

6 February 2024

Dear

## **ATISN 20084 – Freedom of Information**

### **Information requested**

Thank you for your request which I received on 12 January 2024. You asked for:

- The proposals to increase the number of MS in the next 5 years and copies of all [minutes of] meetings and attendees where this was raised discussed and submitted for approval.
- Under what legislation the Welsh government is permitted to increase this expenditure and the estimated cost to the Welsh taxpayer.
- Each Member of the Senedd, full expenses claimed for any items for the last 3 years.

### **The first point was clarified further upon request to**

- Who, when and in what meeting was the proposal to the increase in Members of the Senedd and was a vote required.

### **Our response**

**Who proposed the increase in Members of the Senedd:** The specific proposal of increasing the Senedd's size to 96 Members was made by the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform ([Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform](#)). However, as detailed in the [Explanatory Memorandum](#) to the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill, "over the last two decades, a series of reports have proposed reforms to the Senedd, with the intention of ensuring it had the capacity to deliver its responsibilities effectively." For example, the Explanatory Memorandum details that: "In 2004, the Richard Commission recommended that in consequence to the devolution of primary legislative powers: "the capacity of the Assembly should be increased, by a combination of reviewing its working methods and increasing its Membership from 60 to 80 – with implications for the method of election.""

**When was the proposal to increase the Members of the Senedd:** The Special Purpose Committee's report, *Reforming our Senedd: A stronger voice for the People of Wales*, was published in May 2022. Chapter 4 of the Explanatory Memorandum to the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill provides details on the publication of previous reports related to the size of the Senedd were published.

**In what meeting was the proposal to increase the Members of the Senedd agreed:** The Special Purpose Committee's report was agreed on 18 May 2022.

### **Was a vote required on the proposal to increase the Members of the Senedd:**

The Committee's report details that some of its recommendations were unanimous, and others were voted upon. Following its publication the report was subsequently endorsed in a majority vote by the Senedd on [8 June 2022](#).

The Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill provides for the increase in the Members of the Senedd. For the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill to be passed, it will require a supermajority vote (at least 40 of the 60 Members of the Senedd voting in favour of the Bill) at the end of the Senedd's legislative scrutiny of the Bill (this is known as Stage 4). It also required a majority vote on its general principles, which took place on 30 January 2024 (Stage 1). Details about the Senedd's legislative scrutiny of the Bill can be found at [Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill scrutiny](#).

**Legislation** - The information you requested is set out the [Explanatory Memorandum](#) that accompanied the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill when it was introduced. The relevant section is in Chapter 2 on page 10 that states "*Senedd Cymru ("the Senedd") has the legislative competence to make the provisions in the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill pursuant to Part 4 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 ("GoWA 2006") as amended by the Wales Act 2017.*"

**Member's Expenses** - the Welsh Government does not hold data on expenses claimed by Members of the Senedd in their role as Member. You will need to contact the Senedd to obtain this information. Further information can be found here - [Members' Pay and Expenses \(senedd.wales\)](#)

### **Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,  
Welsh Government,  
Cathays Park,  
Cardiff,  
CF10 3NQ

or Email: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire,

SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely