

Manon Antoniazzi

Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc y Senedd
Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

Mark Isherwood MS
Chair of Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee
Senedd Cymru
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

22 October 2021

Dear Mark

Scrutiny of annual report and accounts 2020-21

Following our appearance at your Committee on 6 October, I am writing to provide you with further information to add to the responses we provided during the meeting.

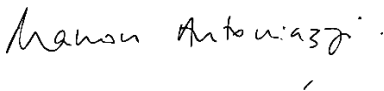
The following information has been requested and is set out in the attached annex:

- an explanation for the increased usage of potable drinkable water when there have been fewer people on the Estate.
- additional information regarding the extensive system testing undertaken as part of the legislative workbench project.

The Committee also requested an in-year update, in February 2022, on progress on socio-economic benchmarking with regards to Commission staff. With the Committee's permission we will write to the Committee in April 2022. This will allow the Commission to provide the Committee with a full 12-month data set to 31 March 2022.

We would like to thank the Committee for its scrutiny. The Commission's approach is always to try to operate with openness, transparency and clarity. So if there is anything else that we can provide you with to assist the Committee, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours sincerely



Manon Antoniazzi

Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc y Senedd / Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



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Annex 1

1. An explanation for the increased usage of potable drinkable water when there has been fewer people on the Estate.

Our Annual Sustainability Report and the Annual Report and Accounts confirm that the usage of potable drinkable water was significantly lower in 2020-21 at 1,642m³ compared to the baseline line of 2014-15 at 6,117m³, due to the building being closed for the periods of lockdown.

We have, however, discovered an error in our 2020-21 Annual Sustainability Report. The report contains one table which states that there was an increase in the usage of drinking water; this note refers to 2019-20 and should have included updated narrative referring to 2020-21.

The 1.6% increase in water usage during 2019-20 compared to the baseline year was as a result of increased public usage of the estate and we also experienced some maintenance issues which also contributed to the increase.

2. Additional information regarding the extensive system testing undertaken as part of the legislative workbench project.

As noted during our recent appearance in front of the Committee, the legislative workbench project has undergone extensive system and user acceptance testing before being introduced into service. This has provided us with the assurance that it works as specified, and that the legislative process can be supported with confidence during the Sixth Senedd. The feedback so far has been very positive.

This extensive system and user acceptance testing included the following:

- At an early stage a group of eight highly experienced officials in legislative scrutiny, including three Committee Clerks, were identified to be part of the development of the software. This same group of individuals would then be responsible for the testing of the system.
- Test scripts were drawn up by the Project Manager which reflected step by step the process of bill scrutiny and could then be referred back to the initial requirements to illustrate which requirements had been met and what was not working correctly.
- Four Bills were identified as being able to cover the requirements – including a simple bill with no amendments, a commission bill for drafting and a large complex bill for stress testing the system. Three of the four are now Acts and therefore the exact amendments and scenarios could be replicated to ensure the system gave the expected results. It also meant we had the original documentation to show Propylon should they need to see how something should be formatted.
- The scripts for these Bills were shared with Welsh Government officials to ensure a joint approach to testing, especially of the introduction and amending stages.



- Biweekly meetings were held with Welsh Government officials to talk through any defects that had been identified and then further biweekly meetings which included Propylon to get feedback on the defects which had been reported.

This has been an extremely labour-intensive and complex process, but one which we felt was necessary to ensure that a key responsibility of the Senedd – to scrutinise and make primary legislation – was not disrupted by the need to update the software which supports that work. With phase 1 of the project complete, the new legislative workbench (LWB360) is ready for use whilst work continues in phase 2 to develop new functionality.

The experience and knowledge of the new software which have developed within the User Group, during the testing process, are now being used to train and support colleagues who will be using the new legislative workbench to process the first Bills of the Sixth Senedd, starting this month with the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Bill.

We are also looking to broaden the membership of that Group in anticipation of the competing demand of supporting 'business as usual' towards the end of the year, particularly in relation to the budget scrutiny process. Our aim is to manage our resources in such a way that our ability to undertake a key stage of the testing process for phase 2 of the project, which is likely to coincide with a particularly busy period for committees, is not affected negatively.

