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Comisiynydd y Cynulliad
Assembly Commissioner

Simon Thomas AM
Chair of Finance Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
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4 November 2016

Dear Simon

Thank you for your Committee's Report on the Scrutiny of the Assembly Commission Draft Budget 2017-2018, published on 19 October 2016. The Commission accepts all of the Finance Committee recommendations as detailed in the annex attached.

I would like to thank the Committee for your scrutiny and I look forward to the debate on the Commission's budget motion on 16 November. The Commission's approach is always to try to operate with openness, transparency and clarity, if there is any further information your Committee would like to have, please let me know.
Yours sincerely



Suzy Davies

cc Claire Clancy, Nia Morgan

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Ysgrifenyddiaeth Comisiwn y Cynulliad/Assembly Commission Secretariat

Annex

Finance Committee Report on the Scrutiny of the Assembly Commission Draft Budget 2017–2018

Assembly Commission response to Recommendations

Recommendation 1. The Committee notes the detail in the 'National Assembly for Wales draft Budget 2017–18' and subject to the comments and recommendations in this report supports the overall request for resource in 2017–18, and recommends the Assembly support this budget.

The Commission welcomes the recommendation and agrees with the Committee that the spending plans beyond 2017–18 may be subject to change in the future given current uncertainties in many areas.

Recommendation 2. The Committee recognises the need for additional resources to support the Fifth Assembly priorities going forward, however, to ensure transparency and offer clarity, it is recommended that an update on how this resource allocation has been used is provided to the Committee following the detailed capacity planning exercise.

Agreed.

A vital part of the Commission's planning cycle is an exercise to match staffing resource against need. This annual capacity planning assessment informs decisions on the creation of any new posts and ensures that we have the right staff in the right areas.

We are currently in the middle of this year's review of our capacity plans. We will write to the Committee with the outcome of this process once it has been completed.

Recommendation 3. The Committee recommends the Assembly Commission provide an update shortly before the end of the financial year, detailing the projected underspend in relation to money drawn down to fund the Remuneration Board determination and justify how this underspend is being utilised by the Assembly Commission.

Agreed.

We will provide the Committee with a response in March 2017. Our Annual Report and Accounts document for 2016–17 will also provide full details of our expenditure during this financial year.

Recommendation 4. The Committee recommends that in relation to the costs associated with ICT investment projects detailed costings are included within the Draft Budget in future years.

Agreed.

Future budgets will contain greater information on the ICT works planned to deliver the Commission ICT strategy.