



Ein cyf/Our ref: LG/00385/16

Darren Millar AM
Chair
Public Accounts Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

29

March 2016

Dear Darren

Thank you for your letter of 18 March commenting on our response to your Committee's report on the Regeneration Investment Fund for Wales. I note the Committee's satisfaction with our response and recognise the next Welsh Government will need to demonstrate to your successor Committee the effectiveness of our proposed actions. You asked for more specific information regarding the Welsh Government's response to recommendations 4, 5, 12 and 18.

Recommendation 4: The review to be conducted by Corporate Governance Unit and Heads of Operation will be completed by the end of this calendar year. It will be for the review itself to determine how best to respond to the question of how Boards retain capacity and expertise when a member is unable to participate. However, I would expect our procedures to include adequate scenario testing of Board structures by those planning the development of arms-length bodies.

Recommendation 5: There is a distinction to be drawn between the function of Board members who are officials and observers. It is the role of the observer to act as the eyes and ears of the sponsoring department, whilst Board members are appointed for the skills and expertise they bring to the role. Where the decision is taken to bring in expertise on a board from outside the sponsoring department, this should not be at the expense of also ensuring appropriate reporting arrangements.

Recommendation 12: It is correct to suggest defining a 'material departure' needs to take account of context. A crucial first step will be to be as explicit as possible in the remit given to arms length bodies and their Boards. Otherwise we need to leave these matters to be considered as part of the process of producing the guidance to which we are committed.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Recommendation 18: The reviews referred to were simply to provide assurance projects and programmes met the tests of having a clear SRO and Additional Accounting Officer responsibility. The reviews did provide such assurance. The process to date has not defined 'major', however, the further review will need to do so.

You also asked for timescales relating to several recommendations;

Recommendation 2: The further work referred to will be completed this calendar year

Recommendation 6: The new templates will be in place in time for the start of the Fifth Assembly.

Recommendation 17: The workshops and the community of practise will be completed and in place this calendar year.

Recommendation 18: The further assurance process we referred to will be completed in time for the Fifth Assembly.

A handwritten signature in blue ink. The word "Regards" is written in a cursive style on the top line, and "Lesley" is written below it, also in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the left of the typed name and title.

Lesley Griffiths AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cymunedau a Threchu Tlodi
Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty