

Pre-appointment hearing for the post of Chair of National Museum Wales

Pre-appointment questionnaire

July 2023

The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee will be carrying out a hearing with the preferred candidate for the post of Chair of National Museum Wales in July 2023.

- 1.** The purpose of this session is to improve the transparency of the public appointments process and allow the preferred candidate an opportunity to experience parliamentary and public scrutiny. A report of the session will be sent to the Minister responsible for making the appointment
- 2.** In order to assist with preparation for the pre-appointment session, I would be grateful if you could complete this questionnaire. Your answers will be shared with Committee members ahead of the meeting. The questions below and the answers you provide will form the basis of the discussions with you at the session. Please note that Members may decide to deviate from this structure, depending on answers you provide to the questionnaire and the public evidence session.
- 3.** Please can you return the completed questionnaire by email to SeneddCulture@senedd.wales by 16.00 on 6 July 2023. There is no word limit for the questions. However I would recommend no more than a couple of paragraphs for each question.



4. Please be aware that unless otherwise agreed, the Committee will publish all information submitted to it, including this questionnaire.

5. If you have any questions, please email the Clerk at SeneddCulture@senedd.wales.

Tell us a little bit about yourself and your background (for committee session).	Dywedwch ychydig wrthym amdanoch chi eich hun a'ch cefndir (ar gyfer sesiwn y pwyllgor).
<p>One of four children, I was born in Wrexham and grew up in a village just outside Mold in North Wales. I attended the Alun School in the town through to sixth form, where I benefitted from some really great and inspirational teaching - in art, literature, history and politics in particular – which encouraged me to believe that I could actually win a place at university. I did and whilst I was there I gained a scholarship to the University of Siena to study the art and political philosophy of the Italian city states – an amazing opportunity for which I'll always be grateful. My executive career was then spent in the pharmaceutical and biotech industry working for a range of companies in public affairs, policy and communications roles. These were senior leadership positions in large, complex, global organisations operating under close scrutiny from regulators, politicians and the public. Since 2016 I've had a portfolio career in Wales with a number of non-executive appointments across the Welsh public sector, in particular with Public Health Wales, the Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Health Specialised Services. These positions now combine my background in health with my passion for the cultural life of our nation. Having grown up as the first generation in our family not to speak Welsh, I've been learning Welsh through Coleg Gwent.</p>	
Question 1: What is your motivation for applying to be Chair of National Museum Wales?	Cwestiwn 1: Beth yw eich cymhelliad dros wneud cais i fod yn Gadeirydd Amgueddfa Cymru?
<p>This is a really exciting opportunity to help lead Wales' family of national museums and collections through the next part of their journey to becoming truly accessible, representative reflections of our myriad Welsh communities and histories – and I'm incredible grateful to have reached this stage in the process. One of the first trustee roles I applied for when I left my executive career was with the Museum. This was back in 2016 and at that time I wasn't successful but it sparked an interest that has grown over the years especially as I've seen the Amgueddfa develop and evolve. It's response to difficult times has been inspirational to watch as a visitor – from Reframing Picton, the Objects of Comfort wellbeing campaign, to the purchase of Melin Teifi - it shows a future thinking responsive organisation that I'd love to be part of leading. I'm also passionate about ensuring everyone has the chance to experience this work, to access our facilities and collections – as my work with the Arts Council has shown the impact arts and cultural provision can have in and with communities.</p>	
Question 2: Why do you think you are well-suited for the role?	Cwestiwn 2: Pam ydych chi o'r farn eich bod chi'n ymgeisydd addas ar gyfer y rôl hon?

Having worked as a non executive/trustee on a number of boards over the past seven years, three years ago I was fortunate enough to be appointed as chair of a NHS organisation. This has been a great opportunity to lead an organisation alongside our Managing Director, and see the impact robust governance, sound finance, rigorous oversight and scrutiny can make to an organisation and its staff, and how we deliver for our population. Having been a board member of the Arts Council of Wales for six years, I recently spent six months acting up as Interim Chair. That period - during which I supported the settling in of a new Chief Executive, and oversaw the consultation and application stage for our forthcoming Investment Review - was really instructive and inspirational in allowing me to see myself as a Chair of major national institution. I'm also excited to explore further ways to strengthen the partnerships between our cultural assets, health and well-being, and think I am well placed to champion this work.

Question 3: What are the three main outcomes that you want to achieve during your tenure?

Cwestiwn 3: Beth yw'r tri phrif beth ydych chi am eu cyflawni yn ystod eich cyfnod yn y rôl?

The work programme and priorities of the Amgueddfa are wide ranging and (rightly) ambitious but there are three elements I would highlight as particularly key to the Chair's role in first three years. Firstly, providing robust oversight of delivery of the priorities set out in the Amgueddfa's strategy with a particular focus on widening engagement across all our communities – both through digitisation projects and in person. Secondly, leading implementation of the recommendations in the forthcoming Tailored Review. Finally, the Chair and the Board play an incredibly important role in setting tone and culture for an organisation and I would want to ensure that every staff member feels like Amgueddfa Cymru is a place where their voice is heard and their contribution valued, where they can both develop themselves and their career, and inspire all our current and future visitors to enjoy and interact with our collections.

Question 4: How will you work with individuals and organisations that support and promote the work of National Museum Wales?

Cwestiwn 4: Sut byddwch yn gweithio gydag unigolion a sefydliadau sy'n cefnogi ac yn hyrwyddo gwaith y Amgueddfa Cymru?

Effective partnership working is key to ensuring our facilities, locations and collections are as accessible and representative as they possibly can be. My first job would be to fully understand the range of partnerships with individuals and organisations that are already in place, engage with them and seek to build on those relationships to better further our joint aims and ambitions. Secondly, I'd want to understand where there are gaps in our collaborative working – across Wales, the UK and internationally. Part of my public facing role as Chair would be to work to foster those partnerships and be the strongest advocate that I can on behalf of Amgueddfa Cymru and all its staff. Finally, my

<p>personal style is to be visible in and around the organisations I work with, to understand staff, partners and their experience of working on the ground – that understanding is vital to good governance and effective board working.</p>	
<p>Question 5: How will you ensure that you maintain your independence from the Welsh Government, whilst also influencing and holding the Welsh Government to account on areas of priority for arts, culture and heritage?</p>	<p>Cwestiwn 5: Sut byddwch yn sicrhau eich bod yn cynnal eich annibyniaeth o Llywodraeth Cymru, tra hefyd yn dylanwadu a dal y Llywodraeth Cymru i gyfrif ar feysydd blaenoriaeth ar gyfer y celfyddydau, diwylliant a threftadaeth?</p>
<p>The relationship between Welsh Government and Amgueddfa Cymru is well described in the Royal Charter, the Remit Letter and the Framework Document and operates on the arms length principle. Building a strong relationship with officials in the sponsor department and the Deputy Minister will be key to maintaining this principle. I'm used to working as a Chair and board member with Welsh Government in this way – maintaining independence whilst ensuring positive and productive relationships. There will always be difficult conversations to be had as public monies are spent and priorities are being delivered, but ensuring there are always open channels of communications to and from the Chair is critical.</p>	
<p>Question 6: How will you work with Senedd Members, Senedd Committees and other stakeholders?</p>	<p>Cwestiwn 6: Sut fyddwch chi'n gweithio gydag Aelodau o'r Senedd, Pwyllgorau'r Senedd a rhanddeiliaid eraill?</p>
<p>I'd like to work with this Committee, other Senedd Committees and Senedd Members in an open and transparent manner. Senedd Committees and Members play a critical role in scrutinising the work of Amgueddfa Cymru and the way in which it spends public money. There will be formal ways in which the Chair of the Amgueddfa will need to interact with them – providing evidence and keeping them updated on areas of priority. Outside these more formal interactions, I would warmly welcome regular contact with Committees and Members in the work the Amgueddfa does so that the opportunities and challenges that face us are fully understood.</p>	

Background

6. Welsh Ministers and the Senedd have agreed to pre-appointment scrutiny of some Chair/Commissioner appointments by the relevant Senedd Committee in order to further improve the scrutiny and transparency of the public appointment process. This scrutiny will take the form of a hearing of 45 minutes, in public session, of the preferred candidate.

7. As part of the recruitment process, you will have been told that Senedd Committees have the option to conduct a hearing for 'significant Welsh Government Ministerial appointments'. The Chair of National Museum Wales is one of these roles.

8. As part of their role, the preferred candidate will need to be able to withstand parliamentary and public scrutiny. This hearing is an opportunity to experience this. The question topics during the hearing are a matter for Committee Members, however, they will usually cover:

- a candidate's professional competence;
- personal independence;
- how the individual would plan to undertake the role (e.g. building relationships with internal and external stakeholders and working with the Welsh Government) and;
- the experience and expertise they would bring to the role.

9. Candidates are not expected to understand the intricate workings of the body for which they would have responsibility, in this case, National Museum Wales, though such questioning may feature in evidence sessions after an individual has taken up post.

Procedure

10. At least one week in advance of the scheduled date for the hearing (12 July 2023), the Welsh Government will provide the Committee with the name and relevant details (CV, personal statement, declaration of interests etc) of the Welsh Government's preferred candidate for the appointment, together with information about the role, as well as a short outline of how the recruitment was conducted.

11. The Welsh Government should have briefed the preferred candidate on the nature of the pre-appointment hearing in advance. However, candidates are welcome to speak directly to the Clerk of the Committee to discuss the Committee's likely approach, please email SeneddCulture@senedd.wales if you would like to speak to the Clerk about your hearing.

12. Following the hearing, the Committee Clerk will write a summary of the Committee's comments and send this, as a report, to the Welsh Government Public Bodies Unit within 48 hours. The report will set out the Committee's views on the preferred candidate's suitability for the role.

13. The candidate and the Minister will usually receive the report under a 24 hour embargo to allow them time to consider the report and, if needed, prepare a response to any specific points it contains.

14. The Minister will then weigh the views of the Committee carefully against the evidence from the appointments procedure to reach a final view to ensure that the decision is made fairly and taking all relevant considerations into account.

15. It is for the Minister to decide whether or not to accept a Committee's recommendations relating to an appointment. The Minister must consider any relevant observations made by the Committee before deciding whether to go ahead with the appointment.