

Mark Drakeford MS
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh
Language

6 March 2025

Consultation on reviewing the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013

Dear Mark,

You may be aware that the Finance Committee of the fifth Senedd undertook post-legislative scrutiny of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 (the 2013 Act) in 2019. The Committee then consulted on a draft Public Audit (Amendment) (Wales) Bill proposing revisions in eight key areas, including simplifying the current provisions relating to the appointment of non-executive members to the WAO Board. In subsequent correspondence (3 March 2022 and 16 March 2022) with this Committee, the then Minister stated:

"I do not share your view that the case for the Bill is strong. The Government opposes the main proposals as a matter of principle and does not consider the remaining – generally minor – issues to be a priority. The Government is very clear, therefore, that it does not support the introduction of a Bill."

In light of the recent disqualification of the former Chair of the WAO Board, I wrote to the then First Minister on 15 April 2024 noting that the Committee would like to look again at the operation of the 2013 Act. In his response of 4 June 2024, the First Minister suggested that I meet with the then Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office to discuss the matter further. The First Minister indicated that the Cabinet Secretary was supportive of that conversation taking place but cautioned that the Welsh Government legislative resources were at their limit in delivering the Government's existing legislative programme.

Since then, I have consulted the Auditor General on the changes to the 2013 Act that he would like to be brought forward in order of priority. The Auditor General's response sets out the 2013 Act changes he considers to be essential and desirable, along with desirable changes to other legislation. To enable

the Committee to consider its next steps, I would be grateful if you could set out the Welsh Government's position on each change proposed in the Auditor General's letter by 28 April 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peredur Owen Griffiths', written in a cursive style.

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Chair of the Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.