

Mark Drakeford AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref

Elin Jones AM
Presiding Officer
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff
CF99 1NA

27 October 2016

Dear Elin,

The post of WRA chair will be advertised shortly to ensure the appointment is made in good time before April 2018, when devolved tax collection gets underway.

I have discussed with the First Minister and other Cabinet colleagues the approach to this particular appointment and the possible inclusion of a pre-appointment hearing with an Assembly committee. I am therefore writing to you to share my thinking and to seek your views and consideration of the relevant committee for such a proposal.

It is because of the unique status and governance arrangements of the WRA that a pre-appointment hearing as part of the chair appointment process is being considered. A hearing would in my view be consistent with the particular characteristics of this post and its unique relationship with the legislature.

The WRA will be a non-ministerial Department, the first such Department of its type to be set up in Wales. Provisions in the Tax Collection and Management (Wales) Act 2016 establish various statutory reporting requirements, where the WRA is accountable to the Assembly.

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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.

The arrangement provides for the operational independence of the WRA, which is essential for this new public body. The reputation and credibility of the WRA will, amongst other things, depend on the chair being, and being seen to be, independent of the Welsh Ministers and Government who should not be implicated in the management of individual taxpayers' affairs.

To be clear, the decision on the chair appointment falls to the executive. The appointment will be regulated by the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments, which will provide for public reassurance about the appointment process.

As mentioned earlier, I am looking to start the appointment process shortly and plan to go to advert early next month. For your information, I enclose the draft appointment information pack for the position. Depending on your views, I would like to refer to any hearing in the pack and include a date or likely time period when a hearing would be held. I intend to come to a view on the candidate to be recommended for appointment before the February half term break in 2017.

If agreement is reached to proceed with a hearing then I believe that a pre appointment hearing could add materially to the positive perception of this important position and its first post holder.

I would be very happy to discuss this offer if you would find helpful, but in the meantime I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes,

Mark

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