

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
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27 February 2026

Dear Mr Isherwood

At the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee on 4 February, I committed to provide further detail on the plans to improve the way we support the development and delivery of legislation.

Work to deliver legislation involves various specialisms, including policy development, legal advice, legislative drafting and translation. Our improvement work has therefore been based on a significant internal engagement exercise with staff across the organisation, seeking to understand what works well now, and where we can improve. The focus of this work is on the internal role of the civil service in delivering the legislative priorities of Ministers. In developing and progressing this work we have drawn on external advice and international experience.

Our objective is to improve our effectiveness and consistency in how we develop legislation from its earliest stages; increase collaboration between the many disciplines involved; strengthen our internal governance arrangements; and improve the training and support offered to those working on all stages of legislation.

Some actions have already been completed: although some of its functions were already being fulfilled, a central Legislation Division led by a Senior Civil Servant has been introduced to strengthen the overarching management of the legislative programme (including subordinate legislation), develop and deploy specialist staff to individual projects (as outlined further below) and provide a central hub for advice, support and training in relation to legislation.



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This work is part of our commitment to *continuously* improve how we work, to ensure that the civil service is equipped to support Ministers in the context of a growing legislature. It is therefore an ongoing reform agenda, with a current focus on the following themes:

Better understanding of the statute book: Develop deeper and more consistent expertise of the range of primary and secondary law in force across devolved policy areas. This is vital to fulfil two core responsibilities: to advise Ministers on legislative options to deliver their policy priorities and to support routine identification of any technical changes that would improve the law's effectiveness or drive efficiency.

Smaller, more focused legislation: Seek to ensure that Bills are more tightly defined in scope, with experience showing that Bills which are more focused in scope can be delivered more quickly and more effectively. Large, wide-ranging Bills can be difficult to support and risk proceeding at the pace of the slowest part; whereas more focused and properly sequenced Bills can expedite progression and delivery of the policy aims.

Strengthened governance: Provide regular delivery assurance and an escalation route to Directors General and to me as Permanent Secretary, through group governance arrangements. These have been strengthened through the introduction of specialist cross-cutting arrangements that will provide regular assurance and advice throughout the development cycle; identifying specific actions that will need to be taken later in a Bill's development to secure timely delivery. At Ministerial level, governance for the overall legislative programme is currently provided by the Cabinet Sub-Committee on Legislation, chaired by the Counsel General and Minister for Delivery.

Central Legislation Specialist Pool: Provide dedicated project management expertise to policy teams developing primary legislation. A central pool of Bill Managers has been established to allow the flexible deployment of individuals with specialist knowledge of legislation processes to Bill projects.

Understanding how to turn high level policy ideas into legislation is a specific skill and to support subject specific policymakers and raise capability further, the centrally managed pool has been broadened to include this 'policy for legislation' expertise. Further consideration is being given to expanding this approach in the next Senedd.

Effective inception and collaboration: A mandated and consistent approach to initiating Bill projects has been piloted, bringing together all relevant functions involved in the development of each Bill and its associated documents. These sessions ensure a shared understanding of the policy goal, the policy and legislative levers available, implementation proposals, and an agreed collaborative operating model for the project. This will be rolled out for all new Bill projects in the Seventh Senedd.



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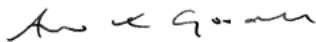
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Training offer: Feedback from the current training offer shows sessions are well attended and positively received. To maintain its relevance and take account of changes to the Senedd and to the legislative framework the current offer is being reviewed and the offer updated.

I hope that this provides a useful overview of the work underway as part of our legislative improvement agenda.

Yours,



Dr Andrew Goodall
Ysgrifennydd Parhaol/ Permanent Secretary
Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government



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