

***Prydain***

*The Welsh Policy Centre  
Canolfan Polisi Cymru*

# **The Quango State We're In**

Matt Smith



## About the Author

### **Matt Smith**

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## About the Prydain Centre

The Prydain Centre, also known as the Welsh Policy Centre is a new thinktank established to shape the centre-right agenda in Wales. With a new political landscape emerging as we head into the 2026 Senedd Election, and as we continue to understand what a UK Labour Government means for the country, Prydain strongly believes the centre-right needs to engage in the policy space, to have the well-defined and researched ideas to challenge the progressive left's hegemony in Welsh politics.

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## 1. An unlovely acronym

- 1.1 Public bodies known as quangos (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation) are interwoven with modern government. Controversy has attended on their role for two reasons. Firstly, their operating at arm's length erodes accountability. Secondly, over-dependence on quangos can lead to a decline in effective decision-making.
- 1.2 The last three decades has seen the role of quangos in Welsh politics as a frontline issue in the 1997 General Election, the devolution referendum of that year and in several devolved elections. The quango-driven model of devolved government is likely to remain a source of interest for the foreseeable future.

## 2. Less a bonfire than a damp squib

- 2.1 Devolutionists promised that devolving power to Cardiff Bay would pay off an alleged democratic deficit arising from electoral asymmetry between the majority party in Welsh constituencies and majority party at Westminster. A Welsh Assembly would oversee and reduce the number of nominated bodies while reducing the cost of government.
- 2.2 In 1995 Labours' Shadow Welsh Secretary Ron Davies called for a 'bonfire of the quangos'. The 'campaign for a Welsh Assembly adopted the moniker 'quango busters'.
- 2.3 Despite an initial merger of arm's length bodies early in Rhodri Morgan's Welsh Assembly Government, this did not lead to a slimmed-down form of governance nor the disappearance of quangos.
- 2.4 Indeed it was not long after that Morgan's Health Minister Jane Hutt was dubbed the 'quango queen of Wales' after it emerged 27 quangos had been created by the new government.

## 3. Quango state redux

- 3.1 Wales has seen a move from the early devolution 'quangocide' rhetoric to a new wave of quango formation<sup>1</sup>.

### ***Devolution's new quango state***

- 3.2 Comprehensive details of the Welsh Government's unelected bodies are available through the 'All organisations' search on the Welsh Government website<sup>2</sup>.
- 3.3 The population of Welsh government's institutional landscape is as follows:

Type of Welsh Government body	Number <sup>3</sup>
Advisory bodies	175
Welsh Government company	14

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid, R Rawlings, 356

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.wales/organisation](http://www.gov.wales/organisation)

<sup>3</sup> As of 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Executive bodies	12
Independent Statutory Office Holders	9
Tribunals	8
National park authorities	3
Inspectorates	2
Independent Regulator	1
Welsh Government public corporation	1
Non-ministerial departments	2
Non-ministerial departments	2
NHS Board / Trust	8
NHS body	9
Other	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>255</b>

3.4 There is a plethora of 175 Welsh Government advisory bodies. This is the equivalent of 12.5 for each Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary or Minister (of which there are 14, including the First Minister) <sup>4</sup>and three for every member of the Senedd (of which there are 60). The overwhelming majority appear to have been created in the last decade.

3.5 There are four Welsh Government bodies for every one of the sixty members of the Senedd.

3.6 The former Auditor General for Wales wrote in a letter to the Senedd Public Accounts Committee in 2018 lamenting that for a nation the size of Wales ‘the complex organisational structure of public services hampers co-ordinated service design and efficient delivery’<sup>5</sup>.

3.7 His successor noted last year that ‘More than five years on... the landscape has become even more complex’. There is considerable clustering around key portfolios which risks overloading ministerial decision making with competing priorities leading to short-termism and consequently a decline in strategic capacity.

3.8 In the last few days the UK Prime Minister of the same party that controls the Welsh Government has warned politicians should not “hide behind a vast array of quangos, arm’s length bodies and regulators”. Indeed temptation to “outsource and delay decision-making and avoid accountability” results in “more arms-length bodies, quangos and regulators which end up blocking the Government as we’re trying to build”. There is a yet little evidence of this ‘vibe shift’ finding its way down the M4 motorway.

### ***Health and education delivery logjam***

3.9 There are no fewer than 29 bodies concerned with health, social care and NHS matters (consisting of 16 advisory bodies, six NHS bodies, two executive bodies, two inspectorates, one company, one tribunal and one inter-ministerial group). This is in addition to NHS Health Boards.

<sup>4</sup> See [Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers | GOV.WALES](#)

<sup>5</sup> H V Thomas *Auditor General for Wales: valedictory reflections* (Audit Wales, 2018), 3

3.10 There are 17 Welsh Government bodies operating within the education sector (consisting of 11 advisory bodies, two executive bodies, one tribunal, one regulator, one independent statutory office holder, and one company).

3.11 There is need of a review of bodies clustering around the healthcare and education portfolios in the interests of streamlining decision making to improve delivery and outcomes.

### ***Equalities fatigue and identity corporatism***

3.12 There are 20 bodies concerned with group politics, equality, diversity and inclusion (including 18 advisory bodies and two statutory office holders).

3.13 This cohort evidences duplication of UK Government and UK-wide bodies. The UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission ('the ECHR') provides a Wales-focus advisory service. There are several UK Government equalities bodies with greater resources operating in this area<sup>6</sup>.

3.14 These bodies push policy in a direction that is alienating to swathes of the public and risks driving equalities fatigue within a public that would prefer government to focus its energies on improving public service delivery.

3.15 Thirdly, public resources are being deflected away from what the public understands as the focus of delivery toward activist class priorities. The Welsh Government's 2025-26 budget includes £10.5 million for 'equality, inclusion and human rights'<sup>7</sup>. One report from two years ago estimated that 138 Welsh Government 'woke jobs' cost the taxpayer nearly £9 million<sup>8</sup>. Ideological regulation is driving resources away from the public's priorities.

### ***Duplication in climate change policy***

3.16 There are seven Welsh Government advisory bodies concerned with climate change and green issues. The Welsh Government's Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group exists to examine 'pathways to net zero by 2035' duplicating and rivalling the UK Government's Climate Change Committee and its Net Zero Commission.

3.17 The Welsh Government's controversial 20mph speed limit policy cost £34 million to implement<sup>9</sup> before it was derailed by a public backlash. Yet the Welsh Government's Welsh 20mph Taskforce Group still exists.

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<sup>6</sup> Including the Government Equalities Office, Office for Equality of Opportunity, Academy for Social Justice, Social Mobility Commission and the Windrush Commemoration Committee, Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities and the Cabinet Office's Race and Equality Unit.

<sup>7</sup> D Chakravarty Waste Watch: *Senedd spends £8m on international relations while Welsh Ambulance Service declares a 'critical incident'* (Telegraph, 2025)

<sup>8</sup> Orde Order *Welsh Government Spending £9million on Woke Jobs* (Guido Fawkes, 2023)

<sup>9</sup> J Grey, C Davies and T Llewellyn *20mps Wales: Some roads to revert to 30mph after backlash* (BBC, 2024)

### ***Constitutional mission creep***

- 3.18 There are five bodies that in some way advocate or pitch moves toward radical constitutional change, a separate legal jurisdiction or welfare jurisdiction. There are three advisory bodies concerned with human rights.
- 3.19 The Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales advocates future constitutional options for Wales including separatism (which it presents as a viable option), devo-max (including devolution of justice and policing) and federalism – though no re-volution of power or closer institutional links with the rest of the UK, despite Wales’ large rejectionist minority.
- 3.20 The Commission on Justice in Wales advocates devolution of the justice system (including powers to run policing, prisons and judicial appointment)<sup>10</sup>. While the Streamlining Welsh Benefits Steering Group aims to ‘increase uniformity across Welsh benefits’.
- 3.21 The Human Rights Legislative Options Working Group seeks to develop ‘bespoke human rights through Welsh public law. The Human Rights Advisory Group purports to examine human rights in the context of austerity and Brexit.

### ***Pushing back the devolutionary boundaries***

- 3.22 Quango-driven constitution building has run well ahead of public opinion and increases the cost of politics.
- 3.23 The Senedd Commission quango has requested a 16% uplift to its budget for 2025-26 to finance adjustments to the estate in anticipation of Senedd reform which will increase the number of Senedd members from 60 to 96<sup>11</sup>.
- 3.24 The Independent Remuneration Board of the Senedd has recommended 6% uplift to Senedd members’ base salaries<sup>12</sup>. There salaries are set to reach £76,380. The First Minister of Wales would earn £167,081 compared to £166,786 for the UK Prime Minister.

## **4. Fallible servants**

- 4.1 Devolution was to oversee the “the end of quango-land”. Despite express promises of a ‘bonfire of the quangos’, the institutional landscape of devolved Wales remains pockmarked with quango-related governance problems, competency failures and politicisation.

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<sup>10</sup> J Rees *Justice powers for Wales urged by commission* (BBC, 2019)

<sup>11</sup> R Mosalski *Senedd expansion costs rise as MSs make demands for furniture* (Wales Online, 2024)

<sup>12</sup> R Mosalski *Full list of top Senedd salaries as Wales’ First Minister Eluned Morgan and colleagues set for pay rise* (Wales Online, 2025)

**4.2 Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:** The Ombudsman exists to investigate complaints made by the public about public bodies and councillors accused of breaking their code of conduct in a politically unbiased way. The office was recently convulsed by the resignation of a senior investigator following expletive anti-Conservative comments undermining “people's trust and confidence in our work”<sup>13</sup>. Extraordinarily the Northern Ireland Assembly Standards Commissioner has been brought in to independently review between 670 and 700 cases to check whether the office’s processes are “sound and free from political bias”<sup>14</sup>.

**4.3 Senedd Commission:** The Senedd Commission is the corporate body that manages the Senedd. It is chaired by the Presiding Officer of the Senedd, a position analogous to the Speaker of the House of Commons. The current Presiding Officer is a member of Plaid Cymru. She remains a member of this party’s group in the chamber<sup>15</sup> and has employed staff drawn from her party<sup>16</sup>. Criticisms of the role have revolved around a failure to isolate the Presiding Officer from party pris.

**4.4 Natural Resources Wales:** Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the Welsh Government’s chief advisor on environmental matters and natural resourcing and its largest quango. In the three years to 2019, the Wales Audit Office declined to sign off the super quango’s accounts. In 2018 the former Auditor General found NRW had entered 59 contracts with three firms without inviting other companies to bid<sup>17</sup>. A review by Grant Thornton identified weaknesses in financial stewardship and contract governance<sup>18</sup>.

**4.5 Museum Wales:** Museum Wales is responsible for seven Welsh museum sites including the iconic National Museum Cardiff building now closed due to safety concerns<sup>19</sup>. NMW has racked up £750,000<sup>20</sup> on the settlement of an employment dispute which saw both the President and Director General of the Museum Wales leave their positions and an external review by the Auditor General<sup>21</sup>. The Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee concluded that the appointments process is insufficiently robust, transparent or accountable<sup>22</sup> and raised “serious questions about its [the Welsh Government’s] governance of arm’s length bodies”<sup>23</sup>.

**4.6 Arts Council of Wales:** Arts Council of Wales (ACW)’s decision to cancel 100% of its funding of the National Theatre of Wales led to its demise<sup>24</sup>. The decision was criticised for ‘disrespecting the principle of independent review and conveying a worrying lack of

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<sup>13</sup> A Browne *I don't believe my office is biased, says watchdog* (BBC News, 2024)

<sup>14</sup> A Browne, *Ibid*

<sup>15</sup> Plaid Cymru *Plaid Cymru's team in the Senedd*

<sup>16</sup> BBC News *Welsh assembly presiding officer accused of bias* (BBC News, 2017)

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, IR Mosalski

<sup>18</sup> R Mosalski *The vast sums squandered when Wales created a giant superquango called Natural Resources Wales* (Wales Online, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019)

<sup>19</sup> D Deans *Closed museum's contents safe, minister tells Senedd* (BBC News Wales, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025)

<sup>20</sup> A Wightwick *Watchdog criticises £750k employment dispute bill involving former head of Wales' national museum* (Wales Online, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023)

<sup>21</sup> D Deans and L Vladev *Museum Wales: Bullying row over ex-WRU boss cost taxpayers £600,000* (BBC Wales News, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023)

<sup>22</sup> Senedd News *Museum Wales: weakness in Welsh Government's management of public bodies* (Senedd, 2024)

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, A Wightwick

<sup>24</sup> L Prichard *Final curtain goes down on National Theatre Wales* (BBC News Wales, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024)



transparency and accountability'<sup>25</sup>. An independent panel concluded ACW had failed to follow 'its own procedures "fairly and transparently"'<sup>26</sup>.

**4.7 NHS Boards:** The entire Hywel Dda University Health Board in west and mid Wales was subject to targeted intervention due to financial and planning "challenges". Swansea Bay University Health Board was subject to targeted intervention for "performance and outcomes". While the Aneurin Bevan Health Board in Gwent was subject to monitoring for performance outcomes. Previously Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board was in special measures while Cardiff and Vale, Powys and Cwm Taf Morgannwg health boards were under enhanced monitored for planning and finance.

**4.8 Quangoland remuneration:** A WalesOnline report from 2022 drew on StatsWales data in order to identify some of the best paid bureaucrats in Wales set reproduced in the following two tables<sup>27</sup>:

<b>Welsh Government/Quango Chief Executive<sup>28</sup></b>	<b>Basic Salary (£) (excluding pension)</b>
Chief executive of Development Bank of Wales	216,264
Director general of Health and Social Services for NHS Wales	205-210,000
Chief medical officer, NHS Wales	200-205,000
Chief executive of Public Health Wales	160-165,000
<b>UK Prime Minister<sup>29</sup></b>	<b>157,372</b>
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales	150-155,000
<b>First Minister of Wales<sup>30</sup></b>	<b>153,033</b>
Chief executive and clerk of the Senedd	145-150,000
Chief executive of Natural Resources Wales	140-145,000
Chief executive of Higher Education Funding Council Wales	130-135,000
Chief executive Qualifications Wales	130-135,000

<sup>25</sup> N Bevan *National Theatre Wales shocked by 100% funding cut* (BBC News Wales, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023)

<sup>26</sup> D Deans *National Theatre Wales says it wins funding appeal* (BBC News Wales, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023)

<sup>27</sup> L Clements *Wales' public sector rich list: The best paid officials in the nation* (Wales Online, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2022)

<sup>28</sup> Reported 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022

<sup>29</sup> Reported 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023, see: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9763/CBP-9763>

<sup>30</sup> D Deans *Senedd politics get maximum 3% pay rise* (BBC, 2023)

Deputy chief executive and executive director of operations and finance for Public Health Wales	130-135,000
Chief inspector of education and training in Wales, Estyn	115-120,000
Chief executive of Social Care Wales	118,500
Director general, National Museum Wales	105-110,000
Chief executive of Education Workforce Council	95-100,000
Welsh Language Commissioner	95-100,000
Chief executive of Welsh Revenue Authority	95-100,000
Chief executive at Sport Wales	95-100,000
<b>Median gross annual earnings for full-time adults working in Wales<sup>31</sup></b>	<b>£32,371</b>

4.9 One would be forgiven for asking why anyone would want to seek elected office when quango and quango-adjacent roles offer more power, prestige and remuneration in an accountability-lite environment.

## 5. What quango-driven government means

5.1 The peculiarly quango-driven nature of devolved government is to a large extent a consequence of the absence of an institutional armada preceding the establishment of Welsh devolution in 1997.

### *How we got here*

5.2 In his *Check Against Delivery* speech of 2001 Rhodri Morgan said that the ‘challenge is to develop the Welsh political culture and the Welsh policy-making capacity and a peculiarly Welsh set of political processes’<sup>32</sup>.

5.3 Third sector organisations, trade unions, party apparats, campaigners, taxpayer funded think tanks and academics, frequently convening through quangos have been invited to substitute for ‘the long-standing tradition of not having policy-making capability in Wales’<sup>33</sup>.

5.4 Welsh devolution’s return to quangocracy is in part a response to the difficulties of creating a functioning political process in the absence of engagement from independent civil society and the public.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/annual-survey-hours-and-earnings>

<sup>32</sup> R Morgan, *Check Against Delivery Institute of Welsh Affairs* (Sefydliad Gwleidyddiaeth Cymru, 2001). 4-5

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, R Morgan, 6

### ***The Cardiff Bay village***

5.5 In *Delineating Wales* Professor Richard Rawlings uses the term ‘The closeness of Wales’ to describe the interconnectedness of the Cardiff Bay system<sup>34</sup>.

5.6 There is a tendency for ‘Welsh Government and public appointments to be drawn from this policy ‘village’ that is ‘small, insular and lacking in ideas’.

### ***Exacerbating the democratic deficit***

5.7 Devolved politics is characterized by severe levels of voter disengagement. Fewer than half of Welsh voters have ever participated in a devolved election<sup>35</sup>. Consequently, the ruling party in Cardiff Bay secured less than a fifth<sup>36</sup> of eligible voters<sup>37</sup> in support of its policies.

5.8 In this context the dependence on Welsh Government Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers on advisory bodies for decision making is especially problematic.

### ***Unaccountable government***

5.9 Outsourcing power to quangos allows Welsh Government ministers to avoid direct accountability thereby diminishing the scrutiny function of the Senedd<sup>38</sup>.

### ***Shadow government***

5.10 Four Senedd members from the governing party had worked for quangos before being elected<sup>39</sup>. With a quarter of the governing party’s 30 Senedd members stepping down ahead of the next 2026 Senedd election, a role in a Welsh quango may be one of the few jobs that they possess the skills and the mindset to undertake.

5.11 An incoming devolved administration of any colour will have to ensure that they ‘do not have their own agendas which are diametrically opposed to what the government is attempting to achieve or perpetuate perceived or real inertia’<sup>40</sup>.

### ***Personnel is policy***

5.12 Quango sinecures are an attractive career move for progressive careerists risking elite capture. Quangocrats are overwhelmingly drawn from the graduate elite whose ‘ostentatious political objectives’ would in other circumstances be frustrated at the ballot box<sup>41</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid, R Rawlings, 328

<sup>35</sup> G Lewis *Senedd voter turnout worries remain after 25 years* (BBC, 2024)

<sup>36</sup> S Pilling *Senedd Cymru/Welsh Parliament elections 2021* (House of Commons Library, 2021)

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.gov.wales/electoral-roll-march-2020>

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, Dr R Norrie, 18

<sup>39</sup> Alun Davies MS worked for Head of Public Affairs at the UK Atomic Energy Authority and S4C. Jane Hutt MS was a non-executive director of the Cardiff Community Health Care Trust. Rhianon Passmore MS served on the BBC Broadcasting Council Wales and the executive body of the National Books Council for Wales. Joyce Watson MS was a senior member of the NHS Equality Reference Group.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, A Potts

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, Dr R Norrie, 14

## **Over government**

5.13 Welsh Government ministers may face a declining strategic capacity as an array of quangos and advisory bodies logjam decision making channels with inputs resulting in immobilism. In 2018 Welsh Government Sponsored Bodies along with Scrutiny Bodies and Commissioners had a staff pay bill of £211.4 million<sup>42</sup>. Quangos add to the public sector pay bill yet the influence they exert invariably favours more bureaucracy.

## **6. Wither the quango state**

6.1 The next Welsh Government will be faced with a ‘first one hundred days’ challenge of dismantling the devolution’s quango state. The following proposals will restore accountability and refocus devolved government on delivery.

6.2 **Quango Sector Review:** A comprehensive quango sector review should be undertaken in accordance with a best value and a public interest test to identify which arm’s length bodies that can be discontinued.

6.3 **An ‘ap Musk’ Auditor General for a new Welsh Agency of Value and Efficiency:** The Quango Sector Review should be run by a new Welsh Agency of Value and Efficiency absorbing Audit Wales, run by an ‘ap Musk’ figure from Wales’ private sector with no connections to the Cardiff Bay Village.

6.4 **Full compliance with the National Fraud Initiative in Wales:** Public bodies must engage with National Fraud Initiative Wales as part of a UK-wide collaboration sharing data to identify instances of fraud and error in public sector accounting. Public bodies that do not cooperate should be decommissioned.

6.5 **End dependence on Advisory bodies:** Advisory bodies should be abolished unless they offer narrowly defined technical or scientific expertise that cannot be met from within the Senedd or from UK Government sources.

6.6 **Defund the Wales Centre for Public Policy:** The policy agenda should be driven by democratically elected politicians answerable to reality-based communities not subsidised think tanks.

6.7 **De-cluster to improve strategic capacity:** There are too many arm’s-length bodies operating around the health and education briefs. In the interests of avoiding governmental logjam these two groups of bodies should be streamlined.

6.8 **A reformed Welsh Development Agency:** A new statutorily independent WDA should absorb the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales, the Development Bank of Wales and Regeneration Investment Fund for Wales and Industry Wales with a brief to work closely with the UK Government to drive growth.

6.9 **Replace the compromised Public Services Ombudsman for Wales:** In the interests of restoring confidence a new Ombudsman should be appointed.

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<sup>42</sup> G Ifan and C Sion *The Public Sector in Wales* (Cardiff University, 2018)

- 6.10 **Quango focused subcommittee of the Senedd Public Account and Public Administration Committee:** A dedicated subcommittee for the purposes of scrutinising and reviewing the operations of arm's length bodies in Wales should be created.
- 6.11 **Reform the Senedd Commission and office of Presiding Officer:** Upon becoming the Senedd's Presiding Office a member should be required to leave their Party group and agree to leave the Senedd following the end of their term.
- 6.12 **Make quango remuneration proportionate:** Quango chief executives operating in Wales' public sphere remuneration should not be paid inordinately high salaries. Public service is a privilege.
- 6.13 **De-merge Natural Resources Wales:** Natural Resources Wales should be split into successor organisations focusing narrowly on regulatory and commercial functions.
- 6.14 **Merge the Welsh Government's National Procurement Service with its UK Government counterpart:** Significant savings in procurement through amalgamation and scale could be achieved by merging with UK Government procurement arrangements.
- 6.15 **Transfer Cardiff International Airport and the Global Centre for Rail Excellence to the commercial sector:** Cardiff International Airport should be sold off. Options should be explored to transfer the Global Centre for Rail Excellence to the commercial sector.
- 6.16 **Integrate equalities:** Welsh Government should not create quangos that fully or in part shadow and rival what UK Government bodies are already doing.
- 6.17 **Scrap politically correct non-jobs:** The proliferation of taxpayer funded activist roles with no demonstrable value are a cause of consternation for the taxpayer and wider public should be discontinued.
- 6.18 **More efficient green politics:** The Bus Decarbonisation Task and Finish Group, the Clean Air Advisory Panel and the Decarbonisation of Homes in Wales Advisory Group should be merged. The Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group which duplicates the UK Climate Change Committee along with the moribund Welsh 20mph Taskforce Group should be scrapped.
- 6.19 **Ban advertising by quangos:** Quangos should be prevented from spending money on public relations and public affairs.
- 6.20 **End constitution building:** The Commission on Justice in Wales, the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales, the Human Rights Advisory Group, the Human Rights Legislative Options Working Group and the Strengthening and Advancing Equality and Human Rights Steering Group should be discontinued.
- 6.21 **Referendum on Senedd Reform:** Quango-driven Senedd reform should only proceed after a popular vote on proposals has taken place.
- 6.22 **Reform appointments process:** Appointments to public bodies should be subject to enhanced Senedd confirmation hearings to check executive influence over public appointments.

6.23 **Viewpoint diversity:** Welsh Government should adopt a presumption against appointing former elected office holders (at all levels) and party staffers to arm's length bodies. A concerted effort should be made to recruit appointees who are neither graduates, academics nor people who have already served on a quango.