

21 December 2022

Dear Dr Goodall,

Inquiry into funding of Commissioners

The Senedd Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee is gathering information about the funding of Commissioners in Wales. This follows the publication of the Senedd Equality and Social Justice (ESJ) Committee's [Report](#) in April 2022 relating to its annual scrutiny of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales.

In its Report, the ESJ Committee [recommended](#):

...the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee carry out a review of the resourcing arrangements of Wales' Commissioners. This review could include consideration of whether any economies of scale can be achieved by the sharing of some backroom functions and staff.

To assist with this, the Committee would welcome information on the following matters:

- Budget approval process:
 - The budget process for agreeing the estimates submitted by the Commissioners.
 - What guidance the Welsh Ministers/Welsh Government officials provide to the Commissioners ahead of them submitting their estimates for the forthcoming year, such as information to support forward financial planning, including the Welsh Government's

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We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

best assessment of the level of funding available in future years and factors to take into account when preparing the estimates.

- What process is in place to agree any modifications of the estimate.
 - In December 2021, the Welsh Government published its Draft Budget 2022-23 and its first multi-year Welsh Budget since 2017. To what extent is the Welsh Government moving to a 'Term of Government' approach for funding for Commissioners to facilitate longer term planning and greater stability, improve efficiency and effectiveness, while complying with statutory requirement for the Commissioners to submit an estimate to Welsh Ministers at least five months before the financial year to which it relates.
 - Does the budget approval process include any review, across the Partnership Teams (sponsors) within Welsh Government departments, of the estimates submitted each year by Welsh Commissioners. Does this seek to achieve consistency in approach, as far as is appropriate and practicable, and if so how.
- Funding comparisons:

- In its Report, the ESJ Committee concluded:

...we note the Commissioner's comments that there is a discrepancy in funding between Wales' Commissioners. While we acknowledge that each Commissioner has different roles and responsibilities and that resourcing needs will vary accordingly, clarification on the justification behind different resource allocations is lacking and warrants further scrutiny. We believe that the onus is on the Welsh Government to better justify how each Commissioner is resourced.

Your views on the ESJ Committee's conclusion about how each Commissioner is resourced.

- Has the Welsh Government conducted a review of the funding allocated across Commissioners and/or their respective financial positions. If so, can you provide details.
- We note the Minister for Social Justice's response to the ESJ Committee's Report (May 2022) says she has asked Welsh Government officials to explore the "scope and need for an evaluation of the [Well-being of Future Generations (Wales)] Act, which could include an assessment of the role and functions of the Commissioner". Have officials undertaken this work, and if the Minister has decided in light of it to evaluate the Act, this Committee would welcome further information about the work, including the proposed timing and scope.
- Has the Welsh Government undertaken any reviews, such as post legislative scrutiny or evaluation, which considers the roles of the other Commissioners in Wales and/or their



costs compared with the estimates made at the time each role was established, with reasons to explain any variances (where appropriate).

- o The Welsh Government's assessment of the impact of the designation of the Commissioners' offices under the changes to the Government of Wales Act 2006 (Budget Motions and Designated Bodies) Order 2018 on their current and future financial positions. What support did the Welsh Government provide to support the Commissioners move to the new arrangements.

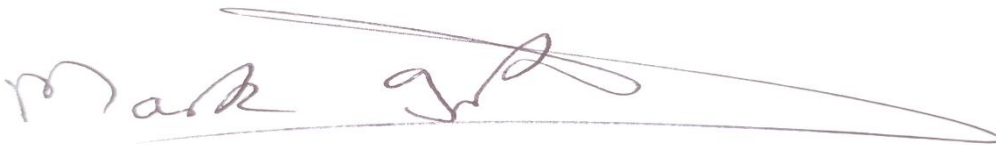
The deadline for submissions is 31 January 2023. The Committee may also wish to take oral evidence from witnesses.

Guidance on preparing written evidence can be found on the Senedd website.

Disclosure of Information

Before submitting information to the Committee, please ensure that you have considered the Senedd's policy on disclosure of information. Alternatively, a hard copy of this policy can be requested by contacting the Clerk, Fay Bowen (0300 200 6565) or SeneddPAPA@senedd.wales

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Isherwood', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark Isherwood MS, Committee Chair

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Mark Isherwood MS
Committee Chair