

Darren Millar AM
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Tŷ Hywel
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff

19 November 2015

Dear Darren

When the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) recently scrutinised the Commission's Annual Accounts for 2014-15, we were asked a question about severance schemes. In light of that, and in the interests of transparency, I am writing to both PAC and the Finance Committee to inform you of our decision to run a voluntary severance scheme.

As we have mentioned during scrutiny by your Committee, the Assembly Commission has a formal approach to capacity planning to help ensure that the Commission has the right staffing complement and structure. This ensures that we: align our resources in terms of capacity and skills; improve workforce effectiveness; achieve structural change to best support the business of the Assembly; and integrate capacity and service planning.

As part of this work we have been considering whether to run a voluntary severance scheme and, having carefully weighed the benefits against the negative aspects and risks, we have concluded that we should. This has been discussed and reviewed by Management Board and the Investment and Resourcing Board and is a decision that I have taken within my delegated authority as Accounting Officer. The purpose of the scheme will be to:

- allow the organisation to respond to shifts in our skill requirements;
- facilitate organisational change, including within particular teams;



- improve workforce efficiency; and
- deliver long-term savings where possible and/or avoiding additional costs in meeting skill shortages.

We intend to launch the scheme this week and those employees whose applications are accepted will leave by 31 March 2016 or early in the new financial year. The scheme will be run in accordance with Cabinet Office/Treasury rules, will be similar to the scheme run recently by the Welsh Government and will have robust assessment criteria and decision processes. The Trade Union Side (TUS) has been informed of our intention to run the scheme and they will be invited to observe the decision process.

In planning the scheme, we have taken full account of the recommendations arising from the internal audit review of our previous schemes and from the wider WAO VFM study into severance schemes. The cost, benefits and savings from the scheme will be published as part of the 2015-16 Annual Report and Accounts in July 2016.

This letter is for information only, but please do let me know if you would like any further information.

Best wishes



Claire Clancy

**Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc/Chief Executive and Clerk
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru/National Assembly for Wales**

