

Y Pwyllgor Cyfrifon Cyhoeddus / Public Accounts Committee  
PAC(4)-12-15 PTN3

Darren Millar AM  
Chair Public Accounts Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay

28 April 2015

Dear Chair

We are writing in response to the report of the National Assembly's Public Accounts Committee, published in March 2015.

We welcome the report and will be making reference to it within the Governance Statements that appear as part of our individual Annual Accounts for 2014-15, highlighting that we will take on board the relevant recommendations and that joint action is already in hand to work further towards meeting them during 2015-16.

We have already identified the following potential areas of potential collaboration for 2015-16:

- Review and update the existing Memorandum(s) of Understanding between the organisations and put in place one joint agreement.
- Accounting Officers will continue to meet regularly to share planned work programmes, identify opportunities for joint working and sharing of knowledge, skills and experience.
- To consolidate our staff learning and development programmes to achieve better value for money in securing externally delivered training and in sharing knowledge, skills and experience across the organisations for internally delivered training.
- To work together on the required review of our existing Strategic Equality plans as we all work towards revision and the requirement to have new plans ready for publication by April 2016.

- To explore the potential for the procurement of a common internal audit service provider to maximise potential for benchmarking across similar type organisations within Wales.

As the report acknowledged there is little to be saved financially from sharing 'back office' functions. Our finance, ICT and HR staff who enable the delivery of our objectives, do already work collaboratively, when appropriate, through a shared network with Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies and will continue to do so alongside Wales Audit Office, National Procurement Service and others. We will however look to identify opportunities to work towards any pooled arrangement for sharing knowledge, skills and experience, and there may be other smaller public bodies who would be interested in joining with us.

Independence is a defining feature of any rights based organisation and is viewed by others as a source of legitimacy and authority. It is therefore welcomed that the Committee noted the strong governance argument in favour of a more consistent approach to funding Commissioners that in our view could only strengthen existing accountability arrangements.

We are aware that Meri Huws has already provided you with a written response to the report but the Welsh Language Commissioner will be working with us on the joint action noted above. We trust that this initial response meets with your expectations and we will provide you with an update on progress during 2015-16.

Yours sincerely



**Older People's Commissioner for Wales**



**Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**



**Children's Commissioner for Wales**

cc Welsh Language Commissioner for Wales