

**Dr Andrew Goodall**  
Ysgrifennydd Parhaol  
Permanent Secretary



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**Mark Isherwood MS**

Chair, Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1SN

29<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Dear Mr Isherwood

Thank you for your letter of 7 February in which you set out the Committee's request for an update on a number of issues discussed at the hearing on 26 January, which looked at the role of the Welsh Government's Public Bodies Unit (PBU). I also reply here to your subsequent letter of 25 February about the 2020-21 Financial Reports of the National Museum Wales.

**Evaluation of the work**

I will keep the Committee informed of progress with the evaluation of the work around arm's-length bodies and the work of the PBU as part of this process during 2022-23. I appreciate the importance of proper evaluation of new initiatives once they have had time to bed in. I will write to the Committee with an update by 30 September 2022.

**Register of Devolved Public Bodies**

The Register of Devolved Public Bodies in Wales was updated on 31 January 2022. A further update, based on returns from the end of year accounts process, will be published on or about 30 June 2022 and then will be reviewed and updated as necessary at least once every six months. The full register will be shared annually with the AAO to review and confirm its accuracy. The list of bodies does not change very often but contact details are subject to more frequent change, and it is important to keep all those details up to date.

**Relationship between PBU and the Partnership Teams**

I attach a document which sets out the relationship between PBU and the Partnership Teams which oversee our Arm's Length Bodies. This diagram reflects, as far as it can, the changes in senior structures within the Welsh Government which I am introducing



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from 1 April and about which I am writing to you separately. There may be some changes to this diagram as the changes bed in.

PBU sits within the new Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and reports to the Director of HR. It has no direct responsibility or accountability to the Partnership Teams, nor are the Partnership Teams responsible to PBU. The distinct responsibilities and roles of PBU and partnership teams, and the overall framework within which they operate, are set out in *Delivering Together: Strengthening the Welsh Government's Sponsorship of Arm's Length Bodies*, published in 2017, and the Framework Document being issued to all executive public bodies. I expect, of course, all parts of the Welsh Government to work together constructively in accordance with my requirements as Principal Accounting Officer.

### **Progress in Delivering Diversity and Exclusion Goals**

The Covid-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the number of appointments and reappointments made in 2020-21, the most recent year for which full datasets are available. In agreement with the Commissioner for Public Appointments, the Welsh Government suspended competitions for a period of six months. In order to allow Boards to continue to operate effectively and legally, extensions by exception or reappointments were used, meaning that there was little change to the existing membership. This had an impact on the diversity of public appointments for 2020–21. For that period, the proportion of appointees and reappointments from ethnic minority communities and of disabled people was just less than 5%. The number of new appointments of women stood at 55% and reappointments at 45%.

### **Timetable for Tailored Reviews**

There are 52 public bodies in Wales which could be subject to a Tailored Review. We are working to agree a timetable for a programme of Reviews up to May 2026, given the resources available in both Welsh Government and the ALBs to carry out the work. Consultation on the Tailored Review programme is due to conclude in April 2022 and I will write to the Committee as soon as those discussions are completed.

The Tailored Review Guidance for Wales is in the process of undergoing an assurance review. It was presented to the Community of Practice for Governance Excellence, a Welsh Government internal grouping of expert officers that provides advice and guidance on issues relating to governance, regularity, propriety and compliance with the requirements and principles of Managing Welsh Public Money.

The associated risk assessment tool is known as HART (Handy Risk Assessment Tool), a model which considers each organisation's setup, functions, and existing assurance and governance structures in order to evaluate the current risk factors. Consultation on the use of HART was completed in March 2022 and will be used for all ALBs by February 2023. This is because some public bodies are facing strategic and other reviews before December 2022, meaning that applying the model before then would be less useful. Other bodies have said that other commitments mean that they cannot complete the HART model assessment before the end of 2022 or engage on a Tailored Review in the next 12-18 months.



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## Tailored Review of the National Museum

The first workshop with the senior executive team (SET) of the Museum was held on 21 March 2022. Up to four workshops will be held to agree the approach to and methodology of the Review: this process takes up to three months to complete.

The next stage is the creation of the Review Team made up of no more than four Independent Panel Members. This is the official start of the Tailored Review, which could take up to six months to complete from this point. The Review Team will initially undertake a desktop review and discuss the Terms of Reference before working on interviews, workshops and benchmarking. The PBU will support the Review Team throughout the process and act as a conduit for all relevant communication. We expect the first draft of the report in September or early October and the final report by early December (depending on an early start to the full Review). Publication will follow scrutiny by the Welsh Government Challenge Panel.

I hope that these responses are helpful to the Committee in continuing its scrutiny in this important area.

Sincerely,

Yours,



### Dr Andrew Goodall

Ysgrifennydd Parhaol/ Permanent Secretary  
Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government



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