

**Shan Morgan**  
Ysgrifennydd Parhaol  
Permanent Secretary



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Mike Hedges AM  
Chair  
Climate Change, Environment & Rural Affairs Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

05 March 2020

Dear Mr Hedges

I am writing in relation to the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee's report 'The Welsh Government's progress on Marine Protected Area Management'. The Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs in her response to your report committed me to writing to you concerning Recommendation 6 about matters of civil service staffing.

Marine and Fisheries Division have taken the opportunity to review staffing levels in the Marine Ecosystems and Biodiversity Branch, previously the Marine Conservation branch, recognising that staffing levels in the branch have been challenging in recent times, in part due to the need to prioritise our Brexit related work. Policy responsibility and staff for UK Marine Strategy and marine litter have recently been incorporated into the Branch, enabling it to maintain strategic focus on the overall health, resilience and functioning of the Welsh marine environment.

The branch structure is set out as below;

1x Grade 7 (G7)  
1x Senior Executive Officer (SEO)  
4x Higher Executive Officer (HEO)  
1 x Executive Officer (EO)  
1 x Team Support



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The Division is not currently at full strength, with 4 of the 8 agreed staff in place at this time. I can assure you that I am very much aware of the importance of this work and will prioritise staffing of this branch.

It is worth noting that the work of the Marine and Fisheries Division is cross-cutting in nature, with staff from across the Division, for example, the Marine Science and Evidence Branch and the Fisheries Resource Management & Policy Branch, also supporting the sustainable management of the Welsh marine environment.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shan Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Shan Morgan**

Ysgrifennydd Parhaol/ Permanent Secretary  
Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government



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