



Public Appointments - supplementary response

By the Welsh Government to the
Public Accounts and Public
Administration Committee

18/12/2025

Introduction

The Committee published a [report](#) and [supplementary report](#) on Thursday 27 March 2025 following its inquiry into public appointments in Wales. It considered the Welsh Government's approach to the public appointments process, including where this could be improved to increase the diversity of candidates for public appointments made by Welsh Ministers. The Welsh Government [laid](#) its response to these reports on 9 June 2025 and it was considered at the Committee's meeting on Wednesday 18 June 2025.

The following is a supplementary response from the Welsh Government, updating the Committee on progress and building on the information provided in the June response. As this is a narrative response, it does not follow the usual format of Recommendation and Response but provides an update on issues of interest to the Committee. Where there is a direct connection to one of the Committee's Recommendations, that is noted in the text. In keeping with established protocol, only officials who are members of the Senior Civil Service are named.

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Organisational Structure and Responsibilities

1. Following the structural changes made to the public bodies teams in 2024, a light-touch review of the arrangements was carried out by the Deputy Director, HR Planning and Delivery (**Recommendation 1**). This concluded that there had been benefits from aligning teams more closely with HR centres of excellence, though the previous combined unit had provided greater internal and external stakeholder visibility.
2. As a result, Public Bodies Unit (PBU) was reinstated from 1 September 2025 bringing the Leadership and Governance, Pay and Remuneration, and Public Appointment teams back into the Unit. Line management of the Public Appointment and Pay & Remuneration teams remains with the HR teams covering Resourcing and Pay & Reward, respectively, to build on the current strong professional links but day-to-day management is by the Head of Public Bodies Unit. This will develop the identity of the Unit and ensure strong connections not only between the different functions but also with partnership and policy teams working with ALBs.
3. The return of PBU allows for greater visibility of the availability of public appointments and the support available to those interested, with a clear identity that covers all issues relating to public bodies. This includes:
 - New web pages to demystify the process, provide real life diverse case studies, and offer guidance to potential applicants;
 - Additional, dedicated resources focused on Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach;
 - A co-creation event on 5 November 2025 brought together community members, board members and chairs, stakeholders and experts to help shape the future of public appointments;
 - A new suite of communication tools which can be applied across different contexts to raise the visibility of PBU and public appointments, has been developed (**Recommendation 6**). This will provide a consistent, recognisable identity that works across print, digital, and in-person settings, meeting Welsh Government branding and accessibility standards (**Recommendation 5**);
 - A short video for the new website will complement existing content and help explain the Public Bodies Unit's role and remit.

4. Work has continued to build links between the wider Welsh Government and Public Bodies Unit (**Recommendation 2**). As part of our relaunch, we have issued briefings for senior Welsh Government leaders, shared signposting online and on the intranet, and used informal mechanisms such as our ALB Chairs and Chief Executive Forums to discuss the role of PBU. A review is being carried out by Welsh Government Internal Audit of the role of the Public Bodies Unit in supporting Partnership Teams and of the consistency of approach to governance by Partnership Teams (including skills and resources). The Public Bodies Unit has funded an anti-racism symposium for ALB leaders which took place on 26 November. This was a result of partnership working with Academi Wales and the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan Implementation Team. Work is underway to have more information about the Public Bodies Unit on the internet and to bring existing information in one place (**Recommendation 5**).

Responsibilities

5. The First Minister retains overall responsibility for management of, and appointments to, devolved public bodies in Wales. Individual Welsh Ministers are responsible for the remits and strategies of their respective bodies, and the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip has specific responsibility for public appointments policy and implementation. Responsibility for appointments to the boards of regulated bodies (covered by the Order in Council) lies with the Public Appointments Team and the relevant partnership teams. Appointments to non-regulated boards are solely the responsibility of the partnership teams – with Public Appointments Team support as required. Levels of remuneration for board members are recommended by Public Bodies Unit but the final decision for each body lies with the appropriate Minister.
6. The Committee requested (**Recommendation 3**) that a diagram or chart be provided to visualise where the various responsibilities for public appointments (pay, recruitment, governance/engagement, pipeline development/mentoring, diversity and inclusion) sit within the machinery of Government.
7. **Annex 1** lists the Welsh Ministers and the bodies for which they have responsibility. In a small number of cases, this is shared between two ministers. The Senior Official responsible for public appointments and other public bodies matters is Dom Houlihan, Director of People and Places. **Annex 2** provides a diagram of the responsibilities of Ministers and officials.

Board Recruitment and Diversity

8. Progress has continued to be made against all five areas of development identified in the Thematic Review of Board Recruitment (**Recommendation 4**). Briefly:
- Templates and candidate communications have been refreshed to improve clarity and tone;
 - As part of our commitment to accessibility, we are also piloting the option of offering interview questions in advance, where appropriate. This forms part of our wider approach to reasonable adjustments, aligned with the Social Model of Disability and learning from Welsh Government changes to internal and external staff recruitment practices (**Recommendation 14**);
 - Although CAIS (the Welsh Government recruitment system) continues to capture diversity and appointment data, this is at the point of appointment only. Officials are exploring alternative options both within and outside of CAIS to capture diversity data from all members of regulated boards;
 - Officials have reviewed progress against all goals and actions contained in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Public Appointments. An evaluation of the Strategy, which should have taken place in 2024, was delayed but has now been undertaken by an independent reviewer and is with the Public Bodies Unit for their consideration - likely to be concluded by April 2026 (**Recommendations 7 and 8**). As a result, the Strategy has been reinstated and extended until May 2026;
 - All future strategies will include clear governance, reporting, and accountability mechanisms;
 - A bilingual Board Diversity and Welsh Language Skills Survey has been developed (**Recommendation 11**) and will be launched in 2026. This will include a comprehensive data set of diversity characteristics for current members of regulated boards, not just those who are newly appointed. Officials will ensure that the Public Accounts and Public Administration committee are updated with the outcomes. The CAIS system also continues to capture data on newly regulated appointments;
 - Internal guidance on lawful positive action and reasonable adjustments has been developed and a public-facing version will be published in due course. This is based on the principle that candidates are responsible for informing us of their needs but we are committed to

proactively offering clear information and examples of reasonable adjustments;

- 'Inclusive Boards in Practice', a practical guide for Chairs to support inclusive leadership, has been issued;
- Officials are considering the possibility of procuring bespoke online panel member training to ensure a robust and consistent approach to recruitment, which will include a module on feedback (**Recommendation 16**). In the meantime, work is being carried out to address this through interim guidance and regular communication with Partnership Teams;
- The Committee requested that the Welsh Government provide a list of all the active strategies and action plans that it has, together with their reporting requirements (**Recommendation 10**). We have reviewed our internal Equality, Diversity and Inclusion governance arrangements, moving to a new Diversity & Inclusion Sub-Committee of the Welsh Government Board, chaired by the Permanent Secretary. This forum, due to first meet in early 2026, will have responsibility for monitoring, assessing, and providing assurance against our equality commitments. In addition, the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan Leadership Sub-group (of the External Accountability Group) comprises a mix of Welsh Government colleagues and external representatives and holds Welsh Government to account for our goals within the Leadership chapter of the Action Plan, which includes specific actions relation to our Public Bodies.

Pipeline and Stakeholder mapping

9. A stakeholder mapping exercise has been undertaken to establish current activity being undertaken in Wales to support people into boards (**Recommendation 13**). A post focused on outreach activities, shadowing, and inclusive board training has been recruited by external competition and the postholder will be starting soon.

Re-appointment and Remuneration

10. Officials have clarified existing processes to ensure that the relevant Senedd Committee is informed when an incumbent is being reappointed to a significant appointment (**Recommendation 18**).
11. A review of remuneration has been completed. This has resulted in the daily rates paid to Ministerial public appointments being increased from 1 January by 3.25%. This aligns with the 2025-26 Senior Salaries Review Body recommended increase for senior civil service roles (**Recommendation 17**). A wider review of the remuneration scheme is now considering how remuneration can help support increased board level diversity and inclusion. This will be based on a pay demographic baseline to help identify key gaps, and to help consider where future action should be best focused, and to help evaluate the impact of those actions. We will inform PAPAC when this wider review has been completed.

ANNEX 1: Ministerial Responsibilities for specific Public Bodies, December 2025

Cabinet Secretary/ Minister	Public Body
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs	Agricultural Advisory Panel for Wales
	Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog National Park Authority
	Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Eryri
	Hybu Cig Cymru - Meat Promotion Wales
	Natural Resources Wales
	Awdurdod Parc Cenedlaethol Arfordir Penfro / Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority
	Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework Group
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning	Design Commission for Wales
	Life Sciences Hub Wales Ltd*
	Welsh Industrial Development Advisory Board
Cabinet Secretary for Education	Dysgu – Professional Learning and Leadership Education Wales
	Education Workforce Council
	Qualifications Wales
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language	Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner*
	Welsh Language Commissioner
	Welsh Revenue Authority

Cabinet Secretary/ Minister	Public Body
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
	Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
	Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
	Digital Health and Care Wales
	Health Education and Improvement Wales
	Powys Teaching Health Board
	Public Health Wales NHS Trust
	Swansea Bay University Health Board
	Velindre University NHS Trust
	Welsh Ambulance Services University NHS Trust
	Life Sciences Hub Wales Ltd*
	Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government
Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip	Advisory Panel to the Welsh Language Commissioner*
	Children's Commissioner for Wales
	Citizen Voice Body for Health and Social Care
	Future Generations Commissioner for Wales
	National Adviser for Violence against Women and other forms of Gender-based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
	Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Cabinet Secretary/ Minister	Public Body
Minister for Children and Social Care	Social Care Wales
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership	Amgueddfa Cymru - Museum Wales
	Arts Council of Wales
	Careers Choices Dewis Gyrfa Ltd (Careers Wales)
	National Library of Wales
	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales
	Sports Council for Wales (Sport Wales)
Minister for Further and Higher Education	Medr: Commission for Tertiary Education and Research

* Bodies with more than one responsible Minister

ANNEX 2: Ministerial and Official Responsibilities, December 2025

