



Eich cyf/Your ref: P-04-557
Ein cyf/Our ref: LG/00812/14

William Powell AM
Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales
Chair Petitions Committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

29 August 2014

Dear William,

Thank you for your letter dated 31 July regarding Petition P-04-557 Valuation Tribunal Service, received from Mr David Grant which seeks a full review of the procedures, management and administration of the Valuation Tribunal for Wales (VTW).

The VTW is a quasi-judicial Welsh Government Sponsored Body which is wholly independent of the Welsh Government, the Valuation Office Agency and Local Authorities. It provides a free service dealing with appeals regarding Non-Domestic Rates, Council Tax and Drainage Rates. The Valuation Tribunal for Wales (VTW) has both judicial and administrative functions and these are prescribed by the Valuation Tribunal for Wales Regulations 2010.

A full review of Tribunals in Wales was undertaken by the Administrative Justice and Tribunals Council (AJTC) in 2010. The report addressed the need to ensure devolved tribunals are accessible to citizen users and dispense justice fairly, clearly and efficiently. The report made a number of recommendations which are highlighted in the Written Statement in the attached link.

<http://wales.gov.uk/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2010/270410trib/?lang=en>

A full copy of the report can be found via the link below.

<http://ajtc.justice.gov.uk/welsh/publications.htm>

As the VTW is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, measures have been taken to ensure effective controls are in operation. A Framework Agreement is in place which addresses propriety regarding their governance and accountability, management arrangements and financial responsibilities. This framework is regularly reviewed and monitoring meetings are held between officials on a monthly basis. Alongside this, the VTW publishes annual reports and operational forward plans on its website, a link to which is provided below.

<http://www.valuation-tribunals-wales.org.uk/publications.html>

In addition, the Governing Council of the VTW seeks to promote enhancement of the management disciplines adopted by the VTW, driving a strong corporate governance culture which ensures proper process, propriety, scrutiny and accountability are demonstrated and robust accounting procedures are in place. Alongside all of these arrangements, the VTW is also held accountable to the Public Service Ombudsman in Wales.

As a result, I am confident the VTW provides an effective and transparent service for the people of Wales.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM

Y Gweinidog Llywodraeth Leol a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Local Government and Government Business