

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs
Via email

6 March 2026

Legislative Consent: Public Office (Accountability) Bill

Dear Huw,

Thank you for attending the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee on 26 February 2026 and giving evidence in relation to the Legislative Consent Memorandum, Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (Memorandum No. 2) and Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (Memorandum No. 3) relating to the Public Office (Accountability) Bill ('the Bill').

The Committee was assured that the Welsh Government has taken steps to engage with stakeholders affected by the Bill and that dialogue between the UK and Welsh governments had improved since the first Legislative Consent Memorandum relating to the Bill was laid in October 2025. Nonetheless we would appreciate responses to the following questions:

- We were encouraged to learn of the stakeholder forum arranged by the Welsh Government for 11 March. We would be grateful if you could clarify what the agenda and intended outputs for the forum will be, and how feedback will be captured and published, including whether this will be made available ahead of the Plenary debate on 24 March?
- During your evidence session, Members raised the potential benefits or drawbacks of aligning approaches across both this Bill and secondary legislation made under Part 3 of the Senedd Cymru (Member Accountability and Elections) Bills, given the overlap in concepts around false or misleading statements. Can you explain how you will ensure standards are coherent and duplication is avoided?

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

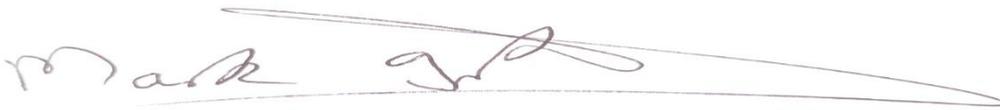
- We are mindful of the practical implications for Welsh public bodies that the proposed duty of candour and offence of misleading the public will have. What assessment has the Welsh Government made of how the Bill could create new civil liabilities or impact public bodies' public indemnity insurance arrangements?

We also note that you made a commitment to provide further information to the Committee on any assessments the Welsh Government has made on the interaction between this Bill and existing mechanisms of parliamentary privilege to ensure clarity for Ministers and Members of the Senedd on the impact of this legislation.

We would be grateful if you could provide this information and a response to the questions outlined above by Monday 16 March to inform the Plenary debate on Tuesday 24 March.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Isherwood', is written over a horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Mark Isherwood MS

Chair of the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee