Independent Remuneration Board

Minutes of Proceedings

22 June 2026

Meeting Location: Room 106, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Alan Lowry, Chairperson

Craig Griffiths, Member

Robert Herron, Member

In Attendance:

James Gilsenan, Assembly Clerk

Roisin Donnelly, Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk

Krystal Clarke, Executive Assistant

Jonathan McMillan, Head of Legal Services, NI Assembly Legal Services (Agenda item 6)

Helen Smyth, Legal Adviser, NI Assembly Legal Services (Agenda item 6)

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly (Agenda item 8)

The meeting commenced at 9.30 am.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared in relation to the agenda items listed for the meeting.

Agreed: The Board agreed to review their declaration of interests before the next meeting.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised that he had declined an invitation from the Office of Identity and Cultural Expression.

The Chairperson advised of his intention to attend the UK Chairs Network meeting on 4 August 2026.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Board agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 27 May 2026.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Drafting Instructions for Second Determination on Assembly Members' Salaries

Jonathan McMillan, Head of Legal Services and Helen Smyth, Legal Advisor, NI Assembly, joined the meeting at 9.53 am.

The Board provided preliminary instructions for a draft determination on Assembly Member's salaries for the 2027-32 mandate.

The Chairperson thanked Mr McMillan and Ms Smyth for their attendance and they left the meeting.

7. Assembly Members' Pensions

The Board considered possible content for its first determination on Assembly Member's Pensions.

Agreed: The Board agreed to seek information on pension drafting services.

Agreed: The Board agreed to suspend consideration of some benefits until completion of Government Actuary's Department review.

8. Board Communications

John Hart, Head of Communications, NI Assembly joined the meeting at 10.45 am.

The Board discussed the communication of its second determination on Assembly Member's salaries with Mr Hart.

Agreed: The Board agreed to consider the communication of its next determination in further detail at its next meeting.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Hart for his attendance and he left the meeting.

9. Correspondence

The Board noted that there was no correspondence.

The Board noted the progress of responses provided to Freedom of Information requests received.

10. Annual Report

The Board reviewed its first annual report.

Agreed: The Board agreed to provide its first annual report to the Assembly Commission in accordance with Section 9 of the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

11. Forward Work Programme

The Board discussed its forward work programme and the deadlines for determinations to be made in respect of the next Assembly mandate.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, 1 September 2026.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.27 am.

Chairperson, Independent Remuneration Board

1 September 2026