



**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4**

**Date:** Thursday 5 December 2013

**Time:** 09:00 - 10:30

**Venue:** Presiding Officer's office

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## **Highlight report to the Commission**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The highlight report outlines work that has recently been undertaken, or is underway, to make progress towards the Commission's strategic goals. The report aims to provide Commissioners with useful information so that they can perform their role of oversight and holding management to account. This report gives an update on key activities and projects since May 2013.

### **A. Strategic Goal – provide outstanding parliamentary support**

#### **2.0 Assembly Business Directorate restructure**

2.1 The Assembly Business Directorate Restructure has been completed. Clerking teams have been reorganised to ensure that all Committees now have the capacity and expertise to support both policy and legislative work. Chairs were advised of the changes over the summer and the new teams were in place before the start of the autumn term. Each team is led by a senior clerk who has responsibility for managing that committee's support, drawing on additional resources where needed. The new approach will deliver better integrated but equally high quality support.

#### **Strategic Transformation**

2.2 An important part of the restructure was to create a new team focussed on the longer term strategic transformation of our services.

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

The team is responsible for driving the delivery of key Commission priorities relating to the Business Directorate, such as Youth Engagement and Machine Translation. It also leads work relating to the future evolution of the Assembly, ensuring that we are prepared to respond to constitutional developments and other external drivers for change. In addition, the team provides secretariat support to the Remuneration Board.

### Supporting Committees

- 2.3 In November, the Commission endorsed its vision for world class committees. We are in the process of completing a report of the Commission's review of support for committees that will act as a vehicle for the publication and basis for implementation of the vision and associated work.
- 2.4 Committees are continuing to push the boundaries of their operation, especially in terms of drawing in a wider range of expertise to inform their work. This is apparent in an increasing use of expert advisers, reference groups, committee events and comprehensive programmes of outreach work.
- 2.5 Committee officials have been working with the internal business analysts to map out committee processes in order to find and implement more streamlined ways of delivering better services to Members.
- 2.6 This has also been a busy term for legislation. The Assembly has considered three Members' Bills, two being passed (albeit one ending up as a Government Bill) and the third reaching an important milestone at the other end of the process – obtaining leave to proceed to introduction. The Assembly is using the fast-track process for the Control of Horses Bill; following concerns about the handling of the decision not to allow time for Stage 1 Committee scrutiny of this Bill, the Business Committee approved a new process for consulting the responsible Committee before a Bill timetable is formally agreed.
- 2.7 As the progress of the Social Services and Wellbeing Bill continues, officials are looking at ways to ensure our services respond effectively to the demands placed on us as our still-maturing procedures are tested to the limit by the largest and most complex piece of

## **AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4**

### **Highlight Report to the Commission**

legislation we have considered to date. Issues arising include the need to support the Welsh Government to use our jointly-procured legislation software in a more efficient and effective way, and the question of whether our current Standing Orders allow enough time for Bills to be checked in between amending stages.

#### **3.0 Reference to the Supreme Court of the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill**

3.1 The Legal Services team has been liaising closely with the Welsh Government lawyers about the Counsel General's legal submissions to the Supreme Court on the matter of the Agricultural Sector (Wales) Bill.

3.2 The Bill was passed on 17 July 2013. On 13 August 2013, the Attorney General for England and Wales referred the Bill to the Supreme Court for a ruling on whether its provisions are within the legislative competence of the Assembly or not. The Bill proposes to establish a regime setting minimum terms and conditions of employment for agricultural workers, including minimum wages, sickness and holiday entitlement. The Attorney General contends that such matters are outside the competence of the Assembly.

3.3 The matter has provisionally been listed for two days consideration by the Court on 17 and 18 February 2014. The Counsel General will act as the main respondent to the reference and will set out arguments why he believes the Bill is within the legislative competence of the Assembly. As one of the United Kingdom's law officers, the Attorney General for Northern Ireland has also notified the Court that he wishes to be joined in as a respondent. The Assembly Commission does not have an automatic right to participate but it may apply to do so if it feels that it has any additional legal arguments, not being made by the Counsel General, which may assist the Court.

3.4 At present, but subject to a review of the final legal submissions of the parties involved, our legal services team do not foresee needing to make a recommendation to the Assembly Commission to intervene in the proceedings.

#### **4.0 Remuneration Board**

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

- 4.1 Sandy Blair was appointed the interim chair in October following Sir George Reid's resignation on health grounds. The Committee is continuing with their planned work.
- 4.2 Recent correspondence with Sir George indicates that he is recovering well. He was awarded with a lifetime achievement award at The Herald Scottish Politician of the Year Awards 2013 on 14 November.

### 5.0 Information and Communications Technology

#### Future Services Transition Project

- 5.1 The project is into its final phase, which is to complete the separation from Atos and Welsh Government. A full report is being presented to the Commission at the December meeting.

#### ICT Strategy

- 5.2 Good progress has been made on the ICT Strategy, including installation of the Assembly's private wireless networks, the Public wireless network in the Senedd and provision of iPads and smartphones to Members. These are the early steps towards a more mobile and flexible way of working. However, key to further significant change is the Assembly taking control of its ICT infrastructure and then seeing through some significant changes.
- 5.3 An important decision, taken recently by Investment Board, has been to approve the implementation of Microsoft Sharepoint into the Assembly as the common platform for information management. The first deliverable from Sharepoint will be the replacement of the current website content management system, by September 2014. Sharepoint will provide the development environment to automate many business processes, integrate services, improve search capability, make it much easier to provide information and documents where and when needed and replace current systems such as ABMS and Medialon.

#### Other Achievements

- 5.4 Worthy of note are the following developments, introduced since May:

## **AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4**

### **Highlight Report to the Commission**

- An upgrade to video conferencing facilities in the Committee and VC rooms.
- A trial of BSL interpretation of First Minister's questions.
- Further work in support of Machine Translation capability.
- Developments to roll-out private papers on i-pads.
- Summer upgrades to the Siambr 'boundary' microphones, which has improved the live and broadcast sound from the Ministerial seats in particular.
- Replacement of the public gallery sound system.
- Constituency Office 'ICT health checks'.
- Further upgrades to the Caseworker system.

#### **6.0 AM and AMSS User Satisfaction Survey**

6.1 The latest Member and Support Staff survey was carried out in June 2013. The average satisfaction rating for Assembly Members was 76% (the same as for 2012). Although some areas and questions increased their overall score from the 2012 survey, further work to progress improvements in the following areas is currently underway:

- general ICT issues;
- timeliness and volume of Committee papers;
- a faster production of transcripts and record of proceedings;
- accommodation arrangements in Tŷ Hywel;
- support for Members moving offices;
- media coverage;
- training (including welsh language learning opportunities) for AMs and AMSS.

The next survey will be held in June 2014. This is currently being revised to ensure it is more focused, asks appropriate questions of AMSS, and is not repetitive.

#### **7.0 Continuous Professional Development for AMs and AMSS**

7.1 Since April this year, there have been 373 participants in the Continual Professional Development (CPD) training sessions provided

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

by the Professional Development Team, 87 of which were Assembly Members. A selection of training interventions is listed in the Annex A.

### 8.0 Research Service's new blog

8.1 Following a successful research blog launched by counterparts in the Australian Parliament, the Research Service launched their blog 'In Brief/Pigion' in October 2013. The blog re-uses the wealth of information accumulated in the course of work for Members and their staff to present a diverse collection of short, accessible research articles on topical issues, from policy summaries to legal definitions and FAQs to statistical analyses. Articles are categorised by subject area, so directly relevant information can be found as quickly as possible. Research papers, quick guides and research notes are also published on the site:

<http://assemblyinsight.wordpress.com> or  
<http://pigion.wordpress.com>.

8.2 Members can sign up to email updates by using the function in the right hand sidebar and posts will be linked to the Twitter account ([@NAWRResearch](https://twitter.com/NAWRResearch)) to ensure that Members never miss a post.

## **B. Strategic goal – engage with the people of Wales and promote Wales**

### **9.0 Women in Public Life**

- 9.1 As part of her Women in Public Life campaign, the Presiding Officer launched a web portal in September. This portal contains details of public appointments in Wales; appropriate training opportunities for women to undertake public appointments, and inspirational stories from female role models.
- 9.2 In January, the Presiding Officer will be launching an all-Wales mentoring scheme aimed at women. The scheme will provide intensive personal development and skills training, one to one mentoring support and role shadowing opportunities at the highest levels. It is intended to motivate and encourage participants across Wales to successfully apply for public appointments at all levels locally, regionally and nationally.
- 9.3 The Presiding Officer's very successful lecture series profiling women in traditionally male-dominated spheres will also continue in 2014.

### **10.0 Outreach activities**

- 10.1 The Communications team has commissioned survey questions from Beaufort to measure engagement and knowledge of the National Assembly for Wales. The results are due in December and will be shared with the Commission in January. The questions are shown at Annex B.
- 10.2 A programme of subject specific Twitter feeds is being rolled out, packaging information according to the interests of people, rather than how we are organised internally. Environment and Health are the first two subject areas, and a new Chamber feed has also been launched, providing those who want to watch plenary with information about debates and how to watch them. More feeds will follow once the initial pilots have been analysed to see how they are working, and to ensure they are not taking up a disproportionate amount of staff time.
- 10.3 The Committee teams have been pursuing new ways to engage the people of Wales in the work of the Assembly. Committees are

## **AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4**

### **Highlight Report to the Commission**

increasingly using Twitter to connect with their stakeholders, alongside more innovative face-to-face contact and use of other media. This has applied both to evidence-gathering and reporting back. For example, the Enterprise and Business Committee held round-table discussions with rail user groups in the Pierhead to kick off the Wales and Borders Franchise inquiry. They also launched their entrepreneurship report with a video of Members responding to the report, a summary report for contributors to the inquiry and feedback sessions with young entrepreneurs who featured in the video of evidence.

- 10.4 In terms of legislation, Twitter followers have been kept fully up to date with the progress of the Control of Horses Bill, and stakeholders had the opportunity to participate in pre-legislation workshops prior to the introduction of the Housing Bill.

#### **11.0 Media coverage of Assembly business**

- 11.1 A number of significant business hits in recent months include the Human Transplantation Act, which was carried widely across the UK and beyond.
- 11.2 The launch of the Enterprise and Business Committee's Entrepreneurship report achieved widespread coverage, including a tweet which achieved 'Top Tweet' status from Twitter.
- 11.3 Good coverage of Assembly Business has been achieved - links to the news pages for major stories is at Annex C.
- 11.4 There was also media coverage on other Assembly Business, the Presiding Officer and Assembly Commission activity.

#### **12.0 Youth Engagement**

- 12.1 Nearly 3,000 young people submitted questionnaires to the youth engagement consultation that has now closed. Many of the young people also had visits from Assembly staff to facilitate discussions around what would motivate them to engage with politics and how the Assembly can enable them to do so. Visits were made to youth groups and forums as well as schools, and harder to reach young people were targeted. Feedback from the sessions was positive, with young people appreciating the youth friendly literature produced for

**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4**  
**Highlight Report to the Commission**

the consultation and the opportunity to discuss the issue in a setting that was relaxed and familiar to them.

- 12.2 Youth Focus Groups across Wales will be meeting in the next few weeks to consider the results of the consultation and the merits of a number of potential engagement methods. The Presiding Officer will present the findings to the Steering Group in January 2014 so that it can influence the options that are presented to the Commission in February.

**13.0 Promoting Wales Internationally**

- 13.1 Annex D lists the main international events and visits, including diplomatic visits.

## Strategic goal – use resources wisely

### 14.0 Investment Programme

14.1 The Investment Board meets regularly and, since April, has approved the following proposals as well as keeping live projects under review:

- Women in Public Life
- Website/Sharepoint project
- Senedd Refresh Phase 3
- Machine Translation
- Telephony Project 1
- Improving the Broadcasting Workflow
- Youth Engagement

An outline of each proposal can be found at Annex E.

### 15.0 Information Governance

15.1 The good progress on work to improve information governance at the Assembly over the past six months has been noted by the Assembly Commission Audit Committee. Information Asset Registers for each service are populated and being reviewed and risk assessed at least twice a year. Reviews show good progress in the management of information assets in many areas, and more detailed guidance on strengthening information risk assessment is being introduced to Information Asset Owners this month.

15.2 Management Board agreed in June that work should begin on creating a retention schedule for the Assembly, to encourage deletion of assets and records once they pass their retention periods. Services produced draft schedules over the summer that are currently being checked against best practice and statutory requirements before sign off.

15.3 The Information Officer group has met twice and they are being developed to provide local points of reference on information matters within services. The Information Governance Manager has continued to attend team and service meetings to raise awareness on information management, data protection, and information security breach reporting. An information management blog along with a new

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

information governance section for the staff intranet has been developed and will go live this month.

- 15.4 Earlier this year we organised Advisory Visits by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for three constituency offices, the first such visits for elected representatives in the UK. In September we received the ICO's final report which identified common areas of good practice, together with good practice recommendations. The ICO was pleased that Assembly Members adopted such a proactive approach to data protection and information security.

### 16.0 KPI Corporate Performance Report

The Commission published its new-style KPI Corporate Performance Report in September:

[http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about\\_us-commission\\_assembly\\_administration/about\\_us-commission\\_publications/key\\_performance\\_indicator\\_reports.htm](http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/about_us-commission_assembly_administration/about_us-commission_publications/key_performance_indicator_reports.htm)

- 16.1 The report improved transparency and accountability for the Commission's delivery against key performance measures aligned to achievement of our strategic goals. The next report will cover the period April-December 2013.

### 17.0 HR-Payroll project go-live

- 17.1 A new integrated HR and Payroll system went live on the 1 November and paid all Members, Support Staff, Commission staff and AM Pensioners on 29 November for the first time.
- 17.2 The new system, provided by NorthgateArinso, replaces our existing separate HR and Payroll systems whose contracts were due for re-tender. The new system offers many benefits to the organisation including reducing duplicate data handing, improving data integrity and offering flexibility not currently available with our existing systems (for example, later payroll shut-down dates for Members). The net cost of the system over the next ten years will be less than the current model of operation.
- 17.3 Changes for Members and Support Staff will be minimal – the most noticeable difference will be the new style payslip.

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

### 18.0 Staff Matters

#### Investors in People

- 18.1 Following the assessment in June, we were delighted to be awarded Gold Standard Investor in People for the second time. The liP standard is an independent, external benchmark of our people practices. It helps inform our approach to staff development and align staff's personal objectives with the achievement of the Commission's Strategic Goals. We promote our best practice widely, through contacts with other organisations and in positioning the Assembly as a great place to work.

#### Secondments

- 18.2 In the year to November 2013, 45 internal placements and 42 placements to external organisations have been supported. These placements provide staff with excellent opportunities to gain insights into how other organisations work, in addition to developing their skills and experiences and sharing good practice in return.

#### Staff survey

- 18.3 77% of staff completed the latest Staff Survey, which ran at the end of the summer term. This was the most successful completion rate yet – previous surveys being around 52% completion. Many positive improvements were noted, summarised in the table below, and it is particularly pleasing that the scores in many areas are very much higher than the latest Civil Service People Survey.
- 18.4 During November, we held all-staff meetings in Tŷ Hywel and our Colwyn Bay office to give staff the chance to discuss the results with Management Board. In response to the themes that emerged from the survey and staff meetings, Management Board agreed to strengthen our approach to recruitment and performance management, including ensuring greater consistency. Staff also signed up to personal commitments to improve how we work.

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

Headline results of the staff survey:

Statement	% agree (including strongly agree)		
	July 2012	August 2013	Latest Civil Service People Survey
I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work.	78%	81.4%	46%
I feel that my organisation as a whole is managed well.	57.5%	60.8%	43%
I achieve a good balance between my work life and my private life	72.3%	70.6%	68%
I get the information I need and the things around me to do my job well	64.9%	79.4%	68%
Poor performance is dealt with effectively in my team	43.5%	47.8%	37%
I feel that my opinion is valued - July 2012 My opinion is sought and I am involved in changes that affect my work - August 2013	56.9%	59.2%	36%
I think it is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done in the organisation	34.6%	40.3%	40%

### Review of Apprenticeship Scheme

18.5 Following the successful pilot of the Assembly Apprenticeship Scheme, the number of Apprentice positions has increased from four to six and recruitment is underway. Approximately 30 people attended the Apprenticeship Open Day in the Pierhead in October following which 69 applications were received. Successful candidates will join the Assembly in January 2014.

### High-profile recruitments

18.6 Over the summer, we supported the Public Accounts Committee in recruiting five non-executive members (one of whom to be Chair) of the Wales Audit Office. These new non-executive roles form part of the governance arrangements established for the Wales Audit Office under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013. There was much interest in the role, with 82 applications. We secured the assistance of Gary Martin, of the University of Ulster and the Northern Ireland Audit Officer Advisory Board, to act as an independent panel member.

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

18.7 Recruitment of a replacement Public Services Ombudsman for Wales is now being progressed following the appointment of Acting Ombudsman, Professor Sylvia Margaret Griffiths, arising from Peter Tyndall's resignation.

### 19.0 Equality and accessibility

#### Action on Hearing Loss: 'Louder than Words' Charter Mark

19.1 The Assembly has achieved the Action on Hearing Loss 'Louder than Words' Charter Mark, a best practice charter for organisations striving to offer excellent levels of service for people who are deaf or have a hearing loss. As part of this process, our facilities, communications support equipment e.g. induction loops and working practices were audited for their suitability and access for deaf people and people with hearing loss. Following correspondence to Assembly Members we are exploring further options to improve the accessibility of Assembly proceedings.

#### Supporting the Assembly's BME staff and increasing BME representation in the workforce

19.2 Data published in our Annual Equality Report 2012-2013 shows that 70% of our BME staff are employed at the lowest pay grade and that no-one from a BME background was recruited between April 2012-March 2013. An action plan has been agreed to identify how to better support BME staff and increase BME representation in the work force.

#### Interparliamentary Equality Exchange

19.3 In September, the Equality Team welcomed their counterparts from each of the UK parliaments to the Assembly to build relationships, share best practice and on-going concerns.

#### Disability Confidence and Supporting LGB Staff training

19.4 The Equality Team have rolled out disability confidence training to Front of House staff to enable them to welcome disabled visitors effectively. They have also delivered sessions to security managers on how to support LGB staff. Both training modules will continue to be offered to staff.

## 20.0 Work on the Assembly Estate

### Tŷ Hywel Covered Entrance

20.1 Following agreement by the Commission, works were completed during the summer recess to construct a new covered entrance at the front of Tŷ Hywel and reconfigure our reception and security screening facilities.

20.2 The works have achieved successful improvements by:

- ensuring equality of access for all visitors to the estate;
- removing the need for visiting groups including schools to queue in Pierhead Street;
- enhancing the welcome for visitors; and
- providing more secure and appropriate security arrangements.

20.3 The works were completed on time and within agreed budgets. Positive feedback has been received from visitors about the improved welcome and visitor experience.

20.4 As part of the project, two interview rooms for Members' exclusive use, to meet constituents and other visitors, were also provided adjacent to reception and this enhancement of facilities for Members has also been positively received.

### Office Refurbishment of Tŷ Hywel to maximise space utilisation and the efficiency of our available estate

20.5 Over the summer refurbishment work was carried out to the former NHS Server Farm on 2A and Block 4A of Tŷ Hywel to enable Commission teams and services to be co-located and accessible by Members and their staff.

### New Security Bollards - Tŷ Hywel

20.6 Following a security review and to enhance the security of the building and the safety of all building users, security bollards have been installed at the edge of the pavement in front of Tŷ Hywel entrance and along Britannia Quay to the car park entrance. This ensures that the

**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4  
Highlight Report to the Commission**

area of the estate that fronts on to a public road has protection.

*Environmental Accreditation - Green Dragon Level 5*

- 20.7 Following a rigorous independent assessment of the Assembly's environmental management system, the Assembly has successfully retained Green Dragon level 5 accreditation. Retaining the standard demonstrates that the Assembly effectively understands, manages and reduces its environmental impacts.

## **C. Financial Update**

### **21.0 Annual Report and Accounts 2012-13**

21.1 The Wales Audit Office's reporting on the 2012-13 accounts concluded with its Management Letter presented to the Audit Committee in November. No major concerns were highlighted by WAO, who asserted that any improvements to be made for next year were just fine tuning of an already very effective process. The Committee noted the very positive report and the continuous improvement seen with each Management Letter.

### **22.0 2013-14 Financial Year**

22.1 The approved 2013-14 Budget is £49.5m. This is split into £13.7m for the Remuneration Board's determination and £35.8m for Assembly services. We have two key financial performance indicators: to deliver a year end outturn of 1% or less and to achieve £500k of Value for Money savings. The financial position at the end of October indicates we are on target to achieve both.

### **23.0 2014-15 Budget**

23.1 The plenary debate on 20 November 2013 approved the final budget for 2014-15. This sets next year's funding at £50.6m and is the last budget in the three year investment strategy agreed in 2012-13. Work on the 2015-16 budget has started with the strategy paper to be presented to Commissioners early next year.

### **24.0 Value for Money highlights**

24.1 Since the last report, the Finance team have been taking steps to further embed and promote the Value for Money programme through changes to the intranet site and the increased involvement with Management Board and other budget managers. The drive to ensure we achieve value for money from every £1 we spend is on-going and being promoted across the Commission.

24.2 Between April and October, Assembly services have realised Value for Money savings of £0.319 million against a target of £0.500 million through vacancy management.

## AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission

### Value for Money through Procurement

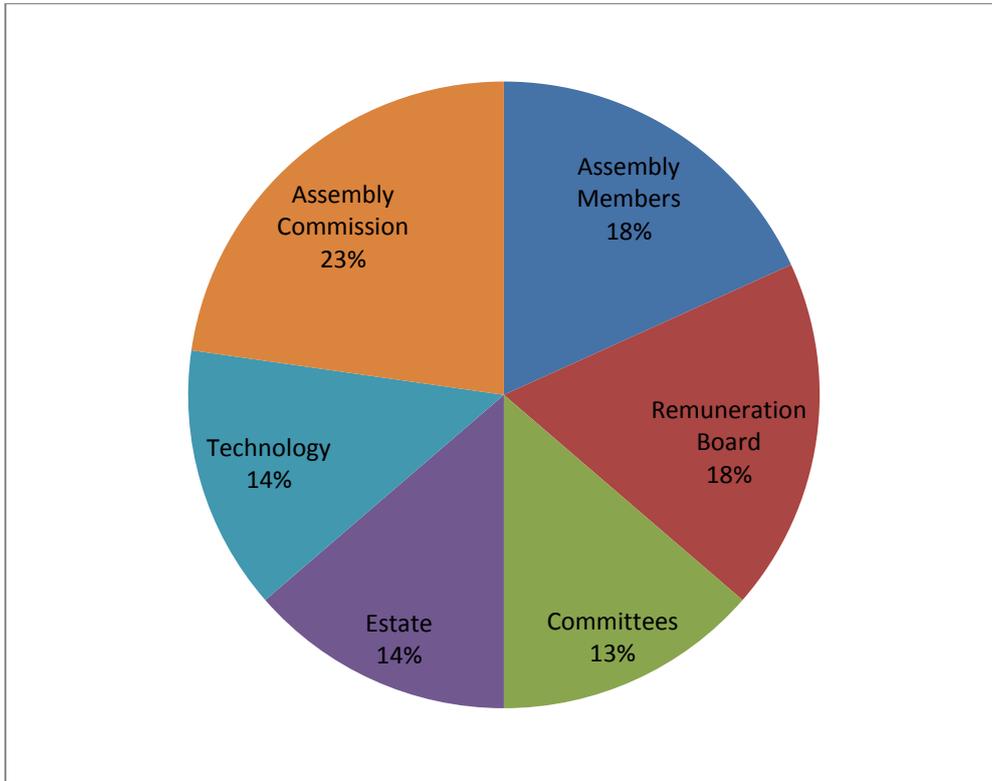
- 24.3 Tenders are now issued and received fully electronically, improving our efficiency and effectiveness during the procurement stages.
- 24.4 During the first two quarters of this year 5 contracts have been awarded: Mobile devices; Public Wireless; Case Worker Training; Internal Audit services; and Members Media Training. The contract negotiations for insurance, mobile devices and internal audit services have generated estimated savings of £94k over the period 2013-14 to 2016-17.
- 24.5 Of the 5 contracts awarded, just one has gone to a large National/ International company - the mobile devices contact. All the other contracts have been awarded to predominantly Welsh based SMEs, evidencing that our approach to giving local SMEs opportunities to win our business is bearing fruit.
- 24.6 In May, the Assembly hosted the Parliamentary Procurement Forum. This is an annual meeting of the Heads of Procurement from across the UK parliaments where good practice is shared. The event was attended by Northern Ireland, Scottish Parliament, House of Commons, House of Lords and Isle of Man and positive feedback was received from the attendees following the event.

## **D. Freedom of Information**

- 25.0 A list of information disclosed since the last report under the Freedom of Information Act is attached at Annex F. This is for the period April to September 2013 and it has been categorised to indicate the subject matter of FOI requests in the period. The list also includes details of information withheld due to FOI exemptions.
- 25.1 The chart below shows the 20 requests as they have been categorised. Two of the requests related to both Assembly Members and Commission staff and have been included in both categories.
- 25.2 Of the 20 requests received, there were no time and cost exemptions applied and 8 requests were withheld. The time/cost taken to handle requests was not captured but four requests required either no work or less work to prepare the response as information was publically available on the Assembly website.

**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4  
Highlight Report to the Commission**

**FOI requests by category (April to September 2013)**



**FOI requests by number (January to September 2013)**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Jan-Mar 2013</b>	<b>Apr-Sep 2013</b>	<b>Total to date 2013</b>
Total requests	26	20	46
Withheld	1	8	9
No information held	0	0	0
Time/cost exemptions	0	0	0

## **CPD for AMs and AMSS – examples of programmes**

### **Financial Scrutiny**

Members, AMSS and Commission staff participated in the first module of the financial scrutiny training delivered by CIPFA in conjunction with the Research Service. The training was delivered to party groups and covered areas such as value for money and budget scrutiny. The next two modules will be delivered through the Assembly's Committees in the new year.

### **Rights of the Child**

In conjunction with Save the Children and the Wales Observatory, Members of the Children and Young People Committee undertook training to enhance members' ability to mainstream consideration of children's rights through all of their work. This was a follow up to a session that had previously been arranged for that Committee and had also been arranged for the Finance Committee.

### **Communications**

Delegates to the media training course learnt how to maximise the benefits of using social media to promote engagement with the Assembly and politics. Following a recent procurement exercise further courses can now be arranged with the offer now including media strategies and issue management.

A number of AMSS participated in an effective writing course that aimed to increase the clarity and quality of participants' written work.

### **CPD for Committee Chairs**

Following the recent review of Assembly Committees a programme of CPD for Committee Chairs is currently being developed. Based on the role description for Chairs agreed by the Business Committee at the start of this Assembly, the programme will look at enhancing the impact and performance of Chairs. Options are currently being piloted with 2 Chairs.

### **Assembly Bills – amendments masterclass**

In conjunction with Parliamentary Counsel Daniel Greenberg, Legal Services and Clerks from the Policy and Legislation Committees an amendments

## **AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4 Highlight Report to the Commission**

masterclass was delivered to Members and AMSS from the Conservative group. The session gave participants opportunity to explore different types of amendments and how they could be used to achieve different purposes. The session was extremely well received and is available to all groups and Committees if they wish to take advantage of the opportunity.

### **Mental Health First Aid**

Delegates based in a constituency office in South Wales attended training that aimed to give them practical skills they may need in order to deal rationally and effectively with difficult customers and staff. Participants heard how they could advise and act in particular circumstances and how best to support constituents in conjunction with other agencies.

### **Welsh Lessons**

Many members and AMSS continue to learn Welsh through classes and one-to-one training. The professional development team has also organised for Members and AMSS to attend residential Welsh training and will shortly deliver a 'gloywi iaith' course for those who wish to increase their confidence in using written Welsh in the workplace. A package of resources including online and e-learning opportunities is currently being developed and will be widely available in the new year.

### **Management and Leadership training**

Aimed at AMSS, the programme allows delegates the opportunity to explore their own leadership styles and enables them to plan their own development through greater self-awareness and by examining the Manager's role.

The programme is accredited through the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and is delivered at Level 5 and Level 7. It will run over an 8 month period consisting of three modules with optional accreditation through the completion of two assignments.

**National Assembly November 2013 Omnibus questions  
Measuring Public Awareness & Engagement**

**KPI: Engagement**

**Success = increases in activity year-on-year across a majority of indicators in Q1.**

Q1. Which of the following have you done in the last year in relation to the National Assembly for Wales?

- Watched a debate or committee on TV or online
- Read, heard or watched news coverage of the Assembly
- Visited the Assembly – either in Cardiff Bay, or in our North Wales office.
- Been on a tour of the Assembly building in Cardiff Bay.
- Met an Assembly Member
- Visited the Assembly’s website or viewed information about the Assembly on Facebook or Twitter
- Been to an event in the Assembly building in Cardiff Bay
- Attended a debate or committee session in the Assembly or at another venue around Wales
- Created or signed a petition to the Assembly
- Other – please specify
- None of the above

**KPI: Public understanding about the role and work of the National Assembly**

**Success = increasing % of correct answers in Q3. (Q2 acts as a balance against random lucky guesses – ie do people know as much as they think they do)**

**Q2. How much, if anything, do you understand about the role of the National Assembly for Wales?**

A great deal, a fair amount, nothing very much, nothing at all

**Q3. Please tell me if you think that the following statements are true or false or you don't know.**

- The Welsh Government and the National Assembly are the same thing
- The National Assembly has powers to make laws on some issues
- The National Assembly can vary income tax
- The National Assembly is responsible for defence and national security.

**Q4. How many Assembly Members, who are elected to represent the people of Wales, are present in the National Assembly for Wales?**

**Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the National Assembly?**

Strongly agree - Tend to agree - Neither agree nor disagree - Tend to disagree - Strongly disagree

- The National Assembly is effective in its role of holding the Welsh Government to account
- The National Assembly encourages public involvement in democracy
- The work of the National Assembly is important to the people of Wales.
- The National Assembly debates and makes decisions about issues that matter to me
- If I wanted to have my say on an issue being considered in the National Assembly, I would know how to go about it.
- I'm not entirely clear about the difference between the Welsh Government and the National Assembly.

### Major coverage of Assembly Business since May 2013

#### May:

- [National Assembly Committee calls for greater penalties for breaching Members' Code of Conduct](#)
- [Welsh Government confused political process with legislative process over council tax regulations – says National Assembly Committee](#)
- [National Assembly Committee calls for devolution of more public transport powers](#)
- [National Assembly to debate the health concerns of promoting caffeine-loaded drinks to children and young people](#)

#### June:

- [Flaws in Welsh Government processes led to more than a million pounds being wasted on a derelict hotel – says National Assembly Committee](#)
- [Welsh Government's handling of AWEMA is symptomatic of grants management shortcomings – says National Assembly Committee](#)
- [National Assembly Committee finds diabetes cases at 'epidemic' level in Wales](#)

#### July:

- [Put the person at the centre of home adaptation system – says National Assembly Committee](#)

#### August:

- [Welsh Government must strengthen the economic infrastructure of north Wales – says National Assembly committee](#)

#### November:

- [Welsh Government draft budget does not match its own priorities – says National Assembly Committee](#)
- [Young entrepreneurs need clear 'route map' to navigate business minefield – says National Assembly Committee](#)

**International events and visits, including diplomatic visits**

Date	Details
<i>15 April</i>	<b>Presiding Officer Rosemary Butler AM</b> attended the 2nd CALRE Standing Committee meeting held in Venice. The meeting allowed an opportunity to discuss the management of the CALRE network and programme, as well as to proactively consider the Assembly's future role in working groups looking at areas of strategic interest and priorities such as <b>e-democracy</b> and <b>Gender and Equality</b> .
<i>27 May-1 June</i>	<b>Antoinette Sandbach AM</b> represented the Assembly at the 24 <sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Seminar held in Singapore*.
<i>29 May</i>	<b>Peter Black AM</b> attended the CALRE Working Group meeting on e-Democracy held at the Parliament of Andalusia, Seville.
<i>17 June</i>	<b>Joyce Watson AM</b> represented the Assembly at the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly's Environment and Social Committee meeting in Dublin as part of their inquiry into Human Trafficking.
<i>24 June</i>	<b>Lindsay Whittle AM</b> represented the Assembly at the British- Irish Parliamentary Assembly's Economic Matters Committee meeting in Dublin.
<i>8 July</i>	<b>William Powell AM</b> represented the Assembly at the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly's European Committee meeting in Dublin.
<i>9 July</i>	Québec Agent-General, Stéphane Paquet visited the Assembly and met with the Presiding Officer
<i>11 July</i>	Shan Morgan, UK Deputy Permanent Representative to the EU, visited the Assembly for a series of meetings including a meeting with Assembly Committee Chairs.
<i>30 July - 6 August</i>	<b>Joyce Watson AM</b> participated in a CPA British Isles and Mediterranean Regional (BIMR) Post Election Seminar in St Helena*
<i>28 August - 5 September</i>	Branch Chair <b>Joyce Watson AM</b> , <b>Simon Thomas AM</b> and <b>Ann Jones AM</b> represented the CPA Wales Branch at the

**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4  
Highlight Report to the Commission**

	59 <sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference* (CPC) in Johannesburg, South Africa. Director of Assembly Business Adrian Crompton also attended the conference to participate in the meeting of the Society of Clerks at the Table (SOCATT)
20-22 October	Deputy Presiding Officer <b>David Melding AM, William Powell AM, Joyce Watson AM, Lindsay Whittle AM and Darren Millar AM</b> attended the 47th British Irish Parliamentary Assembly Plenary held in London.

\*Comprehensive reports of all CPA Wales Branch activities can be found [here](#)

*Diplomatic visits*

The Presiding Officer also hosted these recent diplomatic visits to Cardiff Bay, during which she was able to give an overview of the Assembly and its work as well as to discuss the importance of promoting Wales and Welsh democracy on the world stage and the positive role of diplomatic relations in achieving this.

- 17 June - Her Excellency Ms **Laetitia van den Assum**, the **Netherlands Ambassador** to the UK
- 12 September - His Excellency Mr **Andris Teikmanis**, the **Latvian Ambassador** to the UK
- 1 October - Her Excellency Mrs **Asta Skaisgirytė Liauškienė**, the **Lithuanian Ambassador** to the UK
- 8 October - His Excellency Mr **Konstantin Dimitrov**, the **Bulgarian Ambassador** to the UK
- 10 October - His Excellency Mr **Jovan Donev**, the **Macedonian Ambassador** to the UK
- 25 October - His Excellency Mr **Dominik Furgler**, the **Swiss Ambassador** to the UK.
- 6 November - His Excellency Mr **Matthew Barzun**, the **United States of America Ambassador** to the UK.

**Projects reviewed by Investment Board**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Women in Public Life	To encourage women to apply for public appointments and other roles in public life that may, in turn, lead to improved gender representation in politics.
Website/Sharepoint project	To replace the current website content management system (the support for it is due to expire in September 2014) and to provide an environment and platform for the effective management of information throughout the Assembly.
Senedd Refresh Phase 3	To undertake a number of infrastructure improvements to further enhance the business systems and visitor facilities in the Senedd. In one case, this involves commencing a feasibility and scoping study into Medialon replacement.
Machine Translation	To commit the resource to develop a business case. The aim of the Business Case is to provide the Commission with the information it needs, to decide how best to provide an improved machine translation capability, to meet its obligations under the Official Languages Scheme.
Telephony Project 1 -	Atos currently provides the Assembly with a fully managed fixed line telephony service via the Merlin contract. PSBA (Public Sector Broadband Aggregation) is used to provide the contractual vehicle for the telephony service for Merlin, underpinned by SECL (Siemens Enterprise Communications Limited). This provision cannot continue, post the Commission's exit from Merlin and, therefore, a new contractual framework for telephony services is needed before 31 July 2014.
Improving the Broadcasting Workflow	The Board committed to Phase 1 and 2 during 2013-14 and Phase 3 in 2014-15: Phase 1 - New Senedd.tv

**AC(4)2013(18) Paper 4  
Highlight Report to the Commission**

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
	<p>Phase 2 – New Captioning System</p> <p>Phase 3 – Digital Archive</p> <p>The project will lead to improvements in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How live and archived proceedings, and other videos are streamed on the internet;</li> <li>• How information about live and archived proceedings can be displayed and distributed with the streamed media across multiple platforms;</li> <li>• How metadata can be created at source, associated to and distributed with streamed media;</li> <li>• How metadata can be reused across multiple systems;</li> <li>• How media clips and information can be easily found, reused and repurposed;</li> <li>• How the Assembly’s audio visual recording of proceedings is stored and retrieved.</li> </ul>
Youth Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project will consider how to develop our Youth Engagement services to ensure that children and young people can understand and take an active role in the work of the Assembly, to help build a vibrant Welsh democracy fit for the future.</li> </ul>

**INFORMATION RELEASED FOLLOWING ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUESTS**  
**April-September 2013**

12 requests for information were received during the period April to September 2013. The categories are indicative of the nature of the request

Assembly Members

- Proficiency of Assembly Members in the Welsh language. No information held

Information technology

- Details of emails sent from party distribution lists. No information held
- Access to Wikipedia pages across the network x 2

Committees

- Withheld documents submitted as evidence to the PAC committee (River Lodge Llangollen)

Estates/Facilities

- Refurbishment costs in Tŷ Hywel x 2
- Money received from the filming of Dr Who

Remuneration Board

- The Remuneration board and its links with the WAO

Assembly Commission

- Details on zero hour contracts
- Number of school visits and community groups
- Details of insurance policies and payouts

INFORMATION WITHHELD FOLLOWING ACCESS TO INFORMATION REQUESTS

April-September 2013

8 requests for information were received during the period April to September 2013 and the relevant exemption is shown below.

Assembly Members

- Employment of support staff x 2 (Section 40 – personal information)
- AMs (and Commission staff) taxi spend (Section 21 – already accessible by other means) (*relates to Assembly Commission category also*)

Committees

- Legal advice given on a Private Members Bill (Section 42 – Legal professional privilege)
- Correspondence on a petition (Call to end Councillor and Assembly Member Dual Role) (Section 42 – Legal professional privilege)

Remuneration Board

- Remuneration board (Section 22 – view to publication)
- Remuneration board (Section 22 – view to publication and section 36 – effective conduct of public affairs)
- Remuneration board (and internal HR policies). (Section 22 – view to publication) (*relates to Assembly Commission category also*)

Assembly Commission

*See Assembly Member and Remuneration Board requests above*