



Angela Burns AM  
Chair  
Finance Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

7 December 2010

Dear Angela

### **Assembly Commission Draft Budget 2011-12**

Thank you for the Finance Committee's report on the Assembly Commission's Draft Budget 2011-12, laid on 29 November.

I would like to thank your Committee for the positive comments made in the report on our budget, overall approach and governance arrangements which I know will be well received by staff across the Assembly.

In relation to your recommendations, I am pleased to be able to confirm that a number of them are already in hand:

#### **Paragraph 16**

Our current goals were agreed at the start of the Third Assembly in 2007 and will be reviewed as this Assembly draws to a close. At a strategic level, performance is reported in our Annual Report and Accounts and this can be related back to the budget proposals approved each year.

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**Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh**

However, we do recognise that there is scope for us to further strengthen the bringing together of strategic outcomes, resource mapping and performance measurement as recommended by the Committee. I have recently agreed some changes to service delivery structures that will support this. When the Commission begins to consider its strategic direction for the Fourth Assembly, we will ensure that the Committee's proposals inform that process.

### **Paragraph 23**

As welcomed and acknowledged in the Committee's report, the Commission does have in place a comprehensive system for assessing and managing the Assembly's work within a strong corporate governance framework. The impact of the planned reduction in Assembly staffing will be closely monitored in order to ensure that the effectiveness of the Assembly is not compromised.

### **Paragraph 27**

I mentioned in my earlier letter to you that I had already written to the Assembly Trade Unions with a view to establishing some form of periodic staff survey as an additional tool for effective engagement and feedback. I will be exploring this further when I meet with the unions in the new year. I would however reiterate to the Committee that staff already have a significant range of opportunities to engage with managers and to contribute to the development of the organisation. Our IIP assessment demonstrated that this is recognised and valued by staff.

### **Paragraph 35**

I welcome the Committee's comments on our approach to collaborative working. We are already involved in a number of areas. For example, we use procurement frameworks, we participate in the Welsh public sector benchmarking group and the Finance leadership network. We undertake strong and wide-ranging work with our fellow parliamentary bodies across the UK and further afield. All this enables us to maximise economies by being part of a much larger group where collective knowledge, experience and buying power is shared. I confirm that opportunities for further joint working will continue to be considered and actively pursued.

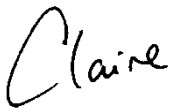
The Committee's report (**Paragraph 20**) highlighted concerns that the Commission's budget reduction strategy and resource planning must not put at risk the Assembly's ability to perform effectively as a legislature and to scrutinise Government. I do not believe the Commission's strategy does pose that risk, but the Commission is of course aware of its statutory

responsibilities under Section 27 (5) of the 2006 Act and will pay close attention to the impact of the budget over the coming year.

I will write again separately with more detail on the restructuring fund and the range of projects in hand in the change programme, as you request in **paragraph 30** of the report, and will include a quantified assessment of the improvements to the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery that will result from these projects and programmes.

My team and I would be happy to meet with you to discuss any of these issues if you would find that helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Claire Clancy**

**Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc/Chief Executive and Clerk  
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru/National Assembly for Wales**