

AUDIT COMMITTEE AC-02-01(p.2)

Date: 8 March 2001
Time: 2pm
Venue: Committee Room ?, National Assembly Building

Title: AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT 00-07: COLEG GWENT - AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES' COMMENTS ON ASSEMBLY CABINET RESPONSE

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6 February 2001

CABINET RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT ON COLEG GWENT

Thank you for your letter dated 9 January 2001 about the response from the Cabinet of the National Assembly for Wales to the Audit Committee's report: "Coleg Gwent". You asked for the Auditor General's advice on the contents of this response and on any follow-up action which the Committee might take.

In its report, the Committee made 21 specific recommendations. The Cabinet has responded positively and constructively to each of these, and given a number of undertakings about actions that Coleg Gwent and also the Further Education Funding Council for Wales will take, in conjunction with other further education institutions where appropriate, in order to respond to the Committee's concerns. Staff of the National Audit Office Wales will be monitoring the completion of these actions closely, on behalf of the Auditor General for Wales.

The Cabinet has also confirmed that the Assembly Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the corresponding Subject Committee, will consider whether the model established for the further education sector - of colleges as independent self-governing bodies - remains appropriate. The Cabinet has further agreed with the Audit Committee that it would be timely to consider the audit

arrangements for further education institutions and noted that the Assembly will wish to consult widely before coming to a firm view.

Subject to the views of the Committee, given the Cabinet's positive response the Auditor General suggests that there is no need for the Committee to take any further action at the moment. The Auditor General will report back to the Committee in due course on the implementation of the undertakings that the Cabinet has given.

I hope that you find this response helpful.

Ann-Marie Harkin
Private Secretary to the Auditor General for Wales