

Audit Committee

Minutes (AC(2)-01-05)

Meeting date: Thursday 3 February 2005

Meeting time: 9.30am – 12.10pm

Meeting venue: National Assembly for Wales

Assembly Members in Attendance

Assembly Member	Constituency
Janet Davies (Chair)	South Wales West
Leighton Andrews (until 12.00pm)	Rhondda
Mick Bates	Montgomeryshire
Alun Cairns	South Wales West
Jocelyn Davies	South Wales East
Irene James (until 11.45am)	Islwyn
Mark Isherwood	North Wales
Carl Sargeant	Alyn and Deeside

Others in Attendance

Name	Representing (if applicable)	Agenda item(s)
Ann Lloyd	Head of Health and Social Care in Wales	2

Stuart Marples	Regional Director, Mid and West Wales Health & Social Care Department	2
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Officials in Attendance

Name	Job title
Gillian Body	National Audit Office
Rob Powell	National Audit Office
Ian Summers	National Audit Office
David Powell	Assembly Compliance Officer

Committee Service

Name	Job title
Kathryn Jenkins	Committee Clerk
Claire Griffiths	(Temporary) Deputy Committee Clerk

Item 1: Introduction, Apologies, Substitutions, and Declarations of Interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed Committee Members and members of the public. She welcomed Irene James AM to her first meeting of Committee.

1.2 Apologies had been received from Denise Idris Jones and Catherine Thomas. There were no substitutions. It was noted that Sir John Bourn was attending the Commonwealth Auditor Generals' Conference in Auckland, New Zealand.

1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2: NHS Waiting Times in Wales

Paper: AC(2)-01-05(p.1)

2.1 The Committee took evidence from Ann Lloyd, Head of Health and Social Care in Wales and Stuart

Marples, Regional Director, Mid and West Wales, Health & Social Care Department.

2.2 A verbatim transcript will be attached as Annex 1 to these minutes.

Actions

2.3 Ann Lloyd agreed to provide

- further information regarding the health needs of Wales compared to those of North East England
- a note setting out in greater detail the interfaces between differing levels of NHS Management and their effect on the NHS's ability to collect activity data
- to provide a note setting out the percentage breakdown of budget spent against activity, for example, new outpatients, elective activities, etc.

2.4 Members requested that the Secretariat arrange an additional meeting of the Committee to continue taking evidence from Ann Lloyd and that the meeting be arranged before the next scheduled meeting on 3 March.

Item 3: Welsh Assembly Government response to the Audit Committee Report, Finances of NHS Wales 2004.

Papers: AC(2)-01-05(p.2) AC(2)-01-05(p.3)

3.1 The Chair advised that all recommendations had been fully accepted by the Welsh Assembly Government.

3.2 Members were content.

Item 4: Papers to note

- AC(2)-01-05(p.4) – Correspondence from the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning to the Chair of Audit Committee regarding progress made by further education institutions in complying with disability discrimination legislation.
- AC(2)-01-05(p.5) – Correspondence from the Auditor General for Wales to Leighton Andrews AM regarding value for money audit of higher education institutions.

4.1 The Chair outlined the basis of the correspondence with the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, that not much progress had been made by further education institutions in complying with disability discrimination legislation, as she would have hoped. Alun Cairns noted that the rate of

progress was not acceptable, given that the said that the Act had been in place for some time and vulnerable people could miss out.

4.2 Mark Isherwood asked that it be recorded that Principals of FE Colleges were aware of the obligations but were unable to deliver as they would like.

Gillian Body advised that additional funds had been made available to help FE institutions make progress on this matter; ELWa were monitoring the impact of these funds on institutions' compliance with disability legislation and, at the request of the Committee, would be providing an update report to the Committee by the end of 2005. The Committee agreed that it would return to this issue once ELWa had provided its further update on the progress made by FE institutions.

4.3 Leighton Andrews said that he agreed with the Auditor General's view, set out in the correspondence regarding value for money of higher education institutions, that the ELWa Audit Service report on the abortive merger of the University of Glamorgan and UWIC was sufficient examination of this particular merger. Mr Andrews said that he was content with these matters for the moment.

4.4 The papers were noted.

Item 5: Minutes of the previous meeting

5.1 The Committee agreed the minutes from the meeting held on 2 December 2004.

The Committee resolved to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 8.24 (vi).

Private Session

Item 6: To consider the draft Committee report "Environment Agency Wales: Regulation of Waste Management"

Paper: AC(2)-01-05(p.6)

6.1 The Committee approved its report Environment Agency Wales: Regulation of waste management.

Any Other Business

7.1 Alun Cairns requested that the proposed additional meeting to continue scrutiny of the NAO report on NHS Waiting Times in Wales be scheduled before the next meeting on 3 March.

7.2 Mick Bates asked that the note on the interfaces between differing levels of NHS management and

the consequent effects on data collection be made available before the additional meeting. The Clerk said that she would try to obtain this in time.