

Jane Hutt AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a Busnes y Llywodraeth
Minister for Finance and Government Business



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein Cyf / Our ref: SF/JH/4161/14

Jocelyn Davies AM
Chair of the Finance Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

18 December 2014

Dear Jocelyn,

I was asked to respond to the second recommendation of the Finance Committee arising from their consideration of the estimates of the Public Service Ombudsman. The Committee has recommended that the Ombudsman should work with the Welsh Government to prepare a clear plan and timetable for amending the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005. I am writing with regard to the Finance Committee recommendation 2 in regard to the above estimates your committee considered in November 2014.

Similar issues were raised by the outgoing Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in January 2014 this year and the then Minister, Lesley Griffiths AM, wrote to Christine Chapman AM, Chair of the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee with the views of the Welsh Government and our view remains the same.

The Welsh Government values the work of the Ombudsman very highly indeed and we seek to support him in every way in which we can. However, the Welsh Government is also a public body subject to the scrutiny of the Ombudsman itself. We feel, therefore, that it would be more appropriate for the Assembly itself to enter into a dialogue with the Ombudsman and to pursue any legislative actions which might result from that dialogue – it is, after all, the Assembly Commission who are responsible for the appointment of the Ombudsman, rather than the Welsh Government. We will, of course, have views of our own to be fed into the consideration – not least in the context of taking forward public service reform - but those views should be considered alongside those of other bodies which are subject to the Ombudsman. Of course, we also have to recognise that the legislative programme for the Assembly is already very busy, but were this to find space in the busy legislative agenda, we will of course engage fully with any proposals to enhance the core role of the Ombudsman

I hope that your Committee will find these responses helpful in its overall deliberations.

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Wedi'i argraffu ar bapur wedi'i ailgylchu (100%)

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