

# Public Accounts Committee

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Meeting Venue:

**Committee Room 3 – Senedd**

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Meeting date:

**Tuesday, 28 April 2015**

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Meeting time:

**09.00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



For further information please contact:

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Committee Clerk

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## Agenda

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### **1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions (09.00)**

### **2 Papers to note (09.00–09:05) (Pages 1 – 4)**

**Scrutiny of Commissioners' Accounts 2013–14: Letter from the Permanent Secretary, Welsh Government (20 April 2015) (Pages 5 – 7)**

### **3 NHS Waiting Times and Key Performance Targets (09.05–09.50) (Pages 8 – 21)**

Wales Audit Office Briefing

Paul Meredith-Smith – Director of the Board of Community Health Councils in Wales

Mary Williams – Chair, Cwm Taf Community Health Council

Dr Paul Worthington – Chief Officer, Cwm Taf Community Health Council

### **4 NHS Waiting Times and Key Performance Targets (09.50–10.35) (Pages 22 – 35)**

## Wales Audit Office Briefing

Allison Williams – Chief Executive, Cwm Taf University Health Board

Ruth Treharne – Director of Planning and Performance, Cwm Taf University Health Board

### **5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business: (10.35)**

Item 6 and the meeting on 5 May 2015

### **6 NHS Waiting Times and Key Performance Targets: Consideration of evidence (10.35–11.00)**

## Public Accounts Committee

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Meeting Venue: **Committee Room 3 – Senedd**

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Meeting date: **Tuesday, 21 April 2015**

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Meeting time: **09.00 – 11.04**

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Cynulliad  
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Cymru

National  
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Wales



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<http://senedd.tv/en/2729>

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### Concise Minutes:

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#### Assembly Members:

**Darren Millar AM (Chair)**  
**Jocelyn Davies AM**  
**William Graham AM**  
**Mike Hedges AM**  
**Sandy Mewies AM**  
**Julie Morgan AM**  
**Jenny Rathbone AM**  
**Aled Roberts AM**

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#### Witnesses:

**James Price, Welsh Government**  
**Barrie Davies, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**  
**Andy Falleyn, Welsh Government**  
**Sheena Hague, Welsh Government**  
**Jeremy Patterson, Powys County Council**  
**David Powell, Powys County Council**  
**Tony Wilkins, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council**

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#### Committee Staff:

**Michael Kay (Clerk)**  
**Leanne Hatcher (Second Clerk)**  
**Claire Griffiths (Deputy Clerk)**  
**Tanwen Summers (Deputy Clerk)**  
**Andrew Minnis (Researcher)**

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## TRANSCRIPT

View the [meeting transcript](#).

### **1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions**

1.1 The Chair welcomed the Members to the meeting.

1.2 There were no apologies.

### **2 Papers to note**

2,1 The papers were noted. However, the Chair asked the Clerks to schedule time in the Committee's work programme to discuss the letter on Covering Teachers' Absence from the Director of Education and Skills and also the letter from the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Chair on the Governance Arrangements at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

2.2 The Chair also said he would reply to the Permanent Secretary at the Welsh Government seeking clarification on how the Welsh Government monitors and spends the grant funding related to the NHS Wales in accordance with Welsh Ministers policies.

2.1 National Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare: Letter from the Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (16 March 2015)

2.2 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Letter from the Highways Agency (24 March 2015)

2.3 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Letter from the Auditor General for Wales (26 March 2015)

2.4 Welsh Government Annual Report on Grants Management : Letter from the Permanent Secretary, Welsh Government (26 March 2015)

2.5 Glastir: Letter from the RSPB (26 March 2015)

2.6 Scrutiny of Commissioners' Accounts 2013–14: Letter from the Welsh Language Commissioner (26 March 2015)

2.7 Covering Teachers' Absence: Letter from Director of Education and Skills (13 April 2015)

2.8 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Additional information from North and Mid Wales Trunk Roads Agent

2.9 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Additional information from South Wales Trunk Roads Agent

2.10 Governance Arrangements at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: Letter from the Board Chair (13 April 2015)

2.11 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Letter from Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust

### **3 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Evidence Session 5**

3.1 The Committee took evidence from James Price, Director General, Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, Sheena Hague, Deputy Director, Network Management, and Andy Falleyn, Deputy Director, Infrastructure Delivery, Welsh Government on its inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road investment.

3.2 James Price agreed to send the following information to Committee:

- explore the suggestion that there are inaccuracies in information provided on the A55 on the Traffic Wales website;
- provide a note on numbers of road works in NMWTRA, including overnight works and the time involved in scheme delivery;
- provide a note on the number of complaints around road works, including the percentage of road works which are subject to complaints, and introduce more formal and regular reporting;
- confirm when preparation of the new StreetWorks Strategy began and the reasons why it has taken four years to develop; and
- investigate the recent difficulties resulting from road works in North East Wales and how this relates to cross border co-operation with English Highway Authorities, including the Highways Agency / Highways England.

### **4 Managing Early Departures: Evidence Session 1**

4.1 The Committee took evidence from Jeremy Patterson, Chief Executive, Powys County Council and David Powell, Strategic Director, Powys County Council together with Tony Wilkins, Director of Human Resources, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and Barrie Davies, Director of Financial Services, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on its inquiry into Managing Early Departures.

4.2 Jeremy Patterson agreed to send the following information to Committee:

- Details of the total numbers of departures since the Auditor General for Wales' report with average costs and which departments have been affected;
- Agreed to check and send details as to whether Powys County Council has utilised the services of consultants who were previous employees who left the authority under an early departure scheme;
- Details of current vacancy numbers together with the departments involved, and
- Details of the numbers of expressions of interest for the last round of early departure applications

4.3 Tony Wilkins agreed to send the following information to Committee:

- Details of current vacancy numbers together with the departments involved.

## **5 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the meeting for the following business:**

5.1 The motion was agreed.

## **6 Inquiry into value for money of Motorway and Trunk Road Investment: Consideration of evidence received**

6.1 The Committee considered the evidence received.

## **7 Managing Early Departures: Consideration of evidence received**

7.1 The Committee considered the evidence received.

## **8 Governance Arrangements at Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board: Consideration of evidence received**

8.1 Due to time constraints, the Committee was unable to consider the evidence received. However, the clerks will re-schedule this item for a future meeting.

## Agenda Item 2.1

Sir Derek Jones KCB  
Ysgrifennydd Parhaol  
Permanent Secretary



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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

*Dear Darren,*

*20th* April 2015

### **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE SCRUTINY OF ACCOUNTS 2013-14**

#### **RESPONSE TO THE REPORT**

Please find enclosed a copy of the response to the above report which will be laid before the Table Office.

I would like to thank you and the Committee for the careful and considered way in which you undertook the investigation and produced the report.

*Yours,*  
*Derek*



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## **Response to the Report of the National Assembly for Wales Public Accounts Committee Report on the Scrutiny of Accounts 2013-14**

I welcome the findings of the report and offer the following response to the three recommendations contained within it that relate to the Welsh Government Accounts for 2013-14.

**Recommendation 4.** If the current funding relationship continues, the Welsh Government should communicate its decision at an early stage on the funding available to the Commissioners. These budgets should then be protected from later in year departmental reductions. (Page 31)

The spirit of the recommendation is accepted. As its financial powers develop the Welsh Government is in the process of reviewing budget processes and timetable to provide an appropriate budget process for Wales. The PAC will be aware of the ongoing work with the Finance Committee in this area and that Committee's Inquiry into Best Practice Budget Processes. The Welsh Government has always respected Commissioners' need for operational independence and would therefore seek to provide as much certainty as possible for them. Responsible Ministers have the flexibility to agree budgets for any bodies which they fund, however whilst it is not the wish to reduce any budget after it has been allocated, it is not possible to provide absolute guarantees. While the situation will be avoided where possible, there may be instances where the pressures and uncertainties within the overall Budget necessitate this action.

**Recommendation 7.** The National Assembly for Wales's Commission and Welsh Government should set out in their budgets and accounts their approach to financial management – in particular their target for underspends. (Page 42)

The recommendation is accepted. The general approach to the Welsh Government's financial position in any year is clearly set out in its budgetary documentation. These contain details of the allocations and budgetary cover the Welsh Government holds in reserve to help manage the financial position. Supplementary Budgets build on this providing details of the levels of underspend managed within, as part of the UK Government's Budget Exchange System, and reserves held at the year end. Finally, a separate report on outturn, which the Welsh Government provides the Finance Committee, describes performance against the both budgets agreed by the National Assembly and against UK Government controls. The report for 2013-14 detailed underspends of 0.1% against Fiscal Resource and 0.7% Capital budgets as approved in the Second Supplementary Budget for that year. The Welsh Government annual accounts comply in full with the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) which prescribes the information to be published by all central government bodies within the UK.



**Recommendation 9.** The Committee encourages organisations funded by public money to consider how they present information to ensure that it is readily understandable for the public, and that shows the organisation's priorities and the level of resource committed to those priorities. (Page 47)

The recommendation is accepted. The annual accounts for central Government Departments including the Welsh Government are prepared using the UK Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). The 'simplifying and improving project' has been considering the contents of the FReM with the sole purpose of ensuring that the format and content of the accounts are made more understandable for the reader. The Welsh Government supported by the Wales Audit Office has fully engaged with this work and, in line with other central Government Departments, will introduce the recommended changes at the end of 2015-16. The Welsh Government is also leading a pilot project alongside other public sector bodies in Wales, including the Wales Audit Office, aimed at exploring how financial and non-financial information is presented together in a more coherent and accessible way. This project (Integrated Reporting or IR) is part of a wider piece of work being undertaken across organisations within the UK and is being supported by the accountancy body CIPFA. An integrated report should be able to deliver a concise communication about how an organisation's strategy, governance, performance and prospects, in the context of its external environment, lead to the creation of value in the short, medium and long term. The potential changes in the way public bodies present performance information are substantial and, therefore, the pilot is not due to complete until 2017-18.

# Agenda Item 3

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

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# Agenda Item 4

By virtue of paragraph(s) ix of Standing Order 17.42

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