

Terms of Reference (incorporating the procedural rules made under Part 7 of Schedule 1 to the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013

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Status

- 1 The Wales Audit Office is established as a corporate body under section 13 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013 ("the Act"). These terms of reference cover the arrangements for conducting business and should be read in conjunction with:
 - the Wales Audit Office's scheme of delegation;
 - the Code of Practice governing the relationship between the Auditor General and the Wales Audit Office; and
 - the Audit Wales Code of Conduct.

The terms of reference incorporate the procedural rules required under Schedule 1, part 7, paragraph 27 of the Act.

Role and responsibilities

- 2 The Wales Audit Office:
 - (a) must monitor the exercise of the Auditor General's statutory functions;
 - (b) may provide advice on the exercise of those functions;
 - (c) must provide the resources required for the exercise of those functions and that the operational independence of the office of Auditor General is preserved in accordance with Section 8 of the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2013;
 - (d) exercises certain other specific functions under the Act, such as jointly preparing with the Auditor General each financial year an estimate of the income and expenses of the Wales Audit Office
- 3 By virtue of the requirement on the Wales Audit Office to comply with the code of practice dealing with the relationship between the Wales Audit Office and the Auditor General, approved by the Senedd, the Wales Audit Office must also:
 - (a) ensure that the operational independence of the office of Auditor General is maintained in accordance with Section 8 of the Act;
 - (b) maintain standards of corporate governance.
- 4 The Wales Audit Office must aim to carry out its functions efficiently and cost-effectively
- 5 The specific and joint responsibilities of the Auditor General, the Wales Audit Office and its members are described in the Code of Practice governing the relationship between the Wales Audit Office and the Auditor General for Wales.

Constitution

Membership

- 6 The Board has nine members comprising:
 - (a) five non-executive members, one of whom is the Chair;

- (b) the Auditor General who is also the Chief Executive and Accounting Officer of the Wales Audit Office; and
- (c) three employee members, one nominated by the Auditor General and two elected by a ballot of employees.

Appointments

- 7 All appointments must be made on merit. In the case of the elected employee members—see below—merit is determined by a ballot of staff of the Wales Audit Office.

The non-executive members

The Senedd appoints five non-executive members and sets their terms of appointment including their responsibilities, remuneration, the circumstances in which their appointment can be terminated and the arrangements should they wish to resign their position in accordance with Schedule 1, Part 2 of the Act. Appointments are for up to four years and may be renewed once, subject to an assessment process. All appointments and renewals must be based on the conclusions of a fair and open competition.

The Chair

- 8 The Senedd appoints the Chair of the Wales Audit Office from amongst the non-executive members (after consulting the First Minister). Appointments are for up to four years and may be renewed once, subject to an assessment process.
- 9 The Senedd sets the Chair's terms of appointment, including their responsibilities, remuneration, the circumstances in which their appointment can be terminated and the arrangements should they wish to resign their position (with or without also resigning as a non-executive member).

The Auditor General

- 10 The Auditor General is a Crown appointment on the nomination of the Senedd. The Auditor General may hold office for up to eight years and may not be re-appointed thereafter. The circumstances governing the resignation or removal from office of the Auditor General are set out at section 3 of the Act.
- 11 Under the Act, the Auditor General is a member of the Wales Audit Office and its Chief Executive.

The appointed member

- 12 The Auditor General recommends an employee for appointment to the Wales Audit Office by the non-executive members ("the appointed member"). The non-executive members may appoint the Auditor General's nominee or require another recommendation (this process continues until agreement is reached). The non-executive members must explain their reasons for not accepting a nomination. The non-executive members shall determine the terms of the appointed member's appointment, including their period of appointment, responsibilities, allowances, the circumstances in which their appointment can be terminated (in addition to those set out below) and the arrangements should they wish to resign their position. The appointment will be for such renewable term as the non-executive members may determine and there is no limit to the number of times such an appointment can be renewed.

- 13 The appointed member may resign from the Board by giving written notice to the non-executive members.
- 14 The appointed member's appointment is terminated if that member ceases to be an employee of the Wales Audit Office. The non-executive members may terminate the appointment by giving written notice if the member:
 - (a) has been absent from Board meetings without the Board's permission for a period or periods totalling three months or more in any 12-month period; or
 - (b) has become bankrupt or has made an arrangement with creditors; or
 - (c) has had their estate sequestrated in Scotland or, under Scots Law, has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, the member's creditors; or
 - (d) is unfit to continue the appointment because of misconduct; or
 - (e) has failed to comply with the terms of the appointment; or
 - (f) is otherwise unable, unfit or unwilling to carry out the member's functions. For the avoidance of doubt, any failure to comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct shall be treated as a failure to carry out the Board member's functions and may result in the termination of the appointed member's appointment.

The elected members

- 15 The non-executive members appoint two employee members following a ballot of staff ("the elected members"). The rules for the conduct of such ballots are set out at Appendix 1.
- 16 The non-executive members set the elected members' terms of appointment including their period of appointment¹, responsibilities, allowances, the circumstances in which their appointment can be terminated (in addition to those set out below) and the arrangements should they wish to resign their position. There is no limit as to how many times they may stand as a candidate in subsequent ballots, unless an employee member has served two consecutive terms in which case they are not permitted to be a Wales Audit Office Board member again for a period of two years after the end of their second period of office.
- 17 An employee member's appointment is terminated if that member ceases to be an employee of the Wales Audit Office. The non-executive members may terminate the appointment of an elected employee member's appointment by giving written notice if the member:
 - (a) has been absent from Board meetings without the Board's permission for a period or periods totalling three months or more in any 12-month period; or
 - (b) has become bankrupt or has made an arrangement with creditors; or
 - (c) has had their estate sequestrated in Scotland or, under Scots Law, has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, the member's creditors; or
 - (d) is unfit to continue the appointment because of misconduct; or
 - (e) has failed to comply with the terms of the appointment; or
 - (f) is otherwise unable, unfit or unwilling to carry out the member's functions

Senior Independent Director

¹ Practice to date (June 2026) has been for the non-executives to set a period of appointment of four years, in line with the period for non-executive member appointments.

- 18 The Chair nominates for Board approval a non-executive member as Senior Independent Director. Where the person nominated by the Chair is not approved by the Board, the Chair will nominate another non-executive member for the role and this will continue until a person is approved by the Board. In addition to deputising for the Chair when they are unable to act, the Senior Independent Director's responsibilities include:
- (a) appraising the performance of the Chair;
 - (b) receiving reports from whistleblowers outside the normal line management chain, and primary disclosure channels specified in the Wales Audit Office's internal whistleblowing policy and arranging investigation as appropriate, in accordance with that policy; and
 - (c) overseeing the election of employee members to the Board.

Board links

19. The Board may appoint members to other roles to support particular projects or aspects of the Wales Audit Office's business. Such roles are designed to demonstrate the Board's commitment and provide members with the opportunity to develop insight and knowledge of the business, helping them and the Board to fulfil their roles more effectively. Further information on the roles and their purpose is at Appendix 2.

Secretarial support

- 20 The Board must appoint a Board Secretary (who is not a Board member) to:
- a) ensure that the Board is properly constituted and advised;
 - b) ensure that the agendas of the Board and its committees align and that appropriate matters are escalated for inclusion on Board agendas;
 - c) liaise with the Chair on the programme of work;
 - d) ensure that the Board receives information and papers in a timely manner to enable full and proper consideration of the issues;
 - e) make arrangements for Board meetings and maintain appropriate records of its business;
 - f) undertake the administrative duties for the election of employee members to the Board set out in the electoral rules (appendix 1); and
 - g) provide any other necessary practical support.
- 21 If the position of Board Secretary becomes vacant, the Board must appoint a Board Secretary as soon as is reasonably practicable. The Board may make a temporary appointment to cover a sudden vacancy or in the case of a temporary inability of the appointed Board Secretary to undertake the role, such as might be caused by illness.
- 22 The Chair contributes to the Secretary's annual performance appraisal as part of the normal arrangements.

Board meetings

The work programme

- 23 The Board Secretary maintains a plan of the business likely to come forward for the Board's consideration during the year. The Board reviews and adjusts the plan as necessary at each meeting.

Frequency

- 24 The Board normally meets six times each year for combined strategic discussion and business meetings in line with the requirements of its work programme.
- 25 Board meetings are summoned by the Board Secretary at the Chair's request. A special meeting of the Board may be called at any time by the Chair or at the request in writing of any three members. A special meeting may be called with less than five working days' notice if the Chair so directs and if there are matters demanding urgent consideration. The person scheduling the meeting must try to ensure, subject to the urgency of any matter to be discussed at the meeting, that as many Board members as practicable are likely to be available to participate.

Attendance

- 26 Members who are unable to attend a meeting may raise any points with the Chair in advance of the meeting to which they relate.
- 27 If the Chair and Senior Independent Director are both unable to attend all or part of a meeting, the remaining non-executive members must appoint one of themselves to Chair for that meeting or part meeting. The quorum arrangements described below will apply.
- 28 Unless otherwise determined by the Chair for a particular meeting, Board meetings do not need to take place in one physical place. Board members participate in (and form part of the quorum in relation to) a Board meeting, or part of a Board meeting, when they can contemporaneously communicate with each other by any means. If all the Board members participating in a meeting are not in the same place, they may decide that the meeting is to be treated as taking place wherever any of them is.
- 29 The Board may invite or require other staff or other persons, such as professional advisers, to attend all or part of meetings as appropriate. The Chair may ask an attendee to leave the meeting at any time.

Papers

- 30 Unless otherwise agreed, at least five working days before the date of the meeting, the Secretary will send to members and anyone required to attend, a notice of each meeting confirming the venue (where the meeting is to take place at a physical location), date and time together with an agenda of items to be discussed. If it is anticipated that Board members participating in the meeting will not be in the same physical place, the notice must set out how it is proposed that they should communicate with each other during the meeting. Supporting papers will be sent at the same time. Late papers are the exception and can only be accepted with the Chair's prior agreement.

Quorum

- 31 The quorum necessary for a Board meeting is five members, provided that in all circumstances a majority of the members present are non-executive members.
- 32 A duly convened meeting of the Board at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all of the powers and duties exercisable by the Board.

- 33 If a meeting is inquorate, no formal business can be conducted and a meeting must remain quorate for decisions to be made. If a meeting is inquorate, any discussions will be informal only.
- 34 In the event of inquoracy, the Chair:
- (a) may decide to call a special meeting to undertake all or the remaining business; or
 - (b) may defer decisions to the next meeting where that is feasible within the constraints of statutory and other practical deadlines; or
 - (c) may request one or more employee members to leave the meeting and remain absent to enable it to become quorate.

Declarations of interest

- 35 Members must declare their interests in any proceedings of the Wales Audit Office regardless of whether those interests have also been recorded on the Register of Interests. Such declarations must be made at the start of any meeting, or as soon as the necessity is apparent. If a member is unsure as to whether a conflict of interest exists, they should seek advice before or during the meeting from the Chair.
- 36 If practicable, the Chair will inform the Board at the outset of the meeting which (if any) items are to be taken in a private session.
- 37 In considering whether to make a declaration, members must consider whether they might be influenced by the interest. Members must also apply the objective test, i.e. whether a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard the interest as so significant that it is likely to prejudice a member's discussion or decision-making.
- 38 If a member feels that, in the context of the matter being considered, their involvement is neither capable of being viewed as more significant than that of an ordinary member of the public, nor likely to be perceived by the public as wrong, they may continue to participate in the meeting and voting. However, the relevant interest must be declared. Members are responsible for judging whether an interest is sufficiently relevant to require a declaration but should err on the side of declaration.
- 39 The Secretary may also advise the Chair and draw the matter to the attention of the member if, based on a declaration in the Register of Interests, there appears to be an actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to an agenda item.
- 40 If a conflict of interest cannot otherwise be managed or mitigated, i.e. is prejudicial, the Chair will require the member to withdraw from the meeting from the commencement of the agenda item giving rise to the conflict or potential conflict until the item has been concluded.
- 41 A prejudicial interest is an interest in any business of the Auditor General or Wales Audit Office which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interests.
- 42 Examples of where prejudicial interests may arise are:
- any organisation of which a member or their close family or associate is a member, officeholder or employee, or in a position of control or management;
 - any employment or business carried out by a member or their associate;
 - any person or organisation who employs the member or their associate;
 - any contract between the Auditor General or the Wales Audit Office and any entity that the member or their associate is a partner in or director of, or in which the member or their associate has an investment exceeding £5,000;

- the interests of any person from whom the member or their associate has received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25.
- 43 Employee members may not participate in Board proceedings where they have a personal interest, except where such an interest is remote. Employee members may not participate in specific discussions concerning staff restructuring, appointments, redundancies, pay and conditions, and disciplinary matters concerning particular individuals, should the Chair determine that they have a conflict of interest. In such cases, the employee members may not see papers relating to such matters and must leave the meeting if and when so determined by the Chair.
 - 44 When a Board member makes a declaration of interest, the Board Secretary must record it in the minutes. The Board Secretary must also assist the member to check whether the matter should be registered in the Register of Interests.
 - 45 If members are frequently declaring interests at meetings they should consider whether they can carry out their role effectively and discuss it with the Chair. Similarly, if any appointment or nomination to another body would give rise to objective concern about membership of the Wales Audit Office, members should discuss the position with the Chair.
 - 46 The Chair may decide that certain agenda items should be considered in the absence of one or more members because a conflict of interest cannot otherwise be managed or mitigated. Where it is practical to do so, the Chair will identify such items in advance of the meeting and they will be identified separately on the agenda as a private session.
 - 47 Periodically, the Board must review the use of private sessions to ensure that the designation was used appropriately and only when necessary.

Decisions and voting

- 48 Where possible, Board decisions are reached by a consensus of members present. Where the Chair cannot achieve a consensus, the matter to be decided is determined by a majority of the votes of the members present. Each Board member has one vote, with the exception of the Chair's casting vote in the case of a tie.
- 49 Proxy or postal votes on behalf of absent members are not permitted. For the avoidance of doubt, votes cast by members at meetings held in more than one physical place are not proxy votes.
- 50 The members may take a vote by a secret ballot if a majority of members agree.
- 51 Dissenting members are entitled to have their dissent recorded in the minutes together with the reason(s) for such dissent.
- 52 Once a matter has been resolved, all members are bound by the Board's decision.
- 53 The Board's decisions may be rescinded or varied only by a subsequent resolution of the Board. No decision may be rescinded or varied unless it is reconsidered as a substantive item on the agenda of a subsequent meeting.

Conduct

The Code of Conduct describes the expected standards of personal conduct and behaviour and these are also applicable during meetings. The Chair is responsible for maintaining order during Board meetings and may take any reasonable action necessary to ensure the orderly conduct of business.

Minutes

- 54 The Secretary must ensure that the Board maintains proper records of its proceedings and decisions.
- 55 The Secretary will aim to send the draft minutes to the Chair within five working days of the Board meeting to which they relate and the Chair will approve them for distribution to members.
- 56 The Board will approve the minutes at its next meeting subject to any amendments requested by the Board. The Secretary must arrange for the minutes of meetings to be published by being posted on an accessible area of the Wales Audit Office's website.

Delegation of functions

- 57 The Wales Audit Office operates in accordance with its scheme of delegation but the delegation of a function does not prevent the Board from exercising the function itself. The Board may vary or revoke its scheme of delegation at any time by a decision of the Board taken in accordance with the decision making process set out in this Terms of Reference.

Board committees

- 58 The Board may establish, and delegate functions to committees (except where such delegation is not permitted as set out in the scheme of delegation). The Board will approve the terms of reference of its committees which are reviewed every three years.
- 59 Committee members will normally comprise non-executive and employee members. However, a person who is neither a member nor an employee of the Wales Audit Office may be a member of a committee provided that the Board delegates no decision-making functions to that committee or sub-committee.
- 60 An employee of the Wales Audit Office who is not an employee Board member may be a member of a committee or sub-committee.
- 61 The quorum for each committee's or sub-committee's meetings will be as set out in the terms of reference for the committee or sub-committee, subject always to the requirement that the majority of members of the committee or sub-committee present are non-executive members of the Board.

Urgent decision-making and Chair's action

- 62 Occasionally, the Board will need to make decisions on unexpected and urgent substantive matters between scheduled meetings, such as the designation of a person to exercise the functions of Auditor General temporarily in accordance with paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the Act. If the Secretary and at least two board members deem that it is not practicable for a special meeting to be called, the necessary decisions may be made by email. The arrangements for convening a quorum (paragraphs 34 to 37) and for recording decisions (paragraph 46) apply to such decision-making
- 63 Exceptionally, the Chair's action may be required on an urgent matter, requiring the exercise of the Wales Audit Office's functions but for which there is no delegation in place and where delay would seriously prejudice the Wales Audit Office. In such circumstances the Secretary must ensure that the Chair's action is reported to the next Board meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting by way of ratification. In such circumstances, the Board will accept corporate responsibility for any action taken.

Performance evaluation

- 64 The Board will evaluate its own performance (including the performance of its committees) on an annual basis. Every three to five years, this evaluation must be performed by an independent external consultant.
- 65 The Chair will review members' performance in accordance with the performance management framework established for that purpose. The Chair's performance is reviewed by the Senior Independent Director.
- 66 The Board maintains a learning and development plan, reviewed annually, covering the arrangements for inducting new members and for providing existing members with relevant ongoing training.

Validity of proceedings

- 67 The proceedings at any meeting or the making of any decision (by the Board or any subcommittee) shall not be invalidated by reason of any accidental informality or irregularity (including any accidental omission to give or any non-receipt of notice) or any want of qualification in any of the persons present or voting or by reason of any business being considered which is not specified in the notice.
- 68 The validity of proceedings of the Board or any committee or sub-committee is not affected by any vacancy or any defective appointment of any of its members.

Wales Audit Office seal

- 69 The application of the seal must be authenticated by:
- the signature of a member of the Board; or
 - any person authorised for the purpose by a resolution of the Board or by the Wales Audit Office's scheme of delegation.

Review of the terms of reference

- 70 The Board must review these terms of reference annually. Any amendment to these terms of reference must be approved by a decision of the Board.

Appendix 1 – rules for electing employee members to the Board

Responsibility for electoral arrangements

- 1 The Senior Independent Director will act in the capacity of 'Elections Officer' responsible for overseeing the arrangements for conducting the ballot and for certifying the outcome.
- 2 The Board Secretary ('the Secretary') is responsible for assisting the Elections Officer by making the administrative arrangements for the ballot insofar as these are necessary to supplement those provided by a reputable external organisation (see paragraph 21 below).
- 3 If the Secretary intends to contest the ballot, the Elections Officer must appoint an acting secretary to fulfil the Secretary's role in the administration of the ballot. If the Secretary is elected, the position of Board Secretary becomes vacant, and the Board must initiate a recruitment process to replace the Secretary².

Notice and timing of ballot

- 4 The Board will determine the deadlines for receipt of nominations and voting. However:
 - (a) The deadline for receipt of nominations should be no less than 8 working days following the notice of ballot and no less than 20 working days before the close of the ballot.
 - (b) The deadline for the close of the ballot should be no more than 45 working days following any vacancy but may be extended by a further 10 working days so as to avoid the election period, including the period for nominations, falling at a time when large numbers of staff are absent or heavily engaged in the completion of audits.
- 5 The ballot will be open for a period of at least 10 working days.
- 6 The Secretary must publish a notice of ballot on the WAO intranet (with a link in an email sent to all staff) no later than 5 working days after a casual vacancy (a vacancy arising for reasons other than the scheduled end of a member's term) occurs, or, in the case of scheduled vacancies, no less than 15 days before the scheduled end of an existing employee member's term. Nominations may be made from the publication of the notice of ballot.

² A person who ceases to be Board Secretary by virtue of being elected employee member will be assigned to other work within the organisation, subject to the availability of suitable work, except of course in respect of their work as an employee member.

- 7 The notice of ballot must specify the deadline (date and time) for the receipt of nominations by the Secretary, the date and time for conclusion of voting, and include a link to these election rules.

Nominations

- 8 All WAO employees regardless of form or length of contract, length of service or working hours are eligible to be nominated to stand for election.
- 9 The Board Secretary, liaising with the Head of HR and line managers as appropriate will make arrangements to ensure that staff away from the office, for example on secondment, sick leave or parental leave have an opportunity to participate in the process if they choose to do so.
- 10 Nominations must be made on a form approved by the Elections Officer, be signed by the candidate and five sponsors who are WAO employees (or supported by authentic emails from the relevant persons' WAO email addresses) and be received by the Secretary before the published deadline. A sponsor may only sponsor one candidate for each vacancy. Nominations received after the deadline will not be accepted. It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the nomination form is properly completed and delivered to the Secretary before the deadline.
- 11 The Secretary must publish a list of valid nominations received on the WAO intranet as soon as possible after the deadline. The Secretary will make completed nomination forms available for inspection.
- 12 If the number of valid nominations equals the number of places available, voting is not required and those nominated will be deemed elected.
- 13 If the number of valid nominations is less than the number of places available, all validly nominated candidates will be elected and a casual vacancy will arise in respect of the unfilled place and the electoral process must be repeated until all vacancies were filled.

Campaigning

- 14 Nominated candidates are permitted to campaign by any or all of the following methods:
 - i. providing a **written statement not exceeding 500 words** for publishing on the intranet (the Hub) and the external voting website. The statement should be sent by email to the Board Secretary who will arrange for translation and publication. When planning their campaign candidates should allow 3 working days for translation and publication on the HUB. Candidates will be provided separately with a date by which the statement should be provided in order for it to be included on the external voting site. Statements which are not received by that date will not be included.

- ii. sending **one email not exceeding 500 words to all staff** – candidates should arrange translation directly through the translation service and issue the email bi-lingually to all staff during the campaign period;
 - iii. inviting all staff to attend **one question and answer session via Teams or Hybrid meeting**, from which an anonymised summary of questions and answers may be published on the elections page on the HUB;
 - iv. **answering ad hoc questions** asked informally orally, via email, Viva Engage (Yammer) or HUB comments and adding these to a question and answer document on the elections HUB page;
 - v. **providing a one minute video for the HUB** introducing themselves and their reasons for standing; and
 - vi. the use of a Viva Engage (Yammer) thread on the 'all company' group to invite and answer questions and answers.
- 15 No other forms of campaigning by the candidate or their supporters will be permitted; neither personal nor work social media accounts should be used for campaigning, save for the all-company Viva Engage (Yammer) group or HUB comments feature which are visible to all staff.
- 16 The campaign period finishes when the ballot opens; candidates are not permitted to campaign after this date.
- 17 Candidates are not permitted to engage in canvassing, defined as the systematic initiation of direct contact with individuals to solicit votes.
- 18 Candidates should ensure that their permitted campaigning is in line with the Code of Conduct. In particular, they must not indicate any political affiliations, and they must not campaign citing the support of any external organisation. They may, however, indicate support by a local (WAO) trade union branch.
- 19 Should nominated candidates require reasonable adjustments to participate in the process, these will be considered in line with the WAO Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Voting

- 20 All employees of the WAO, regardless of form or length of contract, length of service, or working hours are entitled to vote.
- 21 The Board Secretary, liaising with the Head of HR and line managers as appropriate will make arrangements to ensure that staff away from the office, for example on secondment, sick leave or parental leave have an opportunity to participate in the process if they choose to do so.
- 22 The Board will contract the administration of the ballot to a reputable external organisation. The Elections Officer must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place so as to ensure that:
- (a) Employees may only vote once; and

(b) The outcome is verified independently so that the votes cast by individual staff cannot be accessed by other staff or Board members.

- 23 Staff will be invited to place “1” by their preferred candidate and “2” by their second preference candidate and so on. Any candidate who receives first preference votes above a pre-determined threshold set by reference to a formula is elected. The threshold is set by reference to the following formula:

$$\left(\frac{\text{number of valid votes cast}}{\text{number of available places}+1} \right) + 1$$

- 24 The elected candidate’s surplus votes above this threshold are then transferred to the other candidates in proportion to the elected candidate’s voters’ second preference votes. If any candidate exceeds the threshold after this redistribution, they are elected. If at any point in this process there are no unelected candidates with a number of votes exceeding the threshold, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes will be eliminated and their votes will be transferred to the remaining candidates in proportion to their second preference votes. This process continues until the required number of candidates secure enough votes to reach the threshold.
- 25 If there is only one available place in any given election, the threshold becomes half of the total votes. If no candidate achieves more than half of the vote, the candidate with the lowest number of first preference votes will be eliminated and their votes will be transferred to the remaining candidates in proportion to their second preference votes, and so on until one candidate secures more than half of the vote.
- 26 The Secretary must send an email to all staff which explains how votes are to be cast at least 5 working days before the opening of the ballot.
- 27 After the voting deadline, the ballot contractor will independently verify the votes, and the Elections Officer will certify the results. The Secretary must publish an overview of the results on the WAO intranet and make full results available on request. The overview of the results will include the names of each candidate elected, the round they were elected on, and the vote they received on their final round, as well as the names of each candidate not elected with the stage they were eliminated from the ballot and the vote they got on their final round.
- 28 The non-executive Board members will appoint the successful candidates to the Board.

Disputes and allegations of breaches of the Rules

- 29 Any candidate, staff member or member of the WAO Board alleging that a breach of these Rules has occurred must notify the Elections Officer of the facts known to them as soon as practicable after becoming aware of it (and in any event within 5 working days of becoming aware) and must provide to the Elections Officer any evidence in their possession or control.

- 30 The Elections Officer will adjudicate on any such alleged breaches of the Rules or any other disputes regarding the election process or its outcome. Grounds for disputes must be presented in writing within 5 working days of the cause of the dispute becoming apparent. The Elections Officer will seek the views of the other candidates and any other relevant parties and may conduct additional enquiries. The Elections Officer will give their decisions in writing (which may be by email).
- 31 As part of their decision on any dispute, the Elections Officer has discretion to disqualify a candidate. The Elections Officer also has discretion to extend the ballot process or to cancel it and order a new ballot in accordance with these Rules. The Elections Officer must, however, ensure that their decision is reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.
- 32 The Elections Officer's decisions may be appealed by submitting a written appeal specifying the grounds of the appeal to the Chair of the WAO. Appeals must be made within 5 working days of the Elections Officer's written decision being dispatched. The Chair must determine the appeal promptly and provide their decision in writing (which may be by email). The Chair's decision is final. The Chair has discretion to overturn a disqualification but may not impose a disqualification. The Chair also has discretion to extend the ballot process or to cancel it and order a new ballot in accordance with these Rules. The Chair must, however, ensure that their decision is reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.
- 33 If a person is disqualified after being elected, their appointment as an employee member of the Board terminates upon the determination of any appeal or, if there is no appeal, upon the expiry of the time limit for appeal, and a casual vacancy then arises.

Appendix 2 – Board link role description

- 1 The Board may appoint members to link roles. In doing so the Board will take account of members':
 - Committee and other commitments, such as Chairing and Senior Independent Director responsibilities;
 - any particular expressions of interest or areas of expertise; and
 - any potential conflicts of interest.
- 2 The Board Secretary will maintain a record of Board link appointments.
- 3 The Board Chair will review appointments periodically. The impact of the roles will be considered as part of the assessment of the Board's effectiveness.
- 4 The Board and individual members fulfilling a link role must ensure that:
 - the role does not encroach on actions and activities that are the responsibilities of staff with relevant delegations;
 - the role does not encroach on actions and activities that are the responsibility of the whole Board or one or more of its Committees;
 - other Board members do not neglect the matters relevant to the link role;
 - the role does not impair a member's ability to fulfil their responsibilities for holding management to account.
- 5 Views expressed by members fulfilling link roles should be representative of the views of the Board or at least not conflict with the agreed position of the Board on any matter.

Link

- 6 The Board may appoint members to link roles in areas of strategic importance to the organisation. In selecting topic areas, the Board will focus on their strategic importance in the context of priorities in the exercise of Auditor General and Wales Audit Office functions, as articulated in the five-year strategy and respective Annual Plans. The Board may, for example, consider:
 - the level of investment, including its potential to generate long-term savings;
 - the risks, including opportunity and reputational risks;
 - workforce implications, whether positive or negative; and
 - links to other projects or topic areas.
- 7 The Board link will:
 - seek to gain a deeper level of understanding and knowledge of the area, its relevance to the Auditor General and Wales Audit Office functions, and the opportunities and challenges it presents, with the aim of better equipping themselves and the Board to fulfil their roles;
 - where they can safely represent the views of the Board, act as the Board's liaison with management, such as in providing advance views of plans and strategies ahead of Board consideration;
 - attend relevant meetings as appropriate to inform discussions;

- use their experience and perspective to support and inform management on an ongoing basis;
- use their experience to offer guidance to project leads, maximising the effectiveness of their contribution to the topic area;
- as appropriate, engage with the wider organisation to promote and help raise the profile of the topic area; and
- seek to ensure that the Board is well positioned to make informed decisions at the right time.

8 The Board may also appoint members to a link role for a specific time limited specific project or piece of work which may require member involvement over a shorter period of time or for a particular purpose. The Board link will:

- carry out their role, following the principles outlined for the broader link role outlined above; and
- where appropriate highlight their involvement or contribution during the relevant Board consideration of that item.



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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth a galwadau ffôn yn Gymraeg a Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh and English.