

Exceptional determination statement

Staffing Support for Members (including Political Party Leaders¹)

Statement of the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd under section 14(4) of the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010

Decision of the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd

On 10 July 2025, the Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd ("the Board") made a decision in relation to the reimbursement of costs incurred by Members in employing staff under section 20(2) of the Government of Wales Act 2006.

The Board's decision is to allow current Members to claim up to £1,275 for the cost of obtaining specialist external advice to help them prepare for the implementation of the pay and grading framework that will apply to staff employed by Members in the Seventh Senedd (i.e. the Senedd that will be formed following the Senedd election on 7 May 2026).

The amount of £1,275 includes VAT and will be paid from central funds.² The specialist external advice must not be information that can be provided by the Senedd Commission. Claims must be made before 1 April 2026.

The Board's reasons for making an Exceptional Determination

Under normal circumstances, where the Board has made a determination which contains provision that relates to the reimbursement of costs incurred by Members in employing staff, the Board cannot then modify that provision in respect of the financial year in which that determination first takes effect (see section 14(2) of the National Assembly for Wales (Remuneration) Measure 2010 ("the 2010 Measure")).

However, in accordance with section 14(3) of the 2010 Measure, the Board is of the opinion that there are exceptional circumstances which make it just and reasonable for the restrictions imposed by section 14(2) not to apply.

The Board is of the opinion that an exceptional determination is required because:

¹ As regards Political Party Leaders, the amount of £1,275 will be available to the leader of a "Political Party" as currently defined in the Determination.

² Central funds means funding provided through the Determination but which are not part of any specific allowance available to Members or Political Parties under the Determination.

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- On 10 July 2025, the Board decided to introduce a new pay and grading framework for staff employed by Members in the Seventh Senedd.
 - The framework will require Members to make important decisions relating to the employment of their staff, including decisions about identifying job roles, pay grades and job descriptions.
 - It is crucial that current Members who are re-elected in the Seventh Senedd and who will be required to implement the new framework begin preparing for the new pay and grading framework at an early stage. This will be vital in ensuring a smooth transition to the new framework.
 - In order to ensure that smooth transition to the new framework, Members may require specialist external advice (in addition to the advice that can be provided by Members' Business Support).

This is a limited one-off provision to help Members prepare for a significant change in the way they will be required to employ staff in the Seventh Senedd.

The Board is of the opinion that these considerations give rise to exceptional circumstances which make it just and reasonable to make this determination.