



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Wales Audit Office / Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru

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Mr Darren Millar AM  
Chair  
Public Accounts Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
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*Dea Darn*

I am delighted to congratulate you on your re-appointment as Chair of the National Assembly for Wales' Public Accounts Committee. In a similar vein I also intend to write to the new members of the Committee to welcome them.

I wondered if it would be helpful to give you a brief update on how matters relating to the Wales Audit Office and its work have progressed over recent months. I will be happy to discuss these matters in more detail when we meet on 29 June, but briefly:

- The Wales Audit Office annual accounts are currently being scrutinised carefully by Audit Scotland as our interim external auditors – the difference in the level of scrutiny compared to previous years is marked, and welcomed for that. We have made good progress in improving management accounting information, and in preparing our accounts for consideration by the Audit and Risk Management Committee.
- We have also made good progress in establishing the new governance committees for the Wales Audit Office, covering remuneration and resources respectively. The members of those committees have been appointed, have received a comprehensive induction, and are poised to take up their new responsibilities. It only remains to select the chair of each committee. Since, as you are aware, David Melding was unable to participate as originally planned, I very much hope you will be able to assist me with these appointments. Given the reporting lines the chairs will have to you, and the degree of reliance you may wish to place on these new governance arrangements, I feel it is appropriate that you should participate yourself. I will ask Fiona to contact your office to make arrangements at your convenience.
- I understand that South Wales Police will be writing to update you on the progress of the enquiries you requested before the election.

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We have, as I previously indicated we would, also looked at the current governance and accountability arrangements for corporations sole in Wales. We have identified potential mechanisms that might allow the National Assembly for Wales to hold me, and potentially the other corporations sole, to account for our use of resources while separately considering our reports on other public bodies. Again, another topic for discussion at our meeting.

I understand that the first Public Accounts Committee meeting is scheduled for the 5 July and I attach an advance copy of my updated work programme which I will present for consideration by the Committee. I am also anticipating that the Committee would welcome a briefing on my report on hospital catering and patient nutrition, published on 24 March. There is also the opportunity, in private session, for a briefing on my report on adult mental health services, which is scheduled for publication on 7 July. Briefings on these two reports would enable the Committee to decide what action it may wish to take in response to the reports in advance of the summer recess. However, as I understand there may be only two hours for the meeting and a need for a level of induction for new members, I propose to offer them the opportunity to visit our offices, either individually or collectively, to discuss our work in more detail.

I should also like to invite you, as has been the precedent with your predecessors, to consider meeting briefly with Wales Audit Office staff as a group, to share your perspective on how our work can best add value to the work of the Public Accounts Committee. I know that staff would find this particularly encouraging and that it would help them to focus more firmly on future goals.



**HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS**  
**AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES**

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