

Adrian Crompton
Auditor General for Wales

3 July 2024

Dear Adrian,

Consultation on reviewing the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013

I am writing in response to your letter on 11 June, which outlines some of the issues that have previously been raised by yourself and the Committee in relation to the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 (2013 Act), and those that have come to light following the recent disqualification of the former Chair of the Wales Audit Office (WAO).

You will be aware that the Finance Committee of the fifth Senedd wrote to the then Minister for Finance and Local Government setting out eight key proposals to revise the 2013 Act, including simplifying the current provisions relating to the appointment of non-executive members to the WAO Board. However, the Minister responded to the Committee on 6 April 2022 stating that:

"I do not share your view that the case for the Bill is strong. The Government opposes the main proposals as a matter of principle and does not consider the remaining – generally minor – issues to be a priority. The Government is very clear, therefore, that it does not support the introduction of a Bill."

Since then, and in light of recent events, I have written to the First Minister noting that the Committee would like to look again at the operation of the 2013 Act. In his response, the First Minister suggested that I meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office (the Cabinet Secretary) to discuss the matter further. The First Minister indicated that the Cabinet Secretary was supportive of that conversation taking place but cautioned that the Welsh Government legislative resources were at their limit in delivering the Government's existing legislative programme.



In order to progress discussions on how changes to the 2013 can be achieved, I would be grateful if you could provide an update on the changes to the 2013 Act that you would like to be brought forward, and for those to be set out in order of priority ranging from what you deem to be essential to those that are desirable.

I agree with your assertion that addressing defects in the 2013 Act could “give Wales and the post-2026 Senedd a stronger, more coherent audit regime” and hope that we can continue to work together to press for action in this area.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peredur Owen Griffiths', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Chair of the Finance Committee

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