

# Agenda – Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee

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Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Hybrid – Committee Room 5 Tŷ Hywel and video conference via Zoom	Fay Bowen Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 18 June 2025	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.15	<a href="mailto:SeneddPAPA@senedd.wales">SeneddPAPA@senedd.wales</a>

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## Private pre-meeting (09.00 – 09.15)

## Public meeting (09.15 – 09.30)

### 1 Introductions, apologies and declarations of interest

(09.15)

### 2 Paper(s) to note

(09.15)

#### 2.1 Letter from Sioned Evans, Chief Operating Officer – Welsh Government to the Chair regarding the recommendations made in the Committee's report:

'Scrutiny of the Amgueddfa Cymru Accounts 2021–22'

(Pages 1 – 20)

#### 2.2 Public Appointments: consideration of Welsh Government's response

(Pages 21 – 52)

### 3 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of this meeting

(09.30)

## Private meeting (09.30 – 10.00)

### 4 Private paper(s) to note

(09.30)



**4.1 Letter from the Business Committee to the Chair regarding the scrutiny of gaps identified by the Wales COVID-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee and the UK Covid-19 Inquiry Module 2**

(Pages 53 – 55)

**4.2 Public Appointments: consideration of Welsh Government's response**

**4.3 Letter from Andrew Slade, Director General Economy, Energy and Transport Group – Welsh Government to the Chair regarding Cardiff Airport**

(Pages 56 – 57)

# Agenda Item 2.1

Mark Isherwood MS  
Chair, Public Accounts and  
Public Administration Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff. CF99 1SN

[SeneddPAPA@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddPAPA@senedd.wales)

June 2025

Dear Mr Isherwood

In its report '[Scrutiny of the Amgueddfa Cymru Accounts 2021-22](#)' published on 26 June 2024, the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee recommended that:

“The Welsh Government should update the Committee once the rollout of its self-assessment model for reviewing arm’s length bodies is concludes. They should provide further details about its own evaluation of the benefits and downsides of implementing such a system of review.” (Recommendation 10)

In our response to the Committee dated 20 November 2024, the Welsh Government accepted the recommendation and agreed to provide further details once the Self-Assessment Model was rolled out. Your letter of 11 March 2025 to the Permanent Secretary, titled ‘Scrutiny of Accounts: Welsh Government 2023-24’, also asked about the self assessment process, which Dr Goodall answered in his reply dated 1 April. I am now able to update the Committee and attach the Model and guidance which was issued to all arm’s length bodies in Wales in May 2025.

A small number of partnership teams and bodies – a statutory body, a company and a statutory office holder – took part in the Model’s pilot in late 2024 and early 2025. The response was generally positive, with suggestions leading to further changes to the Model, and the bodies are considering further reviews. The revised model has now been issued for use in 2025-2026. The majority of bodies – those which have not been reviewed since 2021 – have been asked to carry out a self assessment in conjunction with their Welsh Government partnership teams and consider the need for a wider review of the organisation, reporting on the outcomes by 31 March 2026. Any issues raised can feed into further amendments to the Model, so that an agreed Model is in place for the next term of government. The remaining bodies need not take any action this year but are encouraged to consider how to use self assessment in the future.

Where a need for a wider review is identified by Welsh Government or the body itself, there are a number of review methods available. These include a focus on key issues identified through the assessment, a Critical Friend Review or similar tool from the Welsh Government Policy Gateway and Integrated Assurance Hub, or an internally led Rapid Review.

The Committee may find it useful to have an updated list of public bodies and the Minister responsible for each. I have attached a list of Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers with details of the arm's length bodies they oversee at Annex A.

**SIGNED EVANS**  
**Chief Operating Officer, Welsh Government**

## ANNEX A

### WELSH GOVERNMENT ARM'S LENGTH BODIES MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, APRIL 2025

<b>Cabinet Secretary/ Minister</b>	<b>Arm's Length Body</b>	<b>Administrative Classification</b>
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs	Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales	Advisory Group (Statutory)
	Hybu Cig Cymru - Meat Promotion Wales	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Natural Resources Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning	Centre for Digital Public Services Ltd	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Cwmni Eginio Ltd	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	DCFW Ltd (Design Council for Wales)	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Development Bank of Wales plc	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Life Sciences Hub Wales Ltd*	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	National Infrastructure Commission for Wales	Advisory Group (non-statutory)
	Sector Development Wales Partnership Ltd (Industry Wales)	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Trydan Gwyrdd Cymru Ltd	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Welsh Development Management Ltd*	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	WGC Holdco Ltd	Arm's Length Body (Company)
Cabinet Secretary for Education	Adnodd Cyf	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Education Workforce Council	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	HM Chief Inspector of Education and Training	Statutory Office Holder
	National Academy for Educational Leadership	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Qualifications Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language	Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner*	Advisory Group (Statutory)
	Welsh Language Commissioner	Statutory Office Holder

<b>Cabinet Secretary/ Minister</b>	<b>Arm's Length Body</b>	<b>Administrative Classification</b>
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care	Life Sciences Hub Wales Ltd*	Arm's Length Body (Company)
Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government	Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Welsh Development Management Ltd*	Arm's Length Body (Company)
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip	Advisory Panel to the Future Generations Commissioner	Advisory Group (Statutory)
	Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner*	Advisory Group (Statutory)
	Children's Commissioner for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care	Statutory Office Holder
	Future Generations Commissioner for Wales	Statutory Office Holder
	National Adviser for Violence against Women and other forms of Gender-based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence	Statutory Office Holder
	Older People's Commissioner for Wales	Statutory Office Holder
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales	Global Centre for Rail Excellence Ltd (GCRE)	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	Transport for Wales Ltd	Arm's Length Body (Company)
Counsel General and Minister for Delivery	Adjudication Panel for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Agricultural Land Tribunal for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Education Tribunal for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Residential Property Tribunal Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Valuation Tribunal for Wales	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Welsh Language Tribunal	Arm's Length Body (Tribunal)
	Welsh Revenue Authority	Non-ministerial department
Minister for Children and Social Care	Social Care Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)

<b>Cabinet Secretary/ Minister</b>	<b>Arm's Length Body</b>	<b>Administrative Classification</b>
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership	Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Arts Council of Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Careers Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd (Careers Wales)	Arm's Length Body (Company)
	National Library of Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
	Sports Council for Wales (SportWales)	Arm's Length Body (Executive)
Minister for Further and Higher Education	Medr: Commission for Tertiary Education and Research	Arm's Length Body (Executive)

\* Bodies with more than one responsible Minister

# **Self Assessment Model for Wales: Test Stage 2025-2026**

## **Guidance for Public Bodies and Partnership Teams on completing the Self Assessment**

### **Introduction**

1. The Self-Assessment Model for Wales (SAMW) underpins the review programme for public bodies. The Model consists of a set of questions for partnership teams and public bodies to use as a desk-based 'health-check' of the body and to review the relationship with the Welsh Government. It contains guidance for the public body and the partnership team to complete it in partnership.
2. The Model is designed for Welsh public bodies – including statutory bodies, Welsh Government-owned companies, and office holders – to use as a first stage in assessing any issues for further review. Partnership teams and public bodies should use the results from the Model to help decide when a body merits a more detailed review and what it should cover.
3. The results will also be shared with the Public Bodies Reference Group to help it oversee and prioritise a wider programme of reviews, and to identify issues that impact on different bodies.
4. The partnership team and the body should work together to complete the self-assessment exercise. Some questions should be answered by either the team or the body, but others require a joint response. We recommend that each body should undergo a self assessment exercise once a year with its partnership team. The results are not normally published but must be discussed by the body and the partnership team, bringing others into the discussion as they consider necessary. Any recommendations should be agreed, implemented, published, and reported on alongside existing performance indicators.
5. Self-assessment results, in combination with partnership team knowledge, will help to determine whether and when the body should have a more detailed review. Each body should have a detailed review at least once in each Senedd term (once every four years) and a review team, made up of staff from both partnership team and the body, should be set up under a Lead Reviewer to carry out this out.
6. The Model does not provide a final and authoritative view on the need for a more detailed review but offers an indication of performance against a number of baseline performance indicators. The analysis will also help the body and its partnership team to identify the scope of the detailed review.

## Completing the Self Assessment

### Introduction

7. General instructions to help you complete the model are on this sheet. All questions (except the Basic Information ones) must be answered 'Yes', 'No' or 'N/A' (Not Applicable) from the drop-down Response menu. Each question says whether the body, its partnership team, or both working together should answer it. Most have Further Questions, which are answered with free text or (in certain cases) figures. Any further information, explaining the answers, can be added here or in the 'Any Additional Information' box on each sheet.

8. The classification of questions as 'Major' or 'Minor' reflects whether the activity in the question is required of public bodies in general ('**MAJOR**') or not ('minor'). Different bodies and their partnership teams may consider some questions more important – or more applicable to their circumstances – than others. If questions do not apply, please put a brief explanation in the 'Answers and Additional Information' column.

### Sheet 1: Basic Information and Core Questions (Questions 01-13)

9. The Basic Information section is self-explanatory. Answers to 'Type of body' and 'Legal basis of body' must be chosen from the drop-down list: if the answer is 'Other', please give more details in the Additional Comments column.

10. The Core Questions are those which must be asked of every public body at least once in a Senedd term. The partnership team must assure its senior partner (Director or Director General), the Welsh Ministers and the Senedd that the body has a clear mandate, is up to date and remains relevant. These questions help to ensure that there are still good reasons for each body's existence and that there are no better or more cost-effective ways of delivering its functions or services. All possibilities should be considered.

### Sheet 2: Effectiveness (Questions 14-33)

11. Every public body should ensure that it has the correct systems and knowledge in place to deliver effective outcomes for citizens. The body should have clear and measurable performance indicators, aligned to the strategic objectives and priorities of the Welsh Government through its delivery plan. The use of meaningful performance measures, benchmarking against other organisations and engagement with customers and stakeholders form the core of this section. There are also questions on compliance with specific legislation and guidance.

12. This section also includes information on support for four key Welsh Government policies – the Well-Being of Future Generations, the use and growth of the Welsh language, the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, and the Net Zero target. While not all public bodies have a statutory duty to deliver these policies, all have a role in supporting them.

### Sheet 3: Efficiency

13. These questions set out expectations for financial management processes in line with current guidance. They aim to measure whether the body adheres to existing financial guidance and to consider improvements in productivity and efficiency through benchmarking and other comparisons.

14. Certain questions ask for figures – cash, staff numbers, percentage change, and gender pay gap. Any further comments can go in the space above the figures or in the ‘Any Additional Information’ box.

15. Not all public bodies were part of the pay parity exercise that took place between 2021 and 2025 (question 54). If the body completing the assessment was not involved, it should note this in ‘Additional Comments’.

### Sheet 4: Governance

16. These questions cover the requirements and expectations of governance for public body boards, chairs and non-executive members. They show where the questions apply to the board as a whole, the chair and/or the non-executives individually. They can help to identify areas where the body’s governance can be improved as part of a ‘health check’ or as part of a reference document setting out key requirements for boards, chairs and non-executives.

17. While all the questions in this section are marked ‘Major’, not all the questions in the first three themes will apply to statutory office holders or to bodies without boards. In that case, they should be answered ‘N/A’. Questions 72-82 should be answered by all bodies and partnership teams.

### Sheet 5: Accountability

18. This sets out expectations on accountability, relationships between partnership teams and public bodies, and the support and challenge offered to bodies through partnership with the Welsh Government. It can help to identify areas where the body’s relationship and accountabilities with its partnership team can be improved.

19. The relationship between the partnership team and the public body must be in line with the guidance issued by the Welsh Government and others and meet the requirements of ‘Managing Welsh Public Money’. The governance structures and processes ensure that the body maintains high standards of probity in the use and management of public funds.

### Sheet 6: Conclusions

20. This sheet offers space for both the partnership team and the body to review the responses in the self assessment and comment on the conclusions reached. This lists the themes of the preceding sheets, but this can be used as free text for any comments.

## Next Steps

21. Once they have completed the self assessment, the body and its partnership team should discuss the issues raised and decide what further action they wish to take. For the Test Phase in 2025-2026, they should consider whether a wider review should take place in the current year (completed and reported before the end of March 2026). There are a number of different forms which a wider review could take, and the body and partnership team should agree which approach is the most appropriate.

22. A copy of the completed model should be sent to the Public Bodies Leadership and Governance team – [CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales](mailto:CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales). The Public Bodies Reference Group (the Welsh Government Directors responsible for public bodies) will consider the results from different bodies and consider any changes needed for the self assessment model and wider reviews after the Test Phase has ended.

23. If you have any queries about how to use the model or how to consider wider reviews, please contact the Public Bodies Leadership and Governance team – [CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales](mailto:CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales).

Based on Requirements for Reviews of Public Bodies (www.gov.uk), UK Cabinet Office, April 2024. Crown Copyright. Adapted and amended by Welsh Government, April 2025



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Welsh Government

# SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES

## Test Stage 2025-2026

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- 3 [Efficiency](#)
- 4 [Governance](#)
- 5 [Accountability](#)

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- 6 [Conclusions](#)



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# SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES

## Test Stage 2025-2026

### Introduction

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**Introduction to the SAM**

The self-assessment model (SAM) forms one part of the overall review programme for Welsh Government public bodies, including arm's length bodies, companies and statutory office holders. The aim of the model is to help partnership teams decide whether a full-scale review is needed, and if so, its scope.

The SAM consists of a set of questions for partnership teams and public bodies to use as a 'health-check' of the body, and to review the relationship of the body with the Welsh Government. The SAM should be used to help identify any instances where the body (or the partnership team) may not be meeting the minimum requirements expected, including the fundamental questions of whether the body should continue to exist.

The model is designed to be completed by desk-based research and by both the partnership team and the body.

**Using the SAM**

As the public body landscape is varied, the partnership team will need to decide which questions within the model apply to the body in question.

The findings from the model should be seen as indicative rather than conclusive; further investigation or explanation may be needed to clarify or confirm apparent findings.

The outcome of the model should be used as one of the factors to inform the partnership team's decision on whether it needs to take a wider and more detailed review.

The answers, and any differences between the partnership team and the body, may suggest areas for further investigation.

**Steps to complete:**

1. Fill in the details of the body on "Basic Information" tab. This will include free text entries as well as drop down boxes.
2. To fill out an assessment for a quadrant, navigate to the tab (e.g. effectiveness, efficiency) for the area that you wish to fill out information for.
3. Partnership teams will need to consider where some questions may not be relevant - and explain why if they do not believe the body or Welsh Government should comply. If the response to a question is 'N/A', please explain in the 'Additional Comments' box.
4. Partnership teams should then record conclusions drawn from the completion of the SAM on the 'Conclusions Tab'.
5. Partnership teams should record whether the SAM has indicated the need for a wider review. Any decision to commence a wider review will be only partly based on the conclusions drawn here, and both the partnership team and the body will need to consider the other factors that may contribute to this decision.
6. Once complete, the self-assessment should be emailed to [CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales](mailto:CyrffCyhoeddus.PublicBodies@gov.wales) who will discuss the next steps with the partnership team.

**SAM Methodology**

The methodology used is based on **MAJOR** issues (minimum requirements) and minor ones (best practice, continuous improvement). These correspond with the 'shalls' and 'shoulds' outlined in the UK Public Body Review Requirements or, where the questions apply only to Wales, the requirements of relevant legislation.

The partnership team should complete the 'Conclusions' tab to log their response to the answers in the model. This should cover any conclusions that should be drawn from the Yes/No questions (especially where the Response is in **RED**) and b) any further conclusions that can be taken from answers to the additional questions.

**Useful Resources (UK Government)**

[Guidance on the undertaking of Reviews of Public Bodies](#)

[Requirements for Reviews of Public Bodies](#)



Based upon the model devised and published by HM Treasury and UK Cabinet Office  
<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65cb9389a7ded000c79e549/2023-11-17-Annex-D-Self-Assessment-Model-1.xlsx>



# SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES

Test Stage 2025-2026

## 1. Basic Information and Core Questions

Llywodraeth Cymru  
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Theme of Quadrant	Q No	Question	Answered by	Response	Additional Comments
NAME AND LEGAL BASIS	01	Name of public body	Body		
	02	Type of body (Choose from options or explain in 'Additional Comments')	Body		
	03	When was the last review of the body? (Say 'None' if there has not been a review)	Both		
	04	Legal basis of body (Choose from options or explain in 'Additional Comments')	Both		
KEY PEOPLE	05	Name of Senior Partner (Deputy Director), Welsh Government Partnership Team	Partnership Team		
	06	Name of Director General (Additional Accounting Officer for Welsh Government)	Partnership Team		
	07	Name of Chief Executive (Accounting Officer for the Body)	Body		
	08	Name of Internal Auditor	Body		
	09	Name of External Auditor (if not Auditor General for Wales)	Body		

**CORE QUESTIONS - to be answered by the Partnership Team at least once in every Senedd term**

Theme	Q No	Question	MAJOR/minor	Answered by	Response (Yes, No, N/A)	Q No	Further Questions	Answers and Additional Information
FUNCTION	10	Has the body's function or services changed significantly since the last review?	<b>MAJOR</b>	Partnership Team		10A	If Yes, summarise the changes and why they have occurred.	
	11	Does the body still meet at least one of HM Treasury's three tests for arm's length bodies?	<b>MAJOR</b>	Partnership Team		11A	If No, why is the body still existing?	
FORM	12	Could the function or service be delivered through a different delivery model?	<b>MAJOR</b>	Partnership Team		12A	If Yes, why is the body still existing?	
						12B	If No, what is the reason for keeping the current delivery model?	
	13	Has the partnership team considered whether the body's function or service could be delivered more effectively through merging it with another organisation?	<b>MAJOR</b>	Partnership Team		13A	If Yes, why is the body still existing?	
						13B	If No, what alternatives have been considered?	

References:

[Treasury Tests - see page 6 GOV.UK](#)

Any Additional Information

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SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES

Test Stage 2025-2026  
2. Effectiveness

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Theme	Q No	Question	MAJOR/minor	Answered by	Response (Yes, No, N/A)	Q No	Further Questions	Answers and Additional Information
OUTCOMES FOR CITIZENS	14	Does the body regularly engage with Welsh citizens and service users?	minor	Body		14A	If Yes, how does the body do this?	
						14B	If No, does the body have any plans to engage with the public?	
	15	Does the body have a clear published policy to explain how the public can make a Freedom of Information Request (FOI)?	minor	Body				
	16	Has the body received any decision notices or enforcement notices from the Information Commissioner's Office regarding the Freedom of Information Act?	MAJOR	Body		16A	If Yes, how many decision notices or enforcement notices has the body received? What action has been taken to comply?	
	17	Is the body subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)?	MAJOR	Body		17A	If Yes, how does the body ensure it complies with the duty?	
	18	Does the body have clear and accurate performance metrics which are accessible to all stakeholders?	MAJOR	Both		18A	If Yes, how has this been tested?	
PERFORMANCE	19	Does the data provided assure the partnership team that performance metrics are timely and sufficient?	MAJOR	Partnership Team		19A	If No, what are both doing to ensure metrics are timely and sufficient?	
	20	Does the body use benchmarking to compare its performance to other bodies?	minor	Body		20A	How does the body do this?	
	21	Are there any assurance gaps in the body's performance data?	MAJOR	Both		21A	If Yes, what are those gaps?	
	22	Are there any plans to improve the provision of performance data?	minor	Both		22A	If Yes, what are the plans?	
	23	Does the body provide performance data in real time?	minor	Body		23A	If No, why not?	
	24	Do the corporate and business plans align to the Welsh Government's strategic aims and priorities?	MAJOR	Partnership Team		24A	If Yes, how do the body and the partnership team ensure this?	
						24B	If No, what plans are in place to bring them into line?	
	25	Do the body and the partnership team use the Green Book and other guidance when preparing business cases?	MAJOR	Both		25A	If No, what guidance is used?	
	26	Does the body have an effective risk management process that is underpinned by an agreed risk appetite, in line with the Orange Book?	MAJOR	Both		26A	If Yes, how does the body manage risks and report to its Board?	
						26B	If No, how does the body manage risks?	
	27	Do both the partnership team and the body understand each other's risk appetite and approach to risk?	MAJOR	Both		27A	If No, what approach is used to manage risk?	
	28	Does the body conduct stress tests?	MAJOR	Both		28A	If Yes, how often?	
						28B	If No, when was this last considered?	
29	Did the previous review of the body (if there was one) make any recommendations for improvements?	MAJOR	Both		29A	If Yes, what improvements have been made as a result of its recommendations? Have any recommendations not been fully implemented? If not, why not?		
FUTURE GENERATIONS	30	Is the body subject to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015?	MAJOR	Body		30A	If Yes, is it on track to meet targets set under that Act?	
					30B	If No, how is the body supporting the Act?		
WELSH LANGUAGE	31	Is the body named in any of the Welsh Language Standards Regulations made under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011?	MAJOR	Body		31A	If Yes, is it meeting the standards required by those regulations? If not, what is the body doing to improve its performance?	
					31B	If No, how is the body developing its use of Welsh to support the Welsh Government's target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2025?		
ANTI-RACIST WALES	32	Is the body working to deliver the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan?	MAJOR	Body		32A	If Yes, what actions are being taken?	
NET ZERO	33	Is the body contributing to the Welsh Government's Net Zero objectives?	MAJOR	Body		33A	If Yes, is it meeting its own targets and objectives?	
					33B	If No, what is the body doing to improve its performance?		
		References:						Any Additional Information
		<a href="#">Guidance on the undertaking of Reviews of Public Bodies - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">Requirements for Reviews of Public Bodies - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">Freedom of information guidance and resources 1602</a>						
		<a href="#">The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)   EHRC</a>						
		<a href="#">Provision for government   GOV.WALES</a>						
		<a href="#">The Green Book (2022) - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">The Orange Book (2023) - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">Management of risk in government framework - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">Future Generations Commissioner for Wales</a>						
		<a href="#">Welsh Language Commissioner: Welsh Language Standards</a>						
		<a href="#">Anti-racist Wales Action Plan 2024 (access HTML)   GOV.WALES</a>						
		<a href="#">Welsh Government Net Zero strategic plan   GOV.WALES</a>						



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**SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES**

Test Stage 2025-2026

3. Efficiency

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Theme	Q No	Question	MAJOR/minor	Answered by	Response (Yes, No, N/A)	Q No	Further Questions	Answers and Additional Information
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	34	Does the body prepare and publish an annual report and accounts, in line with the requirements set out in the Financial Reporting Manual (FreM)?	MAJOR	Body				
	35	Has spending by the body exceeded its agreed budget at any time in the past three years?	MAJOR	Body		35A	If Yes, give details of the excess for each year :  2023-24 2022-23 2021-22	£ £ £
	36	Was the body carrying debt at the end of the last financial year?	minor	Body		36A	If Yes, what was the level of debt, and by how much had this changed from the previous year? Current Level Previous Year Percentage Change	£ £ %
						36B	If the level of debt has increased, what is the reason for this?	
	37	Were there any losses from fraud in the most recent financial year?	minor	Body		37A	If Yes, what was the level of loss from fraud in the most recent financial year, and by how much did this change from the year before? Most Recent Year Previous Year Percentage Change	£ £ %
						37B	How does the body mitigate the risk of fraud?	
	38	Has the body reported any suspected or proven frauds to the partnership team?	MAJOR	Both		38A	If Yes, summarise the details:	
	39	Does the body make grants to individuals or other bodies using Welsh Government or other public funding?	minor	Body		39A	If Yes, how does the body review these grants to ensure that they continue to achieve value for money for the outcomes delivered?	
	40	Does the body receive commercial income?	minor	Body		40A	If Yes, what are the sources of this income? What percentage of overall income does this account for?	
	41	Does the body use the Wales Collaborative Procurement Pipeline or other common procurement agreements for relevant goods and services?	minor	Body		41A	If No, what other processes does it use?	
BENCHMARKING COSTS	42	Does the body have savings or efficiency plans for the remainder of the current Remit Letter?	minor	Body		42A	If Yes, what progress has been made against these plans?	
					42B	What processes are in place for the body to review its use of resources, ensuring that it continues to maintain efficiency?		
	43	Does the body benchmark its costs against other organisations?	minor	Body		43A	If yes, against which organisations does the body compare its costs (across Wales, the UK and elsewhere)?	
					43B	What benchmarking data does the body use to make these comparisons?		
					43C	How does the body use this benchmarking data to drive efficiencies?		
DIGITISATION	44	Does the body offer public-facing digital services?	minor	Body		44A	If No, what is the digitisation strategy of the body?	
	45	If Yes, do the body's digital services meet the Digital Service Standards for Wales?	minor	Body		45A	If No, how is the body setting standards for its digital services?	
	46	Is the body developing shared services with other public bodies?	minor	Body		46A	If Yes, what shared services does the body use?	
	47	Does the body's website include an accessibility statement?	minor	Body		47A	If No, how does the body ensure accessibility?	
WORKFORCE	48	Does the body employ permanent staff?	minor	Body		48A	If Yes, what has the body spent on permanent staff for each of the past three financial years? 2023-24 2022-23 2021-22	£ £ £
					48B	If Yes, what is the average number of permanent full time employees (FTEs) of the body for the past three financial years? 2023-24 2022-23 2021-22	(FTE) (FTE) (FTE)	
	49	Has there been an increase in the number of full-time employees (FTE) in the most recent year?	minor	Body		49A	If Yes, what is the reason for the increase?	
	50	Has the body paid for external consultancy in the past three financial years?	minor	Body		50A	If Yes, how much has the body spent on external consultancy in the past three financial years? 2023-24 2022-23 2021-22	£ £ £

					50B	How will the body reduce the use of external consultancy?	
	51	Does the body own or rent property?	minor	Body		51A	If Yes, what has the body spent on property for each of the past three financial years?
							2023-24
							2022-23
							2021-22
							£
							£
							£
	52	Has the body reviewed its use of office and other space in the past three years?	minor	Body		52A	If No, will the body review this in the current financial year?
	53	Has the body reported on its gender pay gap in the past three years?	minor	Body		53A	If Yes, what gender pay gap has the body reported for each of the past three financial years?
							2023-24
							2022-23
							2021-22
							%
							%
							%
	54	Has the body maintained pay parity? (The exercise to bring minimum salaries of bodies' pay bands to be at least the minimum of the equivalent scales in the Welsh Government from 2021/22)	minor	Body		54A	If No, does the body propose to reestablish parity? (Only if the body was part of the pay parity exercise in 2021/22)
		References:					
		<a href="#">Government Financial Reporting Manual: 2024-25 - GOV.UK</a>					
		<a href="#">Minimum standards for Grants Management - Welsh Government   Audit Wales</a>					
		<a href="#">Welsh Government expectations of grant recipients [HTML]   GOV.WALES</a>					
		<a href="#">Wales Collaborative Procurement Hub - Sell2Wales</a>					
		<a href="#">Digital Service Standards   GOV.WALES</a>					
		<a href="#">Introduction to Web Accessibility   Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)   W3C</a>					
		<a href="#">Workforce Partnership Council report: Fair work – Gender pay gap and senior pay ratio data [HTML]   GOV.WALES</a>					
							<b>Any Additional Information</b>



**SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES**

Test Stage 2025-2026

4. Governance

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Theme	Q No	Question	MAJOR/ minor	Answered by	Response (Yes, No, N/A)	Q No	Further Questions	Answers and Additional Information
PURPOSE, LEADERSHIP AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE (may not apply to all bodies and office holders)	55	Do key documents and plans set out the purpose and strategy of the body, and (where appropriate) the responsibilities of the chair and board members, in ways that are accessible and easily understood?	MAJOR	Partnership Team				
	56	Has the Framework Document been updated since the last Senedd election?	MAJOR	Partnership Team				
	57	Are the roles, responsibilities and remuneration of non-executive directors clearly defined in writing?	MAJOR	Body		57A	If No, when will these be clarified?	
	58	Does the body have:					58A	Do the committees primarily consist of independent/non-executive directors to ensure objective oversight and reduce conflicts of interest?
			- a non-executive Chair?	MAJOR	Body			
			- a board with a majority of non-executive directors?	MAJOR	Body			
			- a suitably-qualified Finance Director who is a permanent board member?	MAJOR	Body			
			- an Audit and Risk Assessment Committee chaired by a non-executive director with appropriate experience or qualifications? and - a Remuneration Committee chaired by a non-executive director?	MAJOR	Body			
	59	Does the body disclose the meetings and attendance records of board members in the 'Governance Statement' in the Annual Report and Accounts?	MAJOR	Body				
	60	Does the lead non-executive board member support the chair to ensure a board effectiveness evaluation is carried out annually, and with independent input at least once every three years?	MAJOR	Body		60A	If No, what other process is used for board evaluation?	
APPOINTMENTS, SKILLS & TRAINING (may not apply to all bodies and office holders)	61	Has the Chair conducted appraisals of all non-executive directors in the past year?	MAJOR	Body		61A	If Yes, have reports been shared with the partnership team? When?	
	62	Has an appraisal of the Chair taken place in the past year?		MAJOR	Partnership Team		62A	Does the Cabinet Secretary set objectives for the Chair annually and conduct an annual appraisal?
							62B	Do the objectives set by the Chair for the Vice Chair (if applicable), non-executive and Chief Executive align to the Chair's objectives?
	63	Has the Chair undertaken a performance appraisal of the Chief Executive on an annual basis?	MAJOR	Body		63A	Does the partnership team see the Chief Executive's objectives before they are agreed by the Chair?	
	64	Is an induction package available to all new board members?	MAJOR	Body				
	65	Are development opportunities made available to all board members, specifically in regard to financial and reporting requirements?	MAJOR	Body				
CONDUCT & BEHAVIOUR (not all questions may apply to all bodies and office holders)	66	Has the Board adopted the Code of Conduct drafted by the Welsh Government, setting out the standards of personal and professional behaviour expected of all board members?	MAJOR	Body				
	67	Does the body have:				67A	If Yes, where are these registers available to partnership team and the public?	
			- a clear policy in place for the declaration and management of relevant interests?	MAJOR	Body			
			- a publicly available register of these interests for all board members?	MAJOR	Body			
	68	Does the body have clear rules on lobbying for board members?	MAJOR	Body				
	69	Does the body have clear rules on political activity for board members?	MAJOR	Body				
	70	Does the body have						
			- clear whistleblowing procedures and policies?	MAJOR	Body			
		- clear post-employment and post-appointment rules?	MAJOR	Body				
	- effective monitoring processes for these?	MAJOR	Body					
71	Does the body have clear rules and procedures in place for the handling of data and cyber security responsibilities, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (UK GDPR) and the current Security Standards?	MAJOR	Body					
EFFECTIVE	72	Does the body have an appropriate process with the partnership team to ensure engagement in the budgeting process?	MAJOR	Both				
	73	Does the body have appropriate and documented systems of financial delegation in place?	MAJOR	Both				
	74	Does the body receive an annual funding award letter that identifies the separate budget control limits that they must manage their resource activities within, and, if appropriate, a cash GIA award total and an amount for other sources of income that can be retained to be used in that financial year?	MAJOR	Both				





**SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES**

Test Stage 2025-2026

5. Accountability

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Theme	Q No	Question	MAJOR/ minor	Answered by	Response (Yes, No, N/A)	Q No	Further Questions	Answers and Additional Information
EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP	83	Are there regular formal meetings between the body's Chief Executive and the Senior Partner?	MAJOR	Both		83A	If Yes, do these discuss i) progress against objectives; ii) risks (and management); and iii) financial performance?	
	84	Does the body report on a 'comply or explain' basis?	minor	Both				
	85	Does the body have a 'Term of Government' Remit Letter?	MAJOR	Both		85A	If No, when was the latest letter from the relevant Cabinet Secretary or Minister setting out the objectives of the body?	
	86	Are governance structures, financial controls and accounting arrangements in place and set out in key documentation?	minor	Both		86A	If No, what alternative arrangements are in place?	
	87	Has the partnership team reviewed the annual report and accounts to confirm that propriety, regularity and value for money have been achieved?	MAJOR	Partnership Team				
	88	Has the partnership team:						
		- helped in setting specific and measurable annual objectives?	MAJOR	Both				
		- set appropriate and effective Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)?	MAJOR	Both				
ACCOUNTABILITY TO WELSH MINISTERS	89	Does the partnership team have an agreed process for considering and approving requests outside delegated limits?	MAJOR	Partnership Team		90A	If Yes, have the processes been used in the past three financial years? What changes could be made?	
	90	Is major capital expenditure properly considered and subject to appropriate approval processes?	MAJOR	Both				
	91	Does the partnership team attend meetings as required, such as internal risk meetings, Audit and Risk Assessment meetings, and others?	MAJOR	Partnership Team		91A	If Yes, is there a formal protocol in place to manage partnership team attendance at these meetings?	
ACCOUNTABILITY TO SENEDD CYMRU	92	Is the partnership team assured that the body has effective policies and arrangements in place for managing information assets, security, business continuity and sustainability, and that relevant management information is supplied when requested?	MAJOR	Partnership Team				
	93	Does the partnership team receive assurance from the body's Accounting Officer that the body is acting within the authority of the Welsh Ministers and assure the Principal Accounting Officer, the Senedd and the public that public funds are managed properly??	MAJOR	Partnership Team				
		References:						<b>Any Additional Information</b>
		<a href="#">Managing Welsh public money   GOV.WALES</a>						
		<a href="#">UK Corporate Governance Code</a>						
		<a href="#">Orange Book - GOV.UK</a>						
		<a href="#">Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities - GOV.UK</a>						

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# SELF-ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR WALES

Test Stage 2025-2026

## 6. Conclusions

Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

### About this page

This page should be completed by the partnership team and the body, following the completion of the self assessment exercise. It should capture all conclusions drawn by the data and any additional answers .

This should include:

- Indication of the themes that require further review or actions, if any.
- Any relevant conclusions to be drawn from answers marked in **RED**
- Any relevant conclusions to be drawn from the free text boxes
- Any wider context that impacts on the responses and outcomes of the theme
- Whether the conclusions drawn here help to support the need for a wider review of the body.

Basic Information and Core Questions	Q No	Conclusions
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Core Questions		
Function	10-11	
Form	12-13	

Effectiveness	Q No	Conclusions
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Performance	18-29	
Future Generations	30	
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Anti-Racist Wales	32	
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Efficiency	Q No	Conclusions

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Workforce	48-54	

<b>Governance</b>	<b>Q No</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
Purpose, Leadership and Effectiveness	55-60	
Appointments, Skills and Training	61-65	
Conduct and Behaviour	66-71	
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Transparency	79-82	

<b>Accountability</b>	<b>Q No</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
Effective Partnership	83-88	
Accountability to Welsh Ministers	89-92	
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# Public Appointments

## Welsh Government response to PAPA Committee report and supplementary report

09/06/2025

### Summary

The Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee has considered public appointments in Wales and made several recommendations and conclusions for the Welsh Government's consideration.

These consist of 20 recommendations in a main report, titled 'Public Appointments', and a further 3 recommendations and 3 conclusions in a supplementary report, titled 'Public Appointments in Wales: A Commissioner for Wales?'

The Welsh Government response is outlined below.

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## Introduction

The Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee published its report and supplementary report following its inquiry into Public Appointments on Thursday 27 March 2025. We thank the Committee for their reports.

The Welsh Government has considered the Committee's reports and responds to each recommendation and conclusion below.

## 1. Recommendation 1

We recommend the Welsh Government reviews its organisational structure to assess whether moving the Public Bodies Unit to the Expert Resourcing Hub is improving the visibility of the Unit and the engagement with it, and how. The outcome of this review should be shared with the Committee.

### Response:

As part of organisational development work in 2024, the Public Appointments Team was moved from the Chief Security Officer's division to the newly established Centre of Expertise for Resourcing and Recruitment within the HR Planning and Delivery Division. This change was designed to align public appointments work more closely with the wider People and Places Directorate and to integrate best practice in recruitment, workforce planning, and equality, diversity and inclusion.

The aim of the Centre of Expertise for Resourcing and Recruitment is to act as a centre of excellence for resourcing, improving collaboration, and enhancing the visibility and impact of teams like Public Appointments by embedding them in a strategic HR structure. Early feedback suggests this realignment is helping to broaden expertise and deliver more integrated support to departments and stakeholders.

We remain committed to ongoing reflection and continuous improvement. The Deputy Director for HR Planning and Delivery will be carrying out a light touch review of the arrangements via a workshop with the teams who have been involved in the change. We will update the Committee at the end of this process.

## 2. Recommendation 2

We recommend the Welsh Government provides the Committee with details on the progress and outputs of actions underway to build stronger networks and links to the Public Bodies Unit with other relevant Welsh Government departments.

### Response

Strengthening internal relationships is a priority. We are working to enhance coordination between Welsh Government teams involved in public bodies work, including governance, appointments, remuneration, and diversity. This is helping to reduce duplication, avoid stakeholder confusion, and reinforce a more integrated Welsh Government approach to board leadership and support. Improving cross-government visibility and collaboration has been a key driver of the recent restructuring.

Examples of actions underway include:

- **Public Bodies Reference Group** – This internal cross-government group meets quarterly and brings together leads across governance, finance, HR, and public body partnership teams. The group takes a strategic approach to public body engagement across Welsh Government, promotes shared learning, and explores cross-cutting issues.
- **Board Chairs Network** – This is a regular forum led by the Welsh Government’s Chief Operating Officer, providing opportunities for Chairs of public bodies to engage directly with officials on topics such as board effectiveness, diversity, inclusion, and leadership development.
- **Intranet Pages** – A new intranet page for Welsh public bodies provides information relevant to the work of partnership teams. This page will link to a new internal resource, being developed by officials in the Public Appointments Team which will clarify roles, responsibilities, and process expectations for Welsh Government partnership teams involved in public appointments. These are designed to promote consistency, demystify the process, and improve candidate experience.
- **Partnership Team Newsletter** - a regular newsletter is sent out to partnership teams and other teams in Welsh Government which have an interest in public bodies. It provides updates and information on changes made to processes which may impact on partnership teams and is an additional tool to facilitate engagement between the Public Appointments team and Welsh Government colleagues. It also promotes training and internal engagement.
- **Meetings with partnership teams** - These are held three times a year and enable the Public Bodies teams the opportunity to meet online with teams which have an interest in public bodies.
- **Diversity and Talent Pipeline Collaboration** – We are drawing on expertise across Welsh Government, including:
  - The Head of Equality in the Workplace, who is coordinating cross-government efforts to increase board diversity and reduce barriers to appointment.

- The Head of Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, who is supporting inclusive outreach and policy alignment with anti-racist commitments.
- Officials in the Health, Social Care and Early Years Group and Academi Wales, part of the Corporate Services and Inspectorates Group, who are delivering a structured aspiring board members programme aimed at increasing representation from ethnic minority and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.
- Progress on these actions will be summarised and shared with the Committee by autumn 2025, alongside the organisational review outlined in Recommendation 1.

### 3. Recommendation 3

In providing an update in response to recommendation 2 we recommend this should include a diagram/chart to the Committee to visualise where the various responsibilities for public appointments (pay, recruitment, governance/engagement, pipeline development/mentoring, diversity and inclusion) sit within the machinery of Government and how these individual component parts link up with one another. This diagram/chart should show a named senior responsible official and the corresponding Ministerial responsibility for each of these components. The Government should also confirm which named senior official and which Minister leads on its public appointments policy overall.

#### Response

The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice and the Chief Whip (CSSJTCW) has responsibility for public appointments policy and implementation. The Senior Official responsible for all aspects of public appointments policy is Dominic Houlihan, Director of People and Places.

We are developing a governance diagram which will set out the key component parts of the public appointments system, including responsibilities for pay, recruitment, governance and engagement, pipeline development and mentoring, and diversity and inclusion. The diagram will include named leads and show how these elements interact as part of a cohesive policy and delivery approach.

We will share the completed diagram with the Committee by October 2025 (to align with the Recommendation 1 and 2 timelines).

## 4. Recommendation 4

We recommend that the Welsh Government provides us with a clear statement on the five areas of development identified by the thematic review of public board recruitment. The statement should clearly state what actions have been completed or not, setting out how actions have been completed and, where they have not, why not.

### Response

The 2023-24 thematic review of public board recruitment identified five key areas for development, aimed at improving the quality, accessibility, and effectiveness of the public appointments process in Wales. While a summary of the review was shared internally with senior leaders, this is the first formal statement provided to the Committee on progress against each area.

The table below sets out the current position:

Thematic Area	Progress	Summary of Action
1. Candidate Experience	<i>In progress</i>	Templates and candidate communications are being refreshed to improve clarity and tone. We will be reviewing our practices and process in due course to ensure the best candidate care.
2. Data and Monitoring	<i>In progress</i>	We are exploring options for a future data system to improve insight and reporting. In the meantime, the CAIS system continues to capture diversity and appointment data on appointment.
3. Diversity and Inclusion	<i>In progress</i>	Actions aligned to the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan are underway. An independent evaluation of previous strategy delivery is being commissioned. Recruitment of an EDI & Outreach Lead is in progress.
4. Outreach and Talent Pipeline	<i>In progress</i>	A stakeholder mapping exercise has been undertaken to inform targeted outreach. An aspiring board members programme is being piloted in the health sector. This area remains a key focus for further development in 2025-26.
5. Consistency of Process and Governance	<i>In progress</i>	Templates and guidance are being updated. Internal intranet pages are under development to support consistency across departments. Further guidance and training are planned.

These five areas are being taken forward as part of the wider Public Appointments Reform Programme. A further update will be provided to the Committee in autumn 2025 as part of our ongoing reporting on public appointments reform.

## 5. Recommendation 5

We recommend that the Welsh Government rebrands and relaunches the Public Bodies Unit, setting out clearly its role and purpose and ensuring it is fully visible and interacts with the public. This should include more public-facing information about its role and remit, available to all candidates on the Welsh Government's website.

### Response

As was outlined in the evidence session with Welsh Government officials on 17 October 2024, the former Public Bodies Unit (PBU) has been disbanded. Its functions have been realigned with corporate centres of expertise to improve integration across leadership, governance, resourcing, and diversity agendas.

We do not consider a formal rebrand or relaunch of the Public Bodies Unit to be the best use of public resource. Our priority is to improve function over form, focusing on delivering better outcomes for candidates and public bodies through improved systems, communication, and support.

To support this, we have engaged Welsh Government marketing colleagues to explore how we can enhance the look and feel of our public-facing materials, including website content and documentation for potential board candidates and stakeholders. These improvements aim to deliver the visibility and clarity the Committee seeks without the need for a separate brand identity.

Welsh Government already operates under a strong and trusted national brand. We are mindful that introducing new sub-brands could risk diluting this identity or creating confusion. We therefore intend to build public-facing visibility through improved content and accessibility under the existing Welsh Government brand, rather than through a distinct rebranding exercise.

## 6. Recommendation 6

We recommend the Welsh Government prioritise increasing the visibility of the Public Bodies Unit, setting out clear actions to achieve this and timescales for when actions to achieve this will be complete. The Welsh Government should provide updates to the Committee on their progress in implementing this.

### Response

While we are not pursuing a formal rebrand, we fully agree with the Committee's intent to improve visibility and accessibility of public appointments.

Work is already underway to strengthen visibility and engagement with a focus on three key areas:

- Improving public-facing content – Enhancing website content to better support candidates, explain the role of Welsh Government in public appointments, and provide signposting to guidance and opportunities.
- Engaging stakeholders – Working with internal teams and external partners to identify areas for improvement and address barriers to understanding and access.
- Coordinating internal messaging – Ensuring consistent and aligned communication across teams involved in governance, resourcing, and public bodies support.

This work builds on the recent team realignment into the Centre of Expertise for Resourcing and Recruitment, which is designed to enhance collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and the visibility of public appointments work within Welsh Government.

We will provide initial progress updates to the Committee by October 2025, in line with the timeline for updates on Recommendations 1-4.

## 7. Recommendation 7

We recommend that the Welsh Government should, now that the former strategy has expired and no successor has been put in place, urgently have a dedicated, standalone Public Appointments Strategy and action plan in place covering diversity and inclusion in its broadest sense (including language and geographic location). It would not be acceptable, especially given that so many fundamental aspects of the 2020-23 strategy are yet to be delivered, to subsume this into the Anti Racist Wales Action Plan as has been suggested. However, we note that given the short remaining time of the Senedd Term the Welsh Government may wish to consider reinstating the current strategy until May 2026. We believe that it is not the content of the Strategy that is a problem, but more so the lack of delivery of its commitments.

### Response

Although the *Reflecting Wales in Running Wales* strategy ended in 2023, we will reinstate the strategy until May 2026. We remain fully committed to its principles and making sure we deliver on the goals which we set out, including improving the diversity of public boards across all characteristics, including race, gender, disability, Welsh language, socio-economic background, and geography.

At the same time, a formal evaluation of the strategy is being scoped and will be independently led. The evidence from this evaluation will shape our future approach and ensure that actions are grounded in what works. We are committed to co-producing this next phase with communities and experts, with a focus on delivery and measurable outcomes.

We are actively considering how best to structure this work. While no final decision has been made on whether to reinstate or formally renew *Reflecting Wales in Running Wales* as a standalone strategy beyond 2026, we are clear that diversity and inclusion will remain a central and visible part of our public appointments reform programme throughout the remainder of this Senedd term.

We will update the Committee on the outcome of the evaluation and confirm next steps on our strategic approach to public appointments diversity by early 2026.

## 8. Recommendation 8

We recommend that the Welsh Government, as a matter of priority, sends this Committee a timeline setting out its intentions and hard deadlines for the review of its Diversity and Inclusion strategy and the development and implementation of a new one.

### Response

We remain committed to putting in place a refreshed strategy on diversity and inclusion in public appointments. Work is underway to commission an independent evaluation of the 2020-23 strategy. The findings from this evaluation will directly inform the structure and focus of the new strategy.

Given current capacity constraints, we are not yet in a position to publish a full delivery timeline. However, we will provide a further update to the Committee in summer 2025, including indicative dates for consultation, development, and implementation of the new strategy.

## 9. Recommendation 9

We recommend the Welsh Government explain to the Committee why only one annual action plan and one annual report was published under the *Reflecting Wales in Running Wales - Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Public Appointments in Wales (2020-2023)* and, in addition to which minister / official decided not to establish the diversity and inclusion governance group, to confirm which minister or official took the decision every year of the above Strategy not to publish the annual action plan and annual report, and why.

### Response

We recognise the Committee's concern regarding the lack of transparency and governance surrounding the delivery of the *Reflecting Wales in Running Wales* strategy. While we acknowledge that only one annual action plan and one annual report were published during the 2020-2023 period, the exceptional operational disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the ability to implement and maintain key delivery and oversight mechanisms, including the proposed Diversity and Inclusion Governance Group.

Records do not show that a formal decision was taken by any individual Minister or official to stop the publication of annual action plans or reports. Rather, this appears to have been the result of a loss of strategic continuity and operational capacity during the pandemic and post-pandemic period.

We do not believe it is productive or appropriate to retrospectively assign individual responsibility for decisions that were not formally made or recorded. However, we fully accept that the governance arrangements in place at that time were insufficient.

We are taking steps to ensure that this is not repeated. Strengthened oversight arrangements have now been put in place, including:

- A clear commitment to publish progress updates as part of the current Public Appointments Reform plans.
- Regular engagement between the Public Appointments Team and the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA).
- An independent evaluation and stakeholder engagement process to inform the next strategic phase of diversity and inclusion work.

Our priority now is to ensure that all future commitments are underpinned by strong governance, clear accountability, and regular public reporting.

## 10. Recommendation 10

We recommend the Welsh Government provide certainty that the poor governance and administration of its Diversity & Inclusion strategy has not and is not being repeated in other policy areas. To provide this certainty the Welsh Government should provide a list of all the active strategies and actions plans that it has, together with what the reporting requirements are and whether or not they are being met.

### Response

This recommendation falls outside the scope of public appointments and would require a Welsh Government wide audit of all strategies and delivery plans. This is not a proportionate request in response to the issues raised in relation to a single strategy within a specific policy area.

However, we recognise the Committee's concern around governance and delivery, and we are committed to ensuring that the lessons from the *Reflecting Wales in Running Wales* strategy are applied in full within the public appointments reform programme. We are taking steps to ensure a coordinated cross-government approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

All future strategies, action plans and reforms under the remit of the Public Appointments Team will include:

- Clear ownership and governance structures.
- Time-bound delivery milestones.
- Transparent reporting mechanisms.

This approach will ensure improved accountability and minimise the risk of similar governance gaps occurring in future.

The [Anti-racist Wales Action Plan 2024 Update](#) commits Welsh Government, in its role as an employer, to strengthening our internal governance arrangements for anti-racism, ensuring clarity, transparency, and integration with other decision-making forums. This commitment extends to examining how governance arrangements can be used to support Arm's Length Bodies and key partners in the delivery of actions and in embedding an anti-racist ethos. The review of these internal governance arrangements for anti-racism, and equality more broadly, is currently taking place.

An internal Anti-racist Organisation Delivery Board has recently been created to oversee delivery of internal actions in the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan Leadership chapter – these actions include those related to our role in the public appointments process.

## 11. Recommendation 11

We recommend that the Welsh Government must urgently provide this Committee with a complete (not spilt into various correspondence) and comprehensive data set of diversity characteristics (including language and location), as it committed to in its 2020-2023 strategy, for all current - Regulated and Non-Regulated public appointments, for transparency and to inform future activity in this area, thereby creating the baseline promised in Action 1, Goal 1 of the Strategy.

### Response

We recognise that the Reflecting Wales in Running Wales strategy committed to gathering data from all current board members to establish a baseline for future action.

Since that time, we have taken steps to strengthen the diversity evidence base and address key data gaps.

- A full dataset of appointments made between 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023 and 16<sup>th</sup> July 2024 was submitted to the Committee in October 2024 as part of the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee evidence paper. This included disaggregated diversity data across characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background and Welsh language skills.
- The 2023-24 Annual Report of the Commissioner for Public Appointments also provides diversity data for regulated appointments across Wales for the financial year.
- Two surveys of serving board members were undertaken in 2023 as part of the wider *Review of Diversity in the Public Sector Workforce and Boards*, published in March 2025, providing further insight across a broad range of bodies.
- A targeted Welsh language skills survey was conducted in January 2025 by the Public Appointments Team to specifically address gaps around linguistic diversity among serving board members.

While these sources together provide a strong evidence base, we are unable to produce a single, fully consolidated dataset of all currently serving board members. This is primarily due to limitations in our current systems, which capture diversity information at the point of application only and do not allow appointees to update their data once appointed.

As a result, there is no technical capability at present to produce a fully consolidated and current dataset covering all appointees across all bodies.

We are actively seeking to address this systems issue as part of our wider public appointments reform programme. Work is underway to identify technical solutions that will enable real-time, post-appointment data collection and improve transparency and reporting in future.

For non-regulated public bodies, the picture is necessarily more varied. These bodies are not required to follow the regulated public appointments process. Whilst some choose to adopt elements of the regulated process voluntarily and share data; others manage

appointments independently. As a result, the Welsh Government does not currently hold a consolidated list of non-regulated appointments (this is also the case for the UK Government). We will continue to encourage good practice and voluntary engagement across all public bodies and explore opportunities to strengthen data coverage over time.

We fully recognise the importance of consistent, high-quality data to drive improvement in board diversity. We will continue to strengthen the completeness and transparency of our data year on year and will keep the Committee updated as this work progresses.

## 12. Recommendation 12

We recommend the Welsh Government meets our request to publishes the reports “to its board” referred to by the chief operating officer in paragraph 166 of this report.

### Response

We understand the Committee’s interest in the internal reports referred to by the Chief Operating Officer. These reports were not produced for publication and may contain sensitive material, including internal reflections and advice developed as part of policy formulation. As such, they are likely to be exempt from disclosure under the relevant provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

We are committed to transparency and accountability. Where appropriate, we will continue to provide high-level summaries of relevant internal work and respond to formal requests through the proper channels. We will also ensure that the key findings and actions stemming from internal discussions are reflected in future updates to the Committee on the Public Appointments Reform Programme.

## 13. Recommendation 13

We remained unconvinced that enough is being done by the Welsh Government to develop a pipeline of talent for public appointments in Wales. We recommend that the Welsh Government improves its approach to encouraging and supporting individuals in applying for public appointments. This could include increased shadowing opportunities and taking a broader and more inclusive approach to promoting available appointments.

### Response

We recognise that a more structured and proactive approach is needed to strengthen the pipeline of future public appointees in Wales. We are committed to improving outreach and ensuring inclusive recruitment practices in order to widen participation.

Several actions are already underway, including:

- A stakeholder mapping exercise to identify organisations or projects working to widen participation in board activity across Wales. The plan is to build on this information to develop targeted engagement strategies, improve outreach efforts, and promote more inclusive public appointments.
- Development of new public-facing guidance and intranet content to support both candidates and Welsh Government teams involved in the process.
- A pilot aspiring board members programme within the health sector, aimed at individuals from minority ethnic and Gypsy Roma and Traveller backgrounds, which may inform future cross-sector activity.

In 2025–26, we will explore opportunities to expand shadowing, mentoring, and other preparatory activities to demystify the appointments process and build confidence among prospective candidates. This will include working with partner organisations and communities to ensure our approach is inclusive and reaches those who are least likely to put themselves forward.

The development of a stronger talent pipeline is a key priority within our public appointments reform programme and will feature prominently in our upcoming visibility and engagement plan.

## 14. Recommendation 14

We recommend that the Welsh Government's Public Bodies Unit undertake work to improve its awareness of what constitutes a reasonable adjustment and take a proactive approach in providing applicants with multiple options in terms of the adjustments they require. We ask that an update on this work including details of options available be provided to us in 6 months' time.

### Response

We are committed to removing barriers for applicants and ensuring that the public appointments process in Wales is as inclusive and accessible as possible. While the Public Bodies Unit no longer exists in its previous form, the Public Appointments Team is undertaking an end-to-end reform of the public appointments process, with accessibility and inclusion at its core.

Options include:

- Offering alternative application formats and flexible interview arrangements on request.
- Improving the clarity and visibility of adjustments guidance within candidate materials and appointment packs; · Developing panel training materials to increase awareness of good practice in inclusive assessment.
- Considering the provision of interview questions in advance where appropriate, as part of a more transparent and supportive process.

These improvements form part of our wider reform programme to modernise public appointments in Wales, enhance the candidate experience, and embed inclusive practice at all stages.

We will provide a progress update to the Committee in October 2025, outlining the actions taken to date and the next steps for further strengthening accessibility and inclusion.

## 15. Recommendation 15

We recommend the Welsh Government progresses its work to improve the accessibility of the public appointments' recruitment process with greater pace and we ask for an update on the outputs of its work with the accountability group of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan as soon as possible.

### Response

Our work to address barriers, improve candidate experience, and modernise the recruitment process is being taken forward as part of the wider public appointments reform programme, and we are committed to accelerating progress wherever possible.

We are actively engaging with the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ARWAP) accountability group and other stakeholders to ensure that our actions are evidence-based, inclusive, and focused on outcomes. Discussions with the group have helped to shape our focus on:

- Improving accessibility of public-facing materials.
- Exploring more inclusive assessment methods.
- Increasing transparency around appointments criteria and process.
- Strengthening outreach to underrepresented communities.

A formal update on the outputs of this engagement and associated accessibility reforms will be provided to the Committee by October 2025, alongside our broader visibility and diversity reporting.

## 16. Recommendation 16

We recommend that the Welsh Government review its approach to providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants for public appointments and we ask that details be provided to us on how the Welsh Government will ensure feedback is consistent and standardised training is provided to recruitment panels on what constitutes good practice in this area.

### Response

Feedback is a critical part of a high-quality, respectful public appointments process. All unsuccessful candidates who reach interview stage are currently offered feedback, in line with the Governance Code. However, we recognise the need to strengthen consistency, clarity and inclusiveness across all appointments.

We are reviewing our approach to feedback as part of our wider programme to modernise and improve public appointments. This work will include developing clearer guidance and support for panel members and internal teams, with a view to embedding a more standardised and candidate-centric approach to feedback.

We are committed to ensuring that feedback consistently reflects good practice, supports candidate development and contributes to a positive experience for all applicants.

We will provide the Committee with an update on this work as part of our broader reporting on public appointments reform.

## 17. Recommendation 17

Remuneration is clearly a barrier to more people applying for public appointments and we recommend an update on the progress and outputs of the Welsh Government's review of Board Remuneration is provided to us.

### Response

We recognise that board remuneration can play an important role in supporting inclusion, accessibility, and fairness in public appointments. We also recognise perceptions around low or inconsistent levels of remuneration, and payments impacting on benefit entitlements, can act as a barrier to participation for some people from underrepresented or lower-income backgrounds.

As the Committee notes, a review of board remuneration is currently underway. This work includes examining current pay levels, benchmarking across other parts of the UK, and wider consideration on how remuneration frameworks could better address time commitments and support diversity and inclusion objectives.

An update on the progress and emerging findings of this review will be provided to the Committee by October 2025.

## 18. Recommendation 18

We recommend that where re-appointments are made, the Welsh Government write to the relevant committee setting out the reason(s) for doing so.

### Response

Reappointments are made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments, with final decisions resting with Ministers. As per the current pre-appointment scrutiny guidance (developed jointly between the Senedd and Welsh Ministers), the Welsh Government informs the relevant Senedd Committee where an incumbent is being reappointed to a significant appointment.

Going further and introducing a requirement to set out the reason(s) for doing so could blur the lines of accountability between Ministers and the Senedd and would place a significant administrative burden on teams without a clear benefit to public confidence or oversight.

For significant or high-profile reappointments, we will continue to ensure that relevant information is shared appropriately through existing channels, including public announcements and publication of appointment details on GOV.WALES.

All reappointments will continue to be made in accordance with the Code and supported by a clear, documented rationale.

## 19. Recommendation 19

We recommend that the Senedd Commission and the Welsh Government work together to develop a set of shared principles to govern the public appointments they are responsible for. These should include the role of Public Appointments pre-appointment hearings, formalising the sharing of relevant information and an appropriate time frame to deliver this information i.e. one full week in advance of a pre-appointment hearing.

### Response

The Welsh Government and the Senedd Commission have distinct statutory responsibilities in relation to public appointments and operate under separate regulatory and accountability frameworks and strategies. As such, we do not consider it appropriate to establish a shared set of principles governing all appointments.

We are open to working with the Senedd to clarify expectations around timelines, information sharing, and committee engagement, where this can be done within the bounds of existing frameworks and without compromising Ministerial accountability.

However, we remain committed to supporting transparency and good practice, particularly where Senedd committees have a scrutiny role, including pre-appointment hearings for significant public roles.

## 20. Recommendation 20

We recommend that the Senedd Business Committee consider whether the existing protocol, as agreed between the Llywydd and the then First Minister Mark Drakeford in relation to pre-appointment hearings, should be reviewed, updated and codified into Standing Orders. We believe that an appropriate body within the Senedd should have some oversight of the ad hoc arrangements that vary from appointment to appointment in terms of Committees involvement in Welsh Government led public appointments and the representation of Committee members on Welsh Government led appointments panels.

### Response

We recognise the importance of robust and transparent scrutiny arrangements for significant public appointments. The existing protocol between the Llywydd and the former First Minister, alongside associated guidance, already provides a clear framework for pre-appointment hearings. These arrangements are aligned with the Westminster model and ensure that committee engagement is appropriate where a scrutiny function has been agreed.

We therefore do not consider it necessary to codify these arrangements into Standing Orders at this time. However, we remain open to engaging constructively with any future review of the existing protocol should the Business Committee wish to undertake one.

Any such consideration would need to continue to respect the separation of powers between the Senedd and the Welsh Government, and the responsibility of Ministers to make appointments in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments.

We will continue to ensure that committee involvement in public appointments is appropriate, proportionate, and clearly communicated at the outset of each relevant appointment process.

## 21. Supplementary Report

### Recommendation 1

We recommend that the Welsh Government establish the role of a Public Appointments Commissioner for Wales, who would assume the responsibilities of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

#### Response

The Commissioner for Public Appointments currently oversees regulated public appointments in England and Wales under the *Governance Code on Public Appointments*. Distinct regulatory arrangements are already in place in Scotland via the Ethical Standards Commissioner and in Northern Ireland via the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. We therefore acknowledge that there is no single UK-wide model for public appointments regulation.

The introduction of a dedicated Welsh Public Appointments Commissioner would represent a substantial departure from the current system and would require:

- Primary legislative changes at the Senedd, with consent from the UK Secretary of State, to modify the existing powers of the UK Commissioner. This is a significant constitutional and legal step, with no current secondary powers available to implement such a change. The creation of a new statutory role and governance structure within Wales.
- Development of a distinct Code of Practice, regulatory framework, and complaints process.
- Establishment of dedicated funding and staffing arrangements.

Given these complexities and the time required to legislate, we believe the most proportionate approach at this stage is to strengthen the delivery within the current regulatory framework. We will continue to improve transparency, performance and stakeholder engagement and keep the option of regulatory change under review.

**Financial implications:** Establishing a Welsh Commissioner would require new legislation, a permanent appointments office, support staff, and associated administrative costs.

## Recommendation 2

This role should be established on a joint basis with an existing Commissioner role, to ensure that the impact on the Welsh public purse is minimised.

### Response

We recognise the Committee's concern about the cost implications of establishing a new oversight role. However, even if established jointly with an existing Commissioner, a Welsh Public Appointments Commissioner would still require:

- Both legislative competence and UK Government consent to alter the functions of the UK Commissioner for Public Appointments, which are reserved under current arrangements.
- A bespoke statutory framework and governance arrangements specific to Wales.
- Clear separation of duties and accountability between any existing and new Commissioner roles.

Such a proposal would involve complex legal, governance, and financial considerations, and would still depend on changes to primary legislation. There is also no obvious existing Commissioner's role with which a Public Appointments could be combined without radically changing, and possibly downgrading, their current duties.

We believe our current focus should remain on delivering practical and measurable improvements through the Public Appointments Reform Programme, which is already enhancing accessibility, candidate diversity, and public confidence in appointments.

**Financial implications:** A joint role may reduce operational costs but would still require legal, governance, and administrative changes. It could also create complexity in ensuring clarity of roles, responsibilities, and accountability.

### **Recommendation 3**

The new Public Appointments Commissioner for Wales should hold the same powers as the Ethical Standards Commissioner in Scotland holds concerning public appointments, including (but not limited to) the ability to publish a Code for Public Appointments, and the ability to appoint public appointment advisers to support recruitment exercises.

#### **Response**

The Ethical Standards Commissioner in Scotland operates within a fully devolved public appointments framework, underpinned by specific Scottish legislation. In contrast, regulatory oversight of public appointments in Wales remains a reserved matter and is governed by the Governance Code on Public Appointments, as issued by the Cabinet Office.

Replicating the Scottish model in Wales would require:

- Both legislative competence and UK Government consent to alter the functions of the UK Commissioner for Public Appointments, which are reserved under current arrangements.
- A full infrastructure to support a separate Code, compliance system, and advisory mechanism.

While we recognise the strengths of the Scottish model, we consider that such a fundamental change is not proportionate at this time, particularly given the scale of legislative and operational changes required.

Instead, we are prioritising actions within our existing powers, including process redesign, enhancing candidate support, and improved outreach to deliver meaningful change more rapidly.

## **Conclusion 1**

The present model of an England and Wales Public Appointments Commissioner is not working as effectively as it should in accessing the best talent for Welsh public appointments, with representation from all of Wales.

We acknowledge the Committee's concern and agree that further progress is needed to improve the diversity, accessibility, and reach of public appointments in Wales, particularly to ensure representation from all parts of the country.

However, we believe the current regulatory model, under the Governance Code overseen by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, provides a robust foundation. Through our Public Appointments Reform Programme, we are already taking action to improve candidate experience, outreach, and representation, including through place-based engagement and better use of data to identify gaps.

We also note that any move to establish a separate Welsh Commissioner would require both primary legislation and UK Government consent to modify the UK Commissioner's current statutory role.

We will continue to work closely with the Commissioner's Office to ensure that the model works effectively in a Welsh context.

## **Conclusion 2**

A dedicated Public Appointments Commissioner for Wales, with the power to intervene in public appointments and appoint independent public appointment advisers would lead to improved outcomes and lead to a more diverse range of successful candidates.

We recognise the Committee's view that a separate Welsh Commissioner could offer a new model of oversight. However, this would require significant structural change, including the devolution of regulatory authority, new legislation, including the consent of the UK Secretary of State to modify the existing regulatory framework, and the creation of a dedicated oversight body.

At this stage, we believe the best way to achieve improved outcomes is by delivering on the priorities already identified through our reform programme, including better outreach, inclusive assessment, independent scrutiny of key roles, and enhanced candidate support.

We will keep this position under review and continue to engage with stakeholders, including the Commissioner, to ensure that the regulatory system continues to serve Wales effectively.

### **Conclusion 3**

The Committee acknowledges the funding challenges facing the Welsh public sector and believes that the model of the Scottish Ethical Standards Commissioner could offer value for money, whilst also ensuring direct Welsh oversight of public appointments.

We appreciate the Committee's acknowledgement of funding constraints and the desire to explore models that offer both oversight and value for money.

While we understand the rationale behind the Scottish model, it is based on a fully devolved public appointments regulatory framework, which does not currently exist in Wales.

Adopting a similar model would require primary legislation, structural reform, and the establishment of new governance arrangements, all of which would have financial and constitutional implications.

At this time, we believe that our focus should remain on delivering improvement within the current model. This allows us to prioritise practical reforms that improve candidate diversity, reduce barriers, and strengthen transparency without the additional cost and complexity of a separate oversight structure.

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# Agenda Item 4.3

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

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