



Eich cyf/Your ref: ARTD/JM
Ein cyf/Our ref: MA(P)/FM/1601/17

Andrew R T Davies AM
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19th May 2017

Dear Andrew

I am writing in response to your letter dated 4 April with which you enclosed a copy of a letter sent to James Price from the former Chair of Sport Wales, asking me to respond to the allegations in the letter.

I have considered the letter from Dr Thomas in the wider context which I set out below for you. When Dr Thomas was informed that Welsh Government Ministers were minded to terminate his appointment, he was informed in writing of the reasons for that intention and was given the opportunity to submit any evidence which he wished to draw to the attention of the Welsh Government. He was then given the opportunity to meet the senior official who was dealing with the matter to present his evidence and to put forward his case why the intention should not be pursued.

The letter which has come into your possession was handed over to the senior official at the meeting as part of the evidence which Dr Thomas submitted. It was taken fully into account, along with other material submitted by Dr Thomas, when a final decision was taken by Ministers on whether or not to proceed with the intention to terminate his appointment. As you know, the decision was taken to proceed with the termination. The letter of termination sent to Dr Thomas included a Statement of Reasons informing him why the decision had been taken.

It would not be appropriate therefore for a separate response to be made to Dr Thomas to this letter since it formed part of the process by which a final decision was taken about his appointment.

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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.

You say in your letter that the allegations require thorough investigation. I have been satisfied, however, that the issues which Dr Thomas raises in this letter were also raised by him at an earlier stage during the Assurance Review of Sport Wales. These were considered alongside the other interviews conducted and evidence collected by the Assurance Review and the conclusions of the Review were submitted to Ministers as part of the evidence base on which decisions were made about the appointments of the Chair and the Vice Chair.

Despite the allegations made in the letter which came into your possession, I am advised that there is not significant and reliable corroborating evidence which would justify a further investigation following on from the Assurance Review, which could not itself substantiate the allegations. Reports from both the external and internal auditors have not raised any concerns about governance issues in Sport Wales. In addition, the interim Chair, who has brought a fresh and external perspective, reports that he finds Sport Wales to be a well-governed and well-run organisation. In particular he has addressed allegations which have been made by the Chair about the CEO of Sport Wales, in relation to procurement and other issues, and has told us that he has found nothing to substantiate the allegations that have been made.

Sport Wales has a vital role to play in the Welsh Government's delivery of its programme going forward. It may indeed need to change and adapt its role, which is why we wish to continue with the Review of Sport Policy in Wales. But that is not out of the ordinary - we need to look at all of our delivery mechanisms to ensure that they are configured properly for taking forward our agenda.

The recent events in relation to the Board have of course been very distracting to Sport Wales. But it needs now to be allowed to move forward and concentrate on the job which it is there to do. I have confidence in the current Board and leadership structure that they will be able to do so.

Given the interest in this and that you raised it in First Minister's Questions, I am placing a copy of this letter in the library.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carwyn Jones', written in a cursive style.

CARWYN JONES