

Dear colleagues,

Later today the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure and Economy will make a statement on the Welsh Labour party's commitment to create 'Historic Wales', bringing together many of the commercial functions of the Welsh Historic Environment Service (Cadw) and the National Museum Wales.

Earlier this year, PwC were commissioned to examine options for creating a more sustainable heritage sector. We understand that in the Cabinet Secretary's statement he will explain that he is publishing in full the PwC report as well as creating a new steering group to take this work forward.

The steering group includes representatives from Cadw, Amgueddfa Cymru -National Museum Wales, National Library of Wales, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, as well as trade union representation. Justin Albert, Director of the National Trust for Wales has been asked to chair the group in an independent capacity. We have committed to contributing fully to the discussions and are keen to explore options for greater collaboration between Wales' heritage organisations, including the National Library of Wales, the Royal Commission and Cadw. However, we communicated clearly at that meeting that we were attending without prejudice and would need to consider the implications for Amgueddfa Cymru as the proposals develop.

Our Board of Trustees meets tomorrow and will discuss the Museum's response to the statement. I appreciate that this is potentially unsettling, and I will ensure that you are kept updated on any developments. Your opinions will also be sought, and we hope to be able to share more detail with you during the post Board briefings which take place over the coming week.

As an emerging nation, Wales needs strong national institutions to develop a deeper understanding by its citizens of their identity and their place in the world, and to inspire the creativity of current and future generations. For over a hundred years we have been caring for the nation's collections and any changes will need to respect the individual identity, independence, integrity and core purpose of the organisations involved.