

Y Fonesig Rosemary Butler AC
Dame Rosemary Butler AM



Llywydd
 Presiding Officer

Jeff Cuthbert AM
 Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty
 Welsh Government
 5th Floor, Tŷ Hywel
 Cardiff Bay
 CF99 1NA

Your ref:
 Our ref: PO/RB/CS/CW

13 May 2014

Dear Jeff

Appointment of the Children's Commissioner in 2015

You may be aware that during my regular discussions with the First Minister and in correspondence, I have raised the issue of transferring responsibility of the Children's, Older People's and Welsh Language Commissioners from the Welsh Government to the National Assembly. I feel strongly that this would increase transparency and accountability and I have sympathy with those who have lobbied me about the perception of Commissioners holding to account the body that appoints them.

I note that the recruitment process for the new Children's Commissioner for Wales, to be appointed early in 2015, has commenced. It may be too late for the Welsh Government to consider bringing forward subordinate legislation to effect a transfer of responsibility at this stage. However, given the engagement of the Children's Commissioner with the Assembly and its committees, I should be grateful if you would consider building into the process a pre-appointment hearing for the preferred candidate with the Children, Young People and Education Committee. I believe this would improve transparency and would allow the Committee to provide feedback to Welsh Ministers. I understand that the Committee raised the appointment process and accountability when you discussed the remit of your proposed Review of the Role and Functions of the Children's Commissioner for Wales on Wednesday 7 May.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg/We welcome correspondence in both English and Welsh

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You may wish to be aware that for the appointments of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and the Auditor General for Wales, the practice of pre-appointment hearings for the preferred candidate works very well.

I am very happy to discuss further if you think that would be helpful.

I am copying this letter to Ann Jones AM, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosemary". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Dame Rosemary Butler AM
Presiding Officer