



Comisiwn **Seilwaith**
Cenedlaethol **Cymru**
National **Infrastructure**
Commission **Wales**

Ein cyf/Our ref: NICW/24/DCJB/CCEIR

Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
SeneddClimate@senedd.wales

15th May 2024

Dear Llyr

Thank you for your letter of the 15 April 2024 enclosing a copy of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee's report; "Annual report on the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales 2023". It was a pleasure to meet with yourself and the rest of the committee in January to discuss our work at the Commission.

We will address each of the recommendations for NICW in your report in turn.

Recommendation 4.

The Commission should commit to ensuring that the requirement for Commissioners to remove themselves from discussions or decisions where a conflict of interest, or a perceived conflict of interest might arise is being met consistently. It should also commit to ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor compliance with the requirement.

Response

The Commission has taken significant steps in recent months to increase its transparency about conflicts or perceived conflicts of interest. This includes updating its online register on both the Welsh Government and NICW websites.

The NICW website (nationalinfrastructurecommission.wales) includes each Commissioner's declared interests on their personal biography pages. At each meeting, new conflicts of interest are recorded in the meeting notes, which are published online on approval.

Commissioners are asked to identify any perceived conflicts on the agenda for all meetings and are asked to withdraw from the meeting for items which carry a risk of perception of conflict of interest. This is recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Cadeirydd / Chair
Ddirprwy Gadeirydd / Deputy Chair

Comisiynwyr / Commissioners

David Clubb
Jenifer Baxter

Helen Armstrong, Stephen Brooks
Aleena Khan, Eluned Parrott
Eurgain Powell & Nick Tune

Ysgrifenyddiaeth NICW Secretariat
nationalinfrastructurecommissionforwales@gov.wales
0300 025 5040 / 0300 025 5200

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National Infrastructure Commission for Wales

Recommendation 7.

The Commission should consider whether and how drainage and water storage could be incorporated into the research phase of its work on climate resilience and existential risk. It should report back to the Committee on the outcome in response to our report.

Response: The issues of strategic water storage and drainage have been explored in the Commission's research on flooding, particularly in relation to catchment management planning. Scoping for our Year 3 work on climate change impacts will focus on how infrastructure providers across the sector are communicating the longer term issues to communities and how their infrastructure will be affected in the future. This will undoubtedly include water and flood organisations. The Committee may wish to note that the UK National Infrastructure Commission carried out a potentially relevant study in 2022 entitled [Reducing the risk of surface water](#).

Recommendation 8.

The Commission should:

- *clarify whether and how it is engaging the UK Climate Change Committee (UK CCC) with its work, in particular its year three project on climate resilience and existential risk, and*
- *seek UK CCC representation on its Project Advisory on climate resilience and existential risk.*

Response: NICW met with the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC) in January to discuss our workstreams and potential collaboration on projects. We have also recently written to the Chair of the UKCCC to request a meeting with her to discuss our forthcoming plans for our Year 3 project and, in particular, how we can share data and thinking on climate change communications.

The governance arrangements for this project are yet to be finalised and may not necessarily lead to the formation of a Project Advisory Group. However, we will continue to engage with the UKCCC in our work and will seek their input at all relevant points as this work progresses.

Finally, we note in the Committee's recommendations to the Welsh Government that the review of NICW, mandated to occur in 2024, features prominently. We would like to reassure the committee and the Welsh Government that we are ready to engage and co-operate with this process to ensure that NICW continues to fulfil its remit to the best of its ability and provides value for money as well as timely and high quality advice to Welsh Ministers in the years to come.

We look forward to continuing to engage with you in the future.

Yours sincerely,



Dr David Clubb
Cadeirydd/Chair



Dr Jenifer Baxter
Dirprwy Gadeirydd/Deputy Chair