

Yr Adran Economi a Seilwaith
Department for Economy and Infrastructure

Nick Ramsay AM
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CARDIFF
CF99 1NA



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

30 June 2016

Dear Mr Ramsay

Scrutiny of Accounts 2014-15: National Library of Wales

I am responding to the letter from the previous Chair of the Public Accounts Committee dated 16 March 2016 regarding the above, which has been passed to me by the Permanent Secretary to respond. I apologise for the delay but this response has been held until the new Government and its Committees were formed.

The legal fees for pursuing potential litigation to recover costs arising as a result of the fire were initially met by the National Library. As the Welsh Government had funded many of these costs, and due to the level of the further legal fees necessary to pursue this being potentially very significant, they then asked us whether we wished to pursue the claims, in conjunction with the Library. Advice was put to Ministers in October 2015, and they agreed that these potential claims should be pursued further, and that the Welsh Government would provide an agreed level of funding for this purpose. This work has been proceeding since then, and my officials have been liaising regularly with the National Library's officials, and directly with the solicitors, on this matter.

In respect of the point that the Board of Trustees had repeatedly sought further clarification from the Welsh Government regarding the Government indemnity scheme, I believe that this refers to the arrangements whereby Government bodies insure themselves. For this reason, and as the National Library did not have sufficient resources to deal with the aftermath of the fire, the Welsh Government provided additional funding, totalling some £2.4m, to fund costs of recovering from the fire.

I trust that the above response addresses the matters raised by the Committee, but should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Dr Manon Antoniazzi
Cyfarwyddwr, Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth
Director, Culture, Sport & Tourism