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Welsh Local Government Association**

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Mark Isherwood MS  
Chair  
Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee  
Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
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Dear Mark,

## **Scrutinising public administration**

The establishment of the Public Accounts and Administration Committee is welcome and the wider remit to provides greater scope to scrutinise administrative matters relating to the Welsh Government and Sponsored Bodies.

The remit of the predecessor Public Accounts Committee provided scope to examine broader administrative matters and the Committee previously undertook several inquiries into matters of relevance to local government and local service delivery.

The Committee has received comprehensive evidence from several bodies who have a remit to review and report on public administration and governance within Wales, notably Audit Wales, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and the Future Generations Commissioner. The Committee therefore has a broad range of evidence, frameworks and principles upon which to draw to help shape and inform its programme of work and future inquiries.

The Committee will also be aware that local authorities' Audit Committees will be re-established from May 2022, with a broader statutory remit to review matters relating to complaints and performance and will become Governance and Audit Committees. Local authorities will also be required to undertake annual self-assessments and commission Panel Performance Assessments once per term to consider how local authorities are meeting the new performance requirements set out by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2022. The new 'performance requirements'

refer to the extent to which the local authority:

- is exercising its functions effectively
- is using its resources economically, efficiently, and effectively
- Its governance is effective for securing the above

The Welsh Government statutory guidance on 'Performance and governance of principal councils' is available [here](#) and the WLGA has produced two supplementary notes, a [Discussion Paper](#) on 'Self-assessment: Perspectives and Principles' and an [Advisory Note](#) on 'Developing and Embedding Self-Assessment Approaches'.

Through its consultation, the Committee has already received a broad range of proposed priorities to consider for its forward work programme. Several of the priorities are 'cross-cutting' and will be of relevance to many of the Senedd's Subject Committees, so there may be scope to under-take joint inquiries, should Standing Orders permit.

Although there will be a UK Public Inquiry into the COVID Pandemic, the Committee may wish to consider any lessons to be learned from the Welsh Government's and wider public service response to the pandemic, particularly relating to the development of One Public Service in Wales.

The Committee's ongoing work around the impact of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 will remain critical. It would be valuable, as part of the work, for the Committee to consider the Welsh Government's approach to multi-year settlements and commitment to review of specific grants, both of which would support longer-term, more strategic financial planning in local government and better alignment with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

The WLGA would welcome the opportunity to discuss with the Committee or its Secretariat as appropriate and looks forward to engaging constructively in the work of the Committee during the remainder of the term.

Yours sincerely,



**Councillor Anthony Hunt**  
WLGA Finance Spokesperson