

Maria Battle
Chair
Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
University Hospital of Wales (UHW)
Heath Park
Cardiff CF14 4XW

31 October 2017

Public Interest Report – Audit of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board’s Contractual Relationships with RKC Associates Ltd and its Owner

Dear Ms Battle,

Thank you for attending the Public Accounts Committee on 25 September 2017 to discuss the Public Interest Report from the Auditor General for Wales on the Audit of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board’s Contractual Relationships with RKC Associates Ltd and its Owner.

The Committee very much welcomed the frank and open answers provided by yourself and the Chief Executive, Len Richards, to our questions as this reassured the Committee about the response from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board to this serious matter. We also welcomed sight of the action plan setting out the actions to address the shortcomings in the public interest report. Given the seriousness of this matter, the Committee would welcome an update on the implementation of this action plan in six months (April 2018).

The Committee were particularly concerned during the evidence session about the culture within your health board and that staff did not feel comfortable raising concerns about this matter. We welcome the assurance that you are putting in place measures to promote and enhance whistleblowing arrangements such as the extension of the safety valve for patient safety concerns to cover non-compliance concerns as well. During the evidence session you recognised it is not merely a case of having the process and procedures in place, but making sure that



they are used and people feel comfortable doing so. Therefore, we would welcome further detail on the measures taken to improve this cultural issue, and their implementation, at the same time as the update on the action plan.

Your written evidence to the Committee highlights that in response to this review you have sought to gain assurances that there are no more instances of poor practice, through commissioning an internal audit report and reviewing manual payments with an invoice value over £5000 during the period 2014-17. We note that there were a number of contracts referred to NHS counter fraud as a result of the review of payments and the Committee would like to receive an update on the outcomes of these referrals once the investigations have been concluded. We would also like to be provided with a copy of the internal audit report once it has been completed.

The Committee also intends to write to the Chief Executive of NHS Wales to clarify the position on the process for appointing to senior executive posts at salaries in excess of the Welsh Government's approved pay scales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Ramsay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nick Ramsay AM
Chair

