

Cofnod y Trafodion The Record of Proceedings

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[The Public Accounts Committee](#)

03/11/2015

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Cofnodir y trafodion yn yr iaith y llefarwyd hwy ynddi yn y pwyllgor. Yn
ogystal, cynhwysir trawsgrifiad o'r cyfieithu ar y pryd.

The proceedings are recorded in the language in which they were spoken in
the committee. In addition, a transcription of the simultaneous interpretation
is included.

Aelodau'r pwyllgor yn bresennol
Committee members in attendance

Mohammad Asghar	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig Welsh Conservatives
Jocelyn Davies	Plaid Cymru The Party of Wales
Mike Hedges	Llafur Labour
Darren Millar	Ceidwadwyr Cymreig (Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor) Welsh Conservatives (Committee Chair)
Julie Morgan	Llafur Labour
Jenny Rathbone	Llafur Labour
Aled Roberts	Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol Cymru Welsh Liberal Democrats
Joyce Watson	Llafur (yn dirprwyo ar ran Sandy Mewies) Labour (substitute for Sandy Mewies)

Eraill yn bresennol
Others in attendance

Jeremy Morgan	Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru Wales Audit Office
Huw Vaughan Thomas	Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru Auditor General for Wales

Swyddogion Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru yn bresennol
National Assembly for Wales officials in attendance

Fay Buckle	Clerc Clerk
Claire Griffiths	Dirprwy Glerc Deputy Clerk
Joanest Varney-Jackson	Uwch-gynghorydd Cyfreithiol Senior Legal Adviser

Dechreuodd rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod am 10:14.
The public part of the meeting began at 10:14.

Cyflwyniadau, Ymddiheuriadau a Dirprwyon Introductions, Apologies and Substitutions

[1] **Darren Millar:** Welcome to today's meeting of the Public Accounts Committee. We've already undertaken item 1 on our agenda. Item 2 is introductions, apologies and substitutions. If I could just remind everybody of the usual housekeeping notices: that the National Assembly for Wales is a bilingual institution and that Members can feel free to contribute through either English or Welsh as they see fit. And, of course, there are headsets available for use. If I could, I encourage everyone to switch off their mobile phones or to put them into silent mode because they can interfere with the broadcasting and other equipment. I remind people that, in the event of a fire alarm, we should follow directions from the ushers.

[2] Just a note as well on the changes to the arrangements for oral declarations of interest. I'm assuming that, as we come to items on the agenda, Members will make any declarations that are required.

[3] In terms of apologies today, we did have some substitute Members for our first session in Alun Ffred Jones for item 1 and Andrew R.T. Davies for item 1, but I'm pleased to be able to welcome back Jocelyn Davies and Mohammad Asghar to the committee. We've received apologies today from Sandy Mewies, and I'm very pleased to be able to welcome Joyce Watson formally to today's committee meeting.

10:16

Papurau i'w Nodi Papers to Note

[4] **Darren Millar:** Item 3, then: papers to note. We've had a number of papers for today. We've got the minutes of our meeting held on 20 October. I'll take it that those are noted. We've had a letter from the director for agriculture, food and marine on Glastir, responding to some of the outstanding items that we had in respect of our report on Glastir. I don't know how Members feel, but do we want a further update in the new year on points 1 and 2 in the letter? Yes? Sound reasonable?

[5] **Mike Hedges:** How are we going to deal with the timetable?

[6] **Darren Millar:** Correspondence, yes—just correspondence only, if Members are content. We've also had a letter from the Deputy Permanent Secretary in relation to our inquiry into value for money for motorway and trunk road investment. There's going to be some guidance, of course, which is going to be published in 2016, and this may be an area that we want to note in our legacy report for future committees. So, we'll keep it and bank it as an item to refer that committee to if Members are content? Yes.

[7] The next item is on unscheduled care. We've had letter from the director general/NHS chief executive, Andrew Goodall. We do have a committee session with Andrew Goodall on 24 November in relation to NHS governance. So, if Members have any issues, perhaps we can tag them on and ask them during that session and, if there's any additional information we want in advance of that session, then, if you can let the clerks know, we'll try and get as much of it as we possibly can.

[8] We've also had a letter from the Permanent Secretary on the procurement and management of consultancy services following our inquiry into that, and we're being told that all future annual reports are going to be submitted to the PAC on procurement. Are Members content with that?

[9] Finally, in relation to scrutiny of accounts, we've had some additional information from the National Museum Wales, from Sports Wales, the Assembly Commission and the Welsh Government. We will incorporate those responses into the draft report that is currently being prepared, which we hope to be able to publish before Christmas. Are Members content?

[10] **Jocelyn Davies:** I've just got one comment—[Inaudible.]—when we ask for extra evidence, just sending us a huge pile doesn't mean that that's useful, and I think we should make that point, really. Something could be in there that just got lost in the volume of information that's sent. Perhaps we could make that point to witnesses. If we want extra information, it's on a specific point that we want it rather than, 'Send us everything you've got.'

[11] **Darren Millar:** Yes. We've had a shed load, I think it's fair to say, from certain people, and it tends to be certain departments that respond with shed loads as opposed to others that are more specific, but it is a fair point, and we can certainly make that when we request additional information.

[12] Sorry, I did miss one item off, and that is that we've had a letter from the acting director of transport and ICT infrastructure at the Welsh

Government on the Cardiff to Anglesey air link. It just gives some more clarification, really, on some of the additional points that we raised with them after we had advice from the auditor general. Again, we might want to just recommend, in our legacy report, that some of those issues are picked up because some of them refer to actions in 2016. Did you want come in, Huw?

[13] **Mr Thomas:** Whilst the Welsh Government has indeed provided a detailed response on the points that you addressed in your report, I do wonder whether you need to consider it in the context of Links Air no longer being the carrier. It's providing ticketing and reservation services at present. The carrier is now the Danish company North Flying. That contract has been entered into under interim contractual arrangements and I just wondered whether you would wish to explore with the Welsh Government what their plans are beyond the interim stage, whether they intend tendering and, if so, how.

[14] **Darren Millar:** Okay. Aled.

[15] **Aled Roberts:** I was going to raise that issue because it was a matter that we raised, if you remember, because there were issues with regard to protection of passengers because of liability issues in the European Union, where the ticketing agency was the contracted party rather than the carrier. I am concerned as to how long this emergency process will take, given that Links Air themselves, at one stage, were appointed under some kind of interim emergency measure. We were given assurances that they'd taken steps on this occasion to ensure that that sort of ambiguity with regard to liability was done away with. So, I want to know, albeit that we recognise that it's outside the control of the Welsh Government, what steps they've taken to protect the interests of Welsh passengers in that scenario given that there were safety issues that were raised during the inquiry.

[16] **Darren Millar:** Okay. Does anybody else want to come in on this? So, if we write back to the Welsh Government, thanking them for their response, but saying that, given the announcement that an interim carrier has had to be appointed, we want some further information on the liability arrangements on the length of the emergency arrangements and what action is being taken to appoint a permanent carrier. Are Members content with that? Yes? Okay, we'll do that.

10:22

**Cynnig o dan Reol Sefydlog 17.42 i Benderfynu Gwahardd y Cyhoedd
o'r Cyfarfod**

**Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to Resolve to Exclude the Public
from the Meeting**

Cynnig:

Motion:

*bod y pwyllgor yn penderfynu that the committee resolves to
gwahardd y cyhoedd o weddill y exclude the public from the
cyfarfod yn unol â Rheol Sefydlog remainder of the meeting in
17.42(vi).*

*accordance with Standing Order
17.42(vi).*

Cynigiwyd y cynnig.

Motion moved.

[17] **Darren Millar:** Item 4, then, is a motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the rest of our business today. Are Members content? Any objections? There aren't, so we'll move into private session.

Derbyniwyd y cynnig.

Motion agreed.

Daeth rhan gyhoeddus y cyfarfod i ben am 10:22.

The public part of the meeting ended at 10:22.