Plaid Cymru Branch

Cymdeithas yr Iaith

Comisiynydd y Gymraeg

Adam Price MS
