

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

**Climate Change, Environment,
and Infrastructure Committee**

Senedd Cymru

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Mark Isherwood MS

Chair, Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee

24 January 2023

Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee Inquiry into Public Appointments

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your invitation to contribute to the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee's inquiry into public appointments. The Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee has held one pre-appointment hearing during this Senedd term. I thought it would be helpful to share our experience with your Committee.

On 30 September 2021, the Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with Dr David Clubb, the Welsh Government's preferred candidate for the position of Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission of Wales (NICW). The Committee concluded that the preferred candidate was a fit and proper person to be appointed as Chair of the Commission.

The Welsh Government provided the Committee with a note that stated, "A previous recruitment campaign to appoint a substantive chair, run in autumn 2019, identified a number of appointable candidates". However, the Deputy Minister for Climate Change informed the Committee that there had not been an open application process for the role on this occasion. The Deputy Minister's rationale for this was that the Commission had "lost some momentum over the last year" and a lengthy recruitment campaign could "exacerbate uncertainty" over the Commission's purpose.

Roles like this should be subject to open recruitment unless there are exceptional reasons not to do so. An open recruitment process will ensure that the pool of applicants includes the best candidates from a diversity of backgrounds. If more than one suitable candidate was identified through the recruitment exercise in 2019, it is uncertain why they were not given the opportunity to apply for the



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position on this occasion. Furthermore, several other appointable candidates may have emerged in the two years that had elapsed since the initial recruitment exercise.

During the pre-appointment hearing, Dr Clubb informed the Committee that he had already commenced his duties as Chair. While we understood the urgency to appoint the Chair of the NCIW, the fact that the appointment was made before the pre-appointment hearing raises concerns about the integrity of the process.

I would be happy for my officials supporting the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee to provide you with further details, should that be necessary.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

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