

Dawn Bowden AS/MS
Dirprwy Weinidog y Celfyddydau Chwaraeon, a'r Prif Chwip
Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DB/661/22
Roger Lewis
President
Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales

[redacted S.40]

11 February 2022

Dear Roger,

I am writing to you following the conclusion of the independent investigation into complaints raised against you by the Director General and Chief Operating Officer of Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales.

I would like to thank you for your patience whilst this matter has been investigated. I understand that it has been a difficult time for everyone involved.

The terms of reference for the independent investigation set out that:

[redacted S.41]

I have read the report in detail and I have noted each of the findings made within it. I have also noted the representations made by the parties on the report and its findings. These findings include:

[redacted S.41]

I must express my profound disappointment that this situation has been allowed to arise within the Museum. It is particularly concerning that relationships with the Director General and Chief Operating Officer appear to have irretrievably broken down. The Museum is a major institution in Welsh life and central to a number of Welsh Government's Programme for Government commitments.

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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 were appointed by my predecessor in 2019 to the prestigious role of President with specific duties within your Terms and Conditions of Appointment to work to the highest personal and professional standards. Part of your role also involved establishing and building a “strong, effective and supportive working relationship with the Director General, providing support and advice whilst respecting executive responsibility”.

The findings made by the independent investigator are, therefore, extremely concerning including [redacted S.41].

It is clear to me from the report that there are significant and sustained difficulties in the efficient and effective operation of the Museum which have been caused by the breakdown in relationships. As Deputy Minister with responsibility for Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales and its major donor, my priority is that the organisation should move forward and continue in its work of helping the people and communities of Wales to have a better and culturally richer life, to protect our natural environment, and to sustain and build our connections with peoples in Europe and across the world.

Unfortunately, the complete breakdown of the relationships is a distraction and a threat to the organisation’s reputation. It is vital for all of the reasons I have set out that I am able to have full confidence in those who play leading roles in the Museum. The report raises some serious issues in that connection.

I have concluded, therefore, in light of that and the findings in the report that the following actions must be taken:

1. Board of Trustees

The report should be shared with the Board of Trustees, via their legal representatives, with my expectation that the Board should clearly demonstrate its leadership in light of the findings in the report and the current state of the Museum’s operation. I shall be writing to them to encourage them to reach out to Welsh Government officials for assistance to move out of this current stasis and inviting them to meet with me as a matter of urgency.

2. Alternative dispute resolution

It is my wish that you, the Director General and the Chief Operating Officer should take part in alternative dispute resolution with a view to setting aside polarised positions and looking to agree a way out of the current situation that is in the best interests of the Museum.

3. Internal Grievance and Employment Tribunal proceedings

I am aware that there is an internal grievance process underway within the Museum. I will be asking the Museum HR to ensure that this process is expedited as I understand the employment tribunal proceedings are currently unable to progress until that process has concluded. In relation to the tribunal proceedings, I have felt unable to make any findings or action in relation to the allegations which are the subject of the complaints to the tribunal.

4. Charity Commission

I shall be writing to the Charity Commission and sharing the report with them. Following the Trustees’ submission of a serious incident report I will be registering with the Commission my grave concerns about the current operation of the Museum and inviting the Commission to exercise its statutory regulatory powers.

5. Governance Review

I note the commitment in the Annual Report and Accounts for the Welsh Government to undertake a wider governance review in 2022 so that this situation does not arise again.

I would be happy to meet all of the parties (individually if necessary) in advance of any alternative dispute resolution process. I will expect the Board to keep me updated as things move forward and would be grateful of an update on progress by 25 February.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Bowden AS/MS

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