



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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# Welsh Revenue Authority Board minutes: 22 September 2021

Minutes from the Welsh Revenue Authority (WRA) Board meeting held on 22 September 2021.

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# Present

## Members

- Kathryn Bishop, Chair
- Dyfed Edwards, Deputy Chair
- Mary Champion, Non-Executive
- Rheon Tomos, Non-Executive
- Dyfed Alsop, Chief Executive Officer
- Sam Cairns, Chief Operations Officer
- Melissa Quignon-Finch, Chief People and Communications Officer

## Ymgynghorwyr (Advisers)

- Rob Jones, Chief Finance Officer
- Amy Bowden, Interim Head of Legal
- Gareth Watson, Interim Head of Communications
- Anna Adams, Deputy Director of Tax Strategy, Policy and Engagement - Welsh Treasury

## Meeting opening

### **1. Welcome and introductions, conflicts of interest and apologies, minutes of the last meeting, matters arising**

1. The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting.
2. Apologies were received from Jocelyn Davies, Neil Butt and Andrew Jeffreys, Anna Adams would deputise and present the report from Welsh

Treasury (WT). Dyfed Alsop sent his apologies for the first part of the meeting.

3. Melissa Quignon-Finch was welcomed to her first meeting as an Executive member of the Board. **Information redacted.**
4. Since the Board last met, a number of Board decisions were taken out of committee in order to commence the election process to appoint a new Staff Elected Member (SEM) to the Board. Because this is a Non-Executive appointment, the Non-Exec approved the terms of the appointment and the Board as a whole agreed the election rules including the process.
5. The Board interest log was agreed.
6. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate account of what was discussed. The redacted minutes were agreed for the purpose of publication.
7. The Board agreed the actions and decisions of the last meeting. Three actions would remain open. These were: A21-01-01: Schedule review of strategies at Board level. A21-02-01: Schedule item on digital operating model for future Board meeting or discussion session. A21-03-01: Arrange separate briefing sessions to discuss tax risk performance measures and the debt review.
8. At the Annual Strategy Away Day in July, the Board agreed that financial and operational performance reporting would take place quarterly to ensure that it was aligned with committee review and to allow more detailed scrutiny at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC).
9. The Chair noted that a decision was taken at the Board Strategy Away Day to move some items from the Board Forward Look to its committees. The Chair would work with the Chief of staff to make improvements to the forward look to make it more comprehensive.

**D21-04-01:** The Board agreed the rules of election for the SEM position.

**D21-04-02:** The Non-Executives agreed the revised terms of appointment for the SEM.

**D21-04-03:** The Board agreed that financial and operational performance take place quarterly.

**A21-04-01:** The Chair and Chief of Staff will carry out a review of the Board Forward Look.

## Report, approvals and decisions

### 2. Chair's report

1. The Chair provided an update on recent activity. **Information redacted.**

### 3. CEO report

1. The Chief Executive's (CE) report had been shared with the Board in advance. It was noted that some of the reporting was provisional because it was part way through the reporting period. However, there had been some improvements on performance in many areas.
2. **Information redacted.**
3. The people survey would commence the following week.
4. An overview of new financial management process for reporting and scrutiny was provided, and the Board confirmed that in their view, it was sufficiently robust.

### 4. Report from Director, Welsh Treasury

1. An update was provided on recent activity. The Welsh Government's Tax Conference would be held on the 3 November, virtually and the WRA would probably host a session on the day. **Information redacted.**

## 5. Accommodation update

1. The Board were informed that a proposal for WRA was being developed for WG's consideration. **Information redacted.**
2. Due to a recent spike in covid cases, WG had changed their advice on working from the office and were now encouraging staff to work from home where possible.

## 6. Governance update

1. The Chief Executive (CE) and Director, Welsh Treasury would present to the WG Board on their experiences as the first Non-Ministerial department of WG and the newly-developed Interdepartmental Agreement (IDA). Andrew Goodhall had been appointed as the new WG Permanent Secretary and the CE was due to meet him the following day. Andrew had been briefed on the WRA's governance model and was supportive of it being shared with WG as a good model.
2. The aspect of the IDA related to litigation funding of the review had been sent to the Minister for Finance and Local Government for consideration. This was aligned with the principles of litigation strategy and outlined a funding agreement to support the strategy.
3. A Service delivery group would be established, made up of representatives across all functions of WRA. This group, chaired by the Chief Operations Officer, would be responsible for day-to-day operational performance management, risk and opportunities and key decision making. Although overall executive leadership would remain with Tîm Arwain, this new structure would mean less reliance on these individuals, freeing them up for more time to be spent on strategic matters.
4. The group will conduct regular reviews of operational delivery which would be translated into quarterly assurance for the Board, the first of which would

start in February 2022.

**Information redacted.**

## Meeting closing

### 10. Any other business

1. It was requested that all board related business discussions that take place over email are copied to all Board members.
2. No other business was raised.

### 11. Forward look

1. The Forward Look was discussed, and it was agreed that a further review would take place in light of recent changes to frequency of reporting and the intention to delegate to committees of the Board.
2. During the meeting, two items were suggested for discussion at a future Board meeting or discussion/briefing. These were:
  - tax risk performance measures
  - debt review

### 12. Meeting review

1. There were fewer papers usual but this provided more space to have constructive discussions about difficult issues. All members contributed to the meeting and the chat function was used well. There was also a healthy amount of debate which was positive and constructive.

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# Redacted information

There are certain circumstances where it is not appropriate to share all of the information contained within the Board minutes, for example, where it contains personal or commercial data or relates to the formulation of government policy or the effective conduct of public affairs. In such circumstances, the information has been redacted and the text is marked clearly that this has been the case.

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