

The story of obtaining new powers for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

In this fascinating paper, Nick Bennett, the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and IOI Board member describes the work he did to ultimately achieve new legislation which strengthened his Office. It's particularly interesting because in recognition of the independence of his Office, the legislation was developed by the Welsh Parliament (the National Assembly for Wales), and not the Government.

One of the considerations for any newly appointed Ombudsman is whether the legislation governing his or her Office is reflective of current best practice. In recent years the IOI has published its Best Practice Paper on Developing and Reforming Ombudsman Institutions which is a useful guide for anyone undertaking this task. It is complemented by the Venice Principles, the first international standard for Ombudsman offices. Finally, the IOI Best Practice Paper on Peer Review offers a tool for assessing an Ombudsman Office against best international practice, and is a useful means of identifying and making the case for change.

In his paper, Nick sets out how he determined what was required and how he deftly steered it through the political process to achieve the new legislation. I hope you will find it as instructive as I did.

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IOI President

June 2020