

Bwrdd Taliadau Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol Cymru

—
Remuneration Board of the
National Assembly for Wales

William Powell AM
Chair
Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales

17 April 2015

Dear William,

Thank you for informing me of the committee's interest in the petition relating to the Board's proposals for Assembly Members' salaries in the Fifth Assembly (Ref: P-04-613). I confirm the petition has already been discussed by the Board as part of its decision-making process, and will be considered again when we meet to finalise our decisions in April.

The Board has undertaken a consultation on salaries, and recently on the whole package of remuneration and support for AMs (including salaries), which would come in to effect after the Assembly Election in 2016. We intend to publish our final Determination for the Fifth Assembly and an accompanying report in May 2015.

On the specific issue of salary we reached our judgement of what was appropriate after considering a wide range of evidence on pay and remuneration in Wales and in other Parliaments. A number of responses to our consultation on AM salaries, which was issued in November 2014, said that our proposed base salary was too high and/or that it was not the right time to set higher salaries for AMs, given the economic context. We took in to account the petition, media coverage and a variety of social media reaction to our proposal.

We also considered:

- the extent to which the powers and responsibilities of AMs are increasing substantially and merit a full revaluation;
- the burden on Members in a small single chamber legislature of effective law-making and efficient scrutiny of government;
- ☐the impact of the proposed increase in MPs salaries on existing and future comparability;
- ☐the reduced cost to the taxpayer – and increased cost to AMs – of changes in the AM pension scheme;
- ☐the pay differentials between London and Cardiff.

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

After a thorough review, we felt that the salary that we proposed was the right figure for the role and responsibilities that Assembly Members will have in the Fifth Assembly. Consequently, we retained our proposal for the consultation on the whole package. We also agreed that AM salaries should be annually adjusted to reflect the changes in average wages in Wales (whether up or down).

The Board will now review all our decisions at our April meeting, in the light of our consultation on the Draft Determination. We intend to publish the final Determination in May.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sandy Blair", enclosed in a thin black rectangular border. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Sandy Blair CBE DL
Cadeirydd / Chair
Bwrdd Taliadau/Remuneration Board