



AC(4)2012(2) Paper 4 part 1

Date: Thursday 8 March 2012

Time: 11:00–13:00

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Nicola Callow, ext 8054

Commission Budget Strategy 2013–16

1.0 Purpose and summary

1.1 This paper outlines the suggested approach to the Commission's 2013–14 Budget and provides indicative figures for the remaining years of the Fourth Assembly term (2014–15 and 2015–16).

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the 2013–14 Budget be prepared in line with the indicative figures set out in the 2012–13 budget document and in accordance with the principles set out in the budget strategy at Annex A.

2.2 For 2013–14 the Assembly Services budget is £35.750 million with £13.700 million for Assembly Members' salaries and costs. This represents an increase of 5.3% compared with the 2012–13 Budget.

2.3 As this budget document will also provide indicative figures to the end of the Fourth Assembly, Commissioners will wish to consider longer term planning assumptions. This will be especially important if Commissioners wish to follow a different budget strategy in any of the remaining years of the Fourth Assembly.

3.0 Consultation

3.1 Management Board's regular review of the budget progress will enable each Assembly service to feed into the budget process. In addition, the Chief Executive holds regular updates with Commission staff and this together with email and regular intranet updates will keep Assembly staff informed of progress.

3.2 Regular updates from the Remuneration Board will be provided to ensure that the Commission keeps abreast of financial implications arising from Determination amendments.

3.3 Commissioners will wish to consider any plans for consultation with Assembly Members and their staff. The 2013–14 Budget process provides for one-to-one meetings with each Commissioner to support this process. Presentations for party groups can be provided as needed.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 This budget, the third year of the Fourth Assembly, is expected to continue the trend in growth and investment started in 2012–13. This follows the recommendation by the Finance Committee...”to reconsider its [the Commission’s] budgetary proposals, on the basis of enabling the increase it is seeking to be introduced on a phased basis, over 2–3 years”.¹

4.2 Delivering within the 2013–14 £35.750m indicative budget for Assembly Services means that any change to the operating spend (salaries and running costs) will need to be balanced with the amount available for investment initiatives and projects. This will also apply to the 2014–15 and 2015–16 budgets. The anticipated budget for the investment programme is in the order of £2.2m per annum.

4.3 Decisions concerning the pay and other costs of Assembly Members continue to be the responsibility of the Remuneration Board. Any budgetary implications of Board decisions will be reported to the Commission.

5.0 Timetable/Next Steps

5.1 The 10 May and 28 June Commission meetings will provide further opportunities for Commissioners to evaluate the budget progress. The budget document will need to be finalised at the Commission’s 12 July meeting. Commissioners will be offered personal budget updates with emphasis on their portfolio areas to be held in May and September.

5.2 The timetable has been accelerated to ensure that Commissioners’ input and agreement is obtained well in advance of the 27 September meeting, where the Commission’s formal approval to lay the draft 2013–14 budget will be sought. The last day to lay the budget document is 28 September 2012. A detailed timetable can be found in Annex B.

¹ National Assembly for Wales, Report on Scrutiny of the Assembly Commission Draft Budget 2012–13, Finance Committee (Fourth Assembly), 20 October 2011, Para 58.

AC(4)2012(2) Paper 4 part 1
Paper title