



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **Publication of the Auditor General for Wales Report: Audit of Accounts 2012-13; Caerphilly County Borough Council: report in the Public Interest**

DATE **6 March 2013**

BY **Carl Sargeant, Minister for Local Government and Communities**

The Auditor General for Wales has today, Wednesday 6 March, published his report into the processes Caerphilly Council adopted when determining Chief Officers' pay. It is entirely right that the Auditor General has looked into, and reported on, this matter in the public interest.

I expect all public bodies to justify and properly account for decisions to increase senior officers' pay.

It is critical that public bodies follow the correct procedures in making such decisions.

The public should be able to see that decisions of this magnitude are taken in a transparent way, and are subject to rigorous and effective scrutiny. It is unacceptable for any such decisions to be taken "behind closed doors."

While it is right that responsibility for pay sits fairly and squarely with the local authority, in this case Caerphilly County Borough Council has failed in its responsibilities to follow the law in coming to its decision.

I have today written to the Leader of the Council requesting an urgent meeting to seek reassurance that Caerphilly County Borough Council has grasped fully the need for transparent and effective decision-making processes to be in place; that decisions are subject to rigorous and effective scrutiny; and that

the situation set out in the Auditor General for Wales' report will never be repeated.

I am very concerned that legal advice given within the local authority has been deemed to be unlawful. I expect a prompt response.