

Dear Dawn,

I am writing to you formally, in your capacity as the Minister for Sport to raise grave concerns I have about the Welsh Rugby Union. There is a deep seated culture of sexism within the WRU which I am afraid will soon become public and that will paint the Welsh Government and those that fund the WRU such as the sponsors and Sport Wales in a negative light. I am concerned that the WRU are not held to account for their behaviour and for their actions as their governance system is archaic and this has resulted in problems within the institution not being dealt with properly and transparently. We have seen this in the review of women's rugby which was completed last year. This document has not been published and there has not been an apology to women who have played and that are playing currently for the way in which they have failed to be the custodians of the game that they had set out to do when they took over the management of the women's game.

My concerns are reflected in the resignation of Amanda Blanc from the WRU Executive Board, after only seeing out 2 of her 6 year tenure. Amanda is the current CEO of Aviva and one of the United Kingdom's high achieving women. Concerns also have been raised anonymously in the media, you may have seen the report in the Daily Mail in March regarding a sex discrimination case which is to be brought in front of a judge in the early autumn. These are only two of a number of cases that have been brought to my attention. I have been unable to speak to and contact the other women myself, but I am very aware of someone in the media having built a comprehensive list of women who are all prepared to go public. From within the WRU, I have spoken to 3 people who have shared my concerns and more concerningly confirmed what I already knew about the organisation.

This is not just a case of one or two people having a spat with the WRU, this is a huge problem on the scale of racism in Yorkshire cricket. I am asking you to speak to these individuals in confidence in order to collaborate the concerns I have raised in this email. As an ambassador of a local girls hub, I have a duty as their MP to ensure that the mistakes of the past and present do not hinder the future careers of women and girls in rugby, and that they are safe to work in the world of rugby and play the sport that they love.

I look forward to hearing from you soon,

Best wishes
Tonia