

Catherine Fookes

Director

WEN Wales

Dyddiad | Date: 15 December 2021

Dear Catherine,

I'm writing to seek your assistance with gathering information on a range of matters relevant to the Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform.

As you are aware, the Committee has been established to consider the conclusions previously reached by the Committee on Senedd Electoral Reform in the Fifth Senedd (as set out in its report, *Senedd reform: The next steps laid before the Senedd on 10 September 2020*); and by 31 May 2022, to make recommendations for policy instructions for a Welsh Government Bill on Senedd reform.

The Committee has agreed to structure its work around the following broad phases:

- Phase One: Members will identify where there is – or a potential to establish – common ground between the policy positions of their political parties, in relation to Senedd reform;
- Phase Two: on areas identified in Phase 1, gather further information as necessary for the Committee to develop recommendations for policy instructions; and
- Phase Three: develop recommendations for policy instructions.

One of the issues that the Committee is considering is the range of measures which could encourage the election of a more diverse Senedd. As you are aware, such measures include the integration of candidate quotas into the electoral system, the introduction of legislative requirements for political parties to publish anonymised data on the diversity of their candidates and job sharing. However, the Committee is conscious that restrictions within the Government of Wales Act 2006 with regard to 'Equal opportunities' and 'Funding of political parties' could constrain the Senedd's competence to legislate in relation to quotas or the requirement to publish candidate diversity data. Members of the Committee understand that WEN has considered these legislative competence issues, and would welcome any insight that WEN may be able to provide in relation to such. This could include any creative drafting approaches that would not engage these legislative reservations.

The Committee would also welcome WEN's views of any other options (including non-legislative measures) that might facilitate the election of a more diverse Senedd, or any

update that WEN would wish to make on the information it previously submitted to the Committee on Senedd Electoral Reform in the Fifth Senedd.¹

The Committee would be grateful for a response to this correspondence by or before 17 January.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Chair

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

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<https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s102095/DIV%2005%20Womens%20Equality%20Network%20Wales.pdf>