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Ein Cyfeirnod/Our Reference

Eich Cyfeirnod/Your Reference

Dyddiad/Date

27 April 2004

Dear Adna

Welsh Assembly Government's response to the recommendations of the Audit Committee report 'The Disposal of the Mid Wales Hospital'

Thank you for your letter of 14 April 2004 regarding the response from the Welsh Assembly Government to the Audit Committee's report *The Disposal of the Mid Wales Hospital*. You sought the Auditor General's advice on the contents of the response and on any follow-up action that might be appropriate.

The Welsh Assembly Government has responded very positively to the Committee's report, not only by agreeing with all eleven recommendations that the Committee made, but by also providing details of how it is already pursuing each of them. The Assembly's NHS Department is to be commended for taking early action so as to address the issues raised by the Committee's consideration of the Auditor General's report on the Disposal of the Mid Wales Hospital of 16 October 2002.

We shall follow-up on the Government's responses to help ensure that the recommendations are pursued effectively. In particular, in relation to the Government's response to recommendation ii, we shall request details of the results of the Assembly's NHS Department's review of the efficacy of its guidance on sustainable development. In relation to recommendation v, we will suggest to the Director of NHS Wales that she should draw the attention of NHS Wales to the need to make use of schedules of condition, or agreed visual records of the property, for all new leases, not just those leases involving a disposal situation. Similarly, on recommendation viii, we will point out to the Welsh Assembly Government that it should draw the attention of all Assembly and ASPB officials dealing with disposals—not just those covered by the Assembly's NHS Department's guidance—to the need to demonstrate and maintain a level playing field with prospective purchasers.

More generally, we will keep in view the progress being made by the Welsh Assembly Government and NHS Wales in improving arrangements for ensuring propriety and sustainable development in estate management. We will draw to the Committee's attention any areas where we consider that further examination by the Committee is merited.

I hope that you find this response helpful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Helen Kirby". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Helen" written in a larger, more prominent hand than the last name "Kirby".

HELEN KIRKBY
Private Secretary to the Auditor General for Wales