



**Comisiynydd  
Plant Cymru**

Children's  
Commissioner  
for **Wales**

# Audit and Risk Assurance Committee – Role Profile

November 2023

## Children's Commissioner for Wales

Established by the Care Standards Act 2000, the Children's Commissioner for Wales is an independent children's human rights institution. The Commissioner's principal aim is to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children. You can read more about the Commissioner's powers [here](#) and current programme of work [here](#).

Rocio Cifuentes MBE is the current and fourth post-holder of the Children's Commissioner role. She began her seven-year term in 2022.

You can read more about the role [here](#).

## Commissioner's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC)

As a Commissioner in receipt of public funds, she has a duty to effectively manage the resources made available to her organisation. The Commissioner must make sure that arrangements are in place to ensure the office is effectively managed and governed. ARAC's primary role is provide the Commissioner with independent advice to assist her in discharging her responsibilities as Accounting Officer. See [here](#) a copy of ARAC's Terms of Reference, which is reviewed and updated annually.

## Current Membership

The Committee is currently chaired by Suzy Davies, former shadow Minister in Welsh Parliament. She is joined by the following non-executive members:

- Jocelyn Davies, retired member of Senedd Cymru (membership ends in March 2024)
- Arwel Thomas, retired Head of Governance and Assurance at Welsh Government (membership ends in March 2024)
- Julie Richards, communications consultant (membership ends in 2024)
- Jo Hendy, Head of Improvement at the WLGA (membership ends in 2024)
- Bernie Bowen-Thomson, local councillor and a director of a third-sector organisation (membership ends in 2024)
- Kelly Harris, chair of the Commissioner's Adult Advisory Panel and Head of Participation for third-sector organisation (membership ends with end of Chairing responsibilities)
- Alfred Oyekoya, chartered accountant (membership ends in 2025)
- Michaela Leyshon, law lecturer (membership ends in 2025)

External auditors from Audit Wales and our internal auditors, currently TIAA, also attend every meeting.

## Role of Non-Executive Member

As a Member of ARAC, you will play a key role in advising the Children's Commissioner to discharge her statutory responsibilities as Accounting Officer.

### Key responsibilities include:

1. Reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances on governance, risk management and the control environment in meeting the Accounting Officer's assurance needs;
2. Reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances;
3. Reviewing the integrity of the Commissioner's financial statements;



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4. Overseeing the effectiveness of the framework in place for ensuring compliance with statutory requirements, in particular those in respect of financial reporting audit;
5. Advising the Commissioner and her staff team on the appropriate arrangements for external and internal audit and ensuring an appropriate response to audit reports and findings;
6. Advising the Accounting Officer about how well assurances support her in decision making and in discharging her legislative obligations
7. Advising the Commissioner and her staff team on key risks, compliance and governance issues that arise in conducting ARAC business
8. Reviewing Committee papers and attending meetings
9. Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge and awareness of issues relating to the Commissioner's work
10. Complying with all relevant codes of conduct, including the Nolan Principles, and maintaining the highest standards of conduct and ethics

In return, we will endeavour to provide you with a high quality board experience in a supportive and friendly atmosphere. Our efficient secretariat will provide you will full support and we will endeavour to be flexible with meeting arrangements to meet any access requirements or personal circumstances you may have.

### **Additional responsibilities**

As a Corporation Sole, the Commissioner and her Team are not listed as bodies covered by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales. We have therefore described a role for our Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and other non-executive members in our third stage appeal processes for many of our policies, including our employment policies and our external complaints policies.

### **Length of appointment**

Members are appointed for a period of three years, which can be renewed by mutual agreement for a further three years.

### **Time commitment and Remuneration**

Your key duties as a member are expected to typically take up to 6 days a year; this includes meeting preparation. The Committee will meet four times a year, but additional meetings may be required from time to time.

We meet virtually and in-person. When we do host face-to-face meetings and you agree to attend, you will be reimbursed for out-of-pocket travel and subsistence costs in line with our Travel and Subsistence Policy. Queries and claims in relation to travel and subsistence will be managed by the Committee's Secretariat, the Commissioner's Executive Support Officer.

If you are required to participate in a third stage appeal or complaints process, as described above in the additional duties section, we will agree a time commitment and pay a day fee for this work. We appreciate that this work is outside of the scope of many traditional public sector non-executive member duties and although an infrequent occurrence, when it does occur, it can be time consuming.



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## Experience, Knowledge and Skills requirement

We are specifically looking for individuals with financial management/accounting skills, knowledge and experience gained in either the public, private or third sector

Or

Experience, knowledge and skills in corporate governance and risk management especially in reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances.

You should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the multi-cultural and multi-lingual landscape in Wales, including the official status of the Welsh language, and an understanding of how you can contribute to the committee effectively in this context.

It would also be advantageous if you are able to demonstrate one or more of the following:

- Experience of leading, conducting or reviewing audit activity;
- Legal experience;
- Experience and/or knowledge of children's rights.

We are committed to broadening our understanding of Wales, increasing the representation of people with a broad array of protected characteristics, and building a workplace where difference is valued. This means we will prioritise applications of people from Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse backgrounds and disabled people.

## Training

Members of the Committee are invited to assess their training needs annually. An induction programme will be provided; details of which will be shared ahead of your first meeting.

## Conflicts of Interest

Every member of ARAC must complete an annual declaration of interest, in line with our Conflict of Interest Policy. The information provided is used to compile a Register of Interests, which is available for inspection by members of the public upon request.

## Conduct

The work of ARAC will be undertaken paying due regard to the seven principles of public life as described by the Committee on Standards in Public Life. You can read a copy [here](#).

## Termination

If you choose to resign from this appointment you will be expected to give three months' notice, unless your circumstances have changed in a way that makes it appropriate for you to resign immediately.

Your appointment may be terminated by the Commissioner if your attendance, performance or conduct as a member is deemed to be unacceptable, or if you have conflicts of interest which cannot be managed.



## Privacy notice

We keep your personal information, in accordance with relevant data protection regulations, only as long we need to. We do so in accordance with our document and information retention policy.

Data protection laws in the UK provides you with rights in relation to your information. In certain circumstances you have a right to withdraw your consent to us processing your personal information at any time. You can also ask us to delete your personal information or restrict or object to the way we use it.

For further information, please liaise with the Commissioner's Data Protection Officer, via [post@childcomwales.org.uk](mailto:post@childcomwales.org.uk)



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