

Appointment of a Non-Executive Member of the Wales Audit Office

May 2025

1. Background

- 1.** The Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 (the 2013 Act)¹ sets out accountability and governance arrangements relating to the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office (WAO).
- 2.** The 2013 Act confers several responsibilities upon the Senedd, including the appointment of five Non-Executive Members of the WAO and the making of their remuneration arrangements.
- 3.** Oversight of the WAO falls within the remit of the Finance Committee (the Committee). Under Standing Orders 18.10(iv), 18.10(v), 18.10(vii) and 18.10(viii)² the Committee is responsible for carrying out the Senedd's functions relating to the appointment of the Non-Executive Members of the WAO, and determining their terms of appointment (including remuneration)

¹ Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013

² [Standing Orders of the Senedd, pages 76-77](#)

2. Non-Executive Member of the WAO

Role of the Finance Committee

4. The appointment of Non-Executive Members to the WAO Board is delegated to the Committee under Standing Order 18.10(v).³ In accordance with the 2013 Act, Non-Executive Members may be appointed for a term of office for a maximum of four years, and may serve a maximum of two terms.⁴

The Recruitment Process and Outcome

5. The second term of office for Non-Executive Member Alison Gerrard expires on 30 June 2025, creating a vacancy on the WAO Board. An advert was published on 31 January 2025 for a Non-Executive Member position, with a closing date for applications of 7 March 2025.

6. The roles were advertised using electronic publications, social media and personal contacts. The advertisement was placed in a range of locations, including: the Senedd website and Finance Committee social media feeds; Audit Wales website; LinkedIn; Jobs Wales; Times online and Sunday Times; Guardian online; Golwg 360; Public Finance website; and Women on Boards. This was also a name-free recruitment, with all applications anonymised to avoid unconscious bias.

7. 33 applications were received from 10 women and 13 men, with one candidate preferring not to say and a further 10 not providing a response. Five candidates were selected for interview. One candidate withdrew prior to the interview stage.

8. Interviews took place on 1 May 2025, at which candidates were questioned on the criteria set out in the job description. The panel members were:

- Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Chair of the Finance Committee;
- Dr Ian Rees, Chair of Wales Audit Office Board;
- Bethan Davies, Head of Chamber and Committee Service, Senedd Cymru.

9. Prior to setting remuneration arrangements and other terms of appointment for the Non-Executive Members of the WAO Board, the 2013 Act

³ Standing Orders of the Senedd, page 78

⁴ Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013, Schedule 1, Paragraph 6

requires the Senedd to consult with “an appropriate person with oversight of public appointments”.⁵ Accordingly, the Committee consulted with the Welsh Government’s Director of People and Places, Dom Houlihan, who responded on 6 January 2025 confirming he was content with the proposed remuneration arrangements.⁶

10. The following candidate was chosen to take up the role of Non-Executive Member for a maximum period of four years:

Bethan Jones – Mrs Jones is a former Area Director for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Deputy Chief Executive of both Anglesey and Conwy council’s. She brings over 25 years of Director Level experience across a range of public services in north Wales and has extensive experience of operating at Board level across these services. This is Mrs Jones’s first appointment to the WAO Board and she has been offered a 4 year term until 2029.

Conclusion 1. The Committee appoints Bethan Jones as a Non-Executive Member of the Wales Audit Office, from 1 July 2025 until 30 June 2029.

⁵ Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013, Schedule 1, Paragraph 9(1)

⁶ Letter from the Director of People and Places, Welsh Government: Consultation on the remuneration arrangement and terms of appointment for Non-Executive Members, 6 January 2025
