

Agenda Supplement – Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee room 3 – Senedd
and video conference via Zoom

Meeting date: 24 September 2025

Meeting time: 09.50

For further information contact:

Robert Donovan

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

Hybrid – Supplementary pack – papers to note

Please note the documents below are in addition to those published in the main Agenda and Reports pack for this Meeting

4 Papers to note

11.40

4.1 Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.4 on the Employment Rights Bill

(Pages 1 – 2)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Chair of the Business Committee – 11 July 2025

4.2 Bluetongue Approved Red Market

(Page 3)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 11 July 2025

4.3 Legislative Consent: Data (Use and Access) Bill

(Pages 4 – 7)



Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 14 July 2025

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 4 August 2025

4.4 Inter–Institutional Relations Agreement: Meeting of the Inter–Ministerial Standing Committee

(Page 8)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 14 July 2025

4.5 Year Five of the Welsh Government’s Legislative Programme: Scrutiny of the Greyhound Bill and the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill

(Pages 9 – 14)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Llywydd, and Chair of the Business Committee – 16 July 2025
Response letter from the Chair to the Llywydd, and Chair of the Business Committee – 24 July 2025

4.6 Inter–Institutional Relations Agreement: 43rd British–Irish Council Summit

(Page 15)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the First Minister of Wales to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 22 July 2025

4.7 UK–EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly

(Pages 16 – 17)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee to the Leader and Co-Chair of the Delegation to the UK–EU Parliamentary, House of Commons – 23 July 2025

4.8 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026–27

(Pages 18 – 46)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Minister for Further and Higher Education – 23 July 2025

Letter from the Chair to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 20 August 2025

Letter from the Chair to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 20 August 2025

Letter from the Chair to the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership – 20 August 2025

4.9 Petition P–06–1488 Establish a ‘Care Society’ to Tackle the Long COVID Crisis in Wales

(Pages 47 – 48)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care – 29 July 2025

4.10 General Ministerial Scrutiny: Follow-up to the meeting held on 17 July 2025 – Rural Affairs

(Page 49)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 31 July 2025

4.11 General Ministerial Scrutiny: Follow-up to the meeting held on 17 July 2025 – Rural Affairs, International Trade, Economy and Skills

(Pages 50 – 52)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership – 1 August 2025

4.12 Development Bank of Wales

(Pages 53 – 56)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 4 August 2025

4.13 General Ministerial Scrutiny: Follow-up to the meeting held on 17 July 2025 – Economy

(Page 57)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 4 August 2025

4.14 Proposed ban on greyhound racing in Wales

(Pages 58 – 59)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Valley Greyhound Stadium – 8 August 2025

Response letter from the Chair to the Valley Greyhound Stadium – 19 August 2025

4.15 Inter–Institutional Relations Agreement: Digital Inclusion Activity in Wales

(Pages 60 – 61)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 11 August 2025

4.16 Inter–Institutional Relations Agreement: Meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter–Ministerial Group

(Pages 62 – 63)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 12 August 2025

4.17 The Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill

(Pages 64 – 68)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Llywydd, and Chair of the Business Committee – 21 August 2025

Response letter from the Chair to the Llywydd, and Chair of the Business Committee – 10 September 2025

4.18 Inter–Institutional Relations Agreement: Meeting of the Inter–Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

(Pages 69 – 70)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 22 August 2025

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate

Change and Rural Affairs to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and
Constitution Committee – 16 September 2025

**4.19 Legislative Consent: Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill:
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report**

(Pages 71 – 75)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response – 29 August 2025

**4.20 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement: Inter-Ministerial Group for Business
and Industry**

(Pages 76 – 77)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning to the
Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 2 September
2025

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning to the
Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee – 10 September
2025

4.21 Anglesey Freeport

(Pages 78 – 79)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Managing Director of Anglesey Freeport, Stena Line, and the
Chief Executive of Isle of Anglesey County Council – 11 September 2025

4.22 Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals

(Pages 80 – 89)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Welsh Government and Welsh Office, House of Commons – 17 September 2025

4.23 Great British Energy: Statement of Strategic Priorities

(Pages 90 – 91)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 16 September 2025

Rt Hon Elin Jones MS
Chair
Business Committee

11 July 2025

Dear Llywydd

Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum No.4 on the Employment Rights Bill

On 08 July 2025 the Welsh Government laid a Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (SLCM) (Memorandum No. 4) on the Employment Rights Bill, which the Business Committee referred to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee with a reporting deadline of 14 July.

The Committee laid its report on the original Legislative Consent Memorandum on 27 March 2025. Having discussed the referral of the most recent SLCM at its meeting on 9 July, the Committee agreed there was not sufficient time to commission legal advice and consider the content of the SLCM. The Committee will therefore not be able to report on this occasion.

I have copied this letter to Mike Hedges MS in his role as Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

CC: Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Our ref: HID PO 423 2025

Members of the Senedd
Welsh Parliament

11 July 2025

Dear Colleague,

On 8 July, I held another roundtable with representatives of the livestock industry to listen to their views regarding Bluetongue. There was particular emphasis on the operation of markets and breeding stock sales in the coming weeks and months.

I am grateful to everyone who contributed to the roundtable discussion and can confirm that from 14 July 2025 livestock markets in Wales will be able to apply to become a 'Bluetongue Approved Red Market'.

This will enable sales of finished sheep and cattle (primestock), including from the England-wide Bluetongue Restricted Zone (RZ) to then be moved directly to a designated slaughterhouse in Wales (or a slaughterhouse within the RZ in England).

Bluetongue Approved Red Markets will not require pre-movement testing or vaccination of livestock, nor will onward moves to a designated slaughterhouse in Wales.

The relevant Welsh Government webpages will be updated.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
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14 July 2025

Dear Andrew,

The Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report on the Legislative Consent Memoranda for the Data (Use and Access) Bill included a recommendation for the Welsh Government to provide regular updates on its discussions with the UK Government on EU Data Adequacy and any implications the Bill may have on trade until the UK's adequacy status beyond December 2025 is secured.

In response, the Welsh Government gave a commitment to provide updates on these matters to the Committee as part of general Ministerial scrutiny meetings and, at other times, as and when there is anything significant to report.

I am writing to update the Committee that, on 24 June 2025, the European Commission announced it had adopted a six-month extension to the existing EU data adequacy decisions for the UK until 27 December 2025.

The extension was initially proposed by the European Commission in March 2025 to allow for the Data (Use and Access) Bill to pass through the UK Parliament with Royal Assent received on 19 June 2025. The European Commission is now assessing whether the UK's new legal framework continues to provide an adequate level of protection for personal data. Based on this assessment, the European Commission has indicated it will decide whether to renew the EU data adequacy decisions for the UK.

Whilst this assessment is ongoing, the Welsh Government will continue to engage with the UK Government in relation to the EU's data adequacy decisions for the UK through the appropriate inter-governmental channels.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I trust the Committee will find this update useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca". The script is cursive and fluid.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

cc.

Chair, Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations
Committee

Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee



Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
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4 August 2025

Dear Andrew,

I wrote last month to update the Committee that, on 24 June 2025, the European Commission announced it had adopted a six-month extension to the existing two EU data adequacy decisions for the UK until 27 December 2025.

As I highlighted in that update, the extension was to allow the European Commission to assess whether the UK's new legal framework, which includes the new Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, continues to provide an adequate level of protection for personal data.

I am pleased to update the Committee that on 22 July 2025, the European Commission [announced](#) that it has launched the process to adopt two new adequacy decisions for the UK to allow the free flow of personal data between the European Economic Area and the UK. The Commission has concluded that the UK's legal framework continues to provide data protection safeguards that are essentially equivalent to those provided by the EU. If adopted, the new adequacy decisions will apply for a period of six years.

As part of the adoption procedure, the draft decisions will now be transmitted to the European Data Protection Board for its opinion. The European Commission will also seek approval from a committee composed of representatives of the EU Member States. The European Parliament also has a right of scrutiny over adequacy decisions.

Whilst this adoption process is ongoing, the Welsh Government will continue to engage with the UK Government on this matter through the appropriate inter-governmental channels.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I trust the Committee will find this update useful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

cc.

Chair, Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations
Committee

Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Agenda Item 4.4

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref – PO/HIDCC/0347/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

14 July 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, and further to my letter of 24 June, to draw to your attention a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) summarising discussions at the most recent meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee ('IMSC').

I have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Finance Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair, Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

16 July 2025

Dear Andrew

Year Five of the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme: Scrutiny of the Greyhound Bill and the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill

The Business Committee is considering the proposed timetables for the Bills to be introduced in Year Five of the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme. At our meeting on 15 July, we discussed the implications arising from the proposed timetables for committee scrutiny and options for referring the Bills to responsible committees.

As you will be aware, the Welsh Government has indicated that it intends to introduce two Bills that fall within the remit of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee during the final year of this Senedd term. These are the Greyhound Bill and the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill.

The key proposed dates for the two Bills are outlined below and the detailed proposed timetables are contained in an Annex to this letter.

Bill	Introduction date	Stage 1 Reporting Deadline	Deadline for Stage 2	Proposed Stage 3 debate	Stage 4
Greyhound Bill	29 Sept 2025	5 December 2025 (8 sitting weeks)	6 February 2026	10 March 2026	17 March 2026
Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill	20 October 2025	19 December 2025 (7 sitting weeks)	13 February 2026	10 March 2026	17 March 2026

Both timetables, as proposed, include shorter than standard periods for Stage 1 scrutiny with the Stage 1 reporting deadlines falling only two weeks apart. Furthermore, the deadlines for completion of Stage 2 proceedings are proposed to be one week apart and Stage 3 proceedings in Plenary are currently scheduled to take place on the same day.

In light of the significant overlap between the two proposed timetables, the Business Committee is considering several options for referral of the Bills to responsible committee(s).

To assist us with those considerations, we agreed to write to seek the views of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee on the proposed timetables for the Bills and whether or not it is practical for the Committee to act as the responsible committee for scrutiny of both Bills, in light of the extent to which they will need to be scrutinised simultaneously.

I would be grateful to receive your views.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Elin Jones', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Yours sincerely,

The Rt Hon Elin Jones MS
Chair of the Business Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex

ILLUSTRATIVE TIMETABLE – GREYHOUND BILL

Milestone	Date
Introduction to the Senedd	29 September 2025
Deadline for Stage 1 Committee consideration	5 December 2025
Stage 1 ends – Plenary debate on general principles and motion on financial resolution (if necessary)	16 December 2025
Stage 2 begins	17 December 2025
Earliest possible date for Stage 2 consideration	12 January 2026
Stage 2 ends - deadline for Stage 2 Committee	6 February 2026
Stage 3 begins	9 February 2026
Stage 3 in Plenary	10 March 2026
Stage 4 in Plenary	17 March 2026
Royal Assent	April 2026

ILLUSTRATIVE TIMETABLE – REGULATION OF VISITOR ACCOMODATION BILL

Milestone	Date
Introduction to the Senedd	20 October 2025
Deadline for Stage 1 Committee consideration	19 December 2025
Stage 1 ends – Plenary debate on general principles and motion on financial resolution (if necessary)	13 January 2026
Stage 2 begins	14 January 2026
Earliest possible date for Stage 2 consideration	4 February 2026
Stage 2 ends - deadline for Stage 2 Committee	13 February 2026
Stage 3 begins	16 February 2026
Stage 3 in Plenary	10 March 2026
Stage 4 in Plenary	17 March 2026
Royal Assent	April 2026



The Rt Hon Elin Jones MS
Llywydd, and Chair of the Business Committee

24 July 2025

Dear Llywydd,

Year Five of the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme: Scrutiny of the Greyhound Bill and the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill

Thank you for sharing the key proposed dates for the Greyhound Bill and the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill. I have discussed your letter with the Committee, and we do not believe it would be possible to give adequate scrutiny to both bills, given the proposed timetable.

I would also like to raise concerns regarding the proposed shortened stage one for both bills. Realistically, if a committee is to meet the reporting deadlines proposed in the letter, they will only be able to hold a three-week public consultation. A key part of the Committee's role in legislative scrutiny is to gather the views of interested parties and reflect these in the Stage One report. Three weeks will not provide stakeholders time to digest the bill and submit a full high-quality response, especially if they are a representative organisation and need to consult their members.

To mitigate against this, I would request that Welsh Government commits to publishing the draft bills as soon as practically possible. If this is not possible, I would request that an early private draft bill is shared with the committees they will be referred to. Those committees could then share this draft with key stakeholders they identify, ensuring those organisations have as much time as possible to contribute to the Committee's work.

I would also like to request that the Welsh Government makes officials available to give a private technical briefing to the committees prior to each bill's introduction. Whilst this would be a highly unusual step, I believe it is necessary given the limited time Members will have to digest the bills.

These two measures will help address some of the issues presented by the exceptionally short stage one timetables. However, even with them in place I still feel the proposed timelines are too short to give the quality of scrutiny I would expect to be provided by any Senedd Committee.

I am sure you agree with me that high quality scrutiny is a vital part of lawmaking and produces better quality legislation. I am disappointed the Welsh Government has not planned their five-year legislative programme well enough to provide committees with adequate time to carry out our role and provide proper scrutiny of their proposed legislation.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Ein cyf/Our ref: PO/FM/0337/25

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
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22 July 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, to notify you that I attended the 43rd British-Irish Council Summit, hosted by the Northern Ireland Executive in County Down, which took place on 12 and 13 of June.

I would like to draw your attention to my [Written Statement](#) and to the BIC [communiqué](#) summarising the outcomes of the Summit.

The Summit theme was '*The Role of AI in Reform and Transformation*'. I shared the Welsh Government's experience and commitment to harnessing AI technologies for public sector reform and transformation in Wales, including highlighting guidance developed by Wales' Workforce Partnership Council.

Whilst at the Summit, I also had the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with a number of leaders from the Council's other member administrations.

I have copied this letter to the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Eluned Morgan

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport and International Relations
Committee**

Marsha De Cordova MP,
Leader and Co-Chair United Kingdom
Delegation to the UK-EU Parliamentary
Partnership Assembly,
House of Commons
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23 July 2025

UK-EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly: November 2025

Dear Marsha,

Thank you for notification of the dates of the next meeting of the PPA in November and for the invitation to suggest meeting topics for consideration by the Bureau. This early notification and opportunity to contribute ideas is greatly appreciated.

As we discussed in March, the effects of Brexit on the culture sector is a key area of concern for my committee. During a recent visit to Brussels, I was heartened to hear that the political pressure generated by the PPA and elected members on both sides was key to ensuring that references to cultural and artistic exchanges and touring artists were included in Common Understanding. Indeed, the Committee heard that these references would not have been included without the work of legislatures on this issue.

Whilst these references are welcome, the lack of concrete measures is disappointing, and I believe therefore it is crucial for the PPA to continue to encourage our executives to be as ambitious as possible in this area.

Unfortunately, a comprehensive agreement on touring artists may not be likely in the immediate term but there are a number of practical and pragmatic steps that could be taken in the interim. These could be usefully discussed and highlighted by the PPA to ensure that the UK and EU keep this issue on the table as the Common Understanding negotiations proceed. I would therefore kindly ask that this issue is considered as an agenda item for the next meeting.

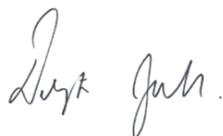


My committee's report, Culture shock, provides an account of the TCA's effects on creative workers in Wales. It outlines our full support for the PPA's 2023 recommendation on this issue and puts forward possible next steps.

Senedd committees, including my own, will also be publishing a report on the implementation review of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement in August, and I look forward to discussing its conclusions and recommendations with Members at the PPA in November.

I look forward to our continued work together.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Chair

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

—
**Children, Young People
and Education Committee**

Lynne Neagle MS
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Vikki Howells MS
Minister for Further and Higher Education

23 July 2025

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Dear Lynne and Vikki,

As in previous years, we would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than two weeks prior to your appearance before Committee, the date of which will be arranged in due course.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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Annex A: Request to the Cabinet Secretary for Education, and Minister for Further and Higher Education regarding the CYPE Committee's Draft Budget scrutiny 2026-27

Cross-cutting areas

Transparency of budget presentation

As in previous years, we request a clear, transparent explanation of changes to the overall Education and MEG in 2026-27, from 2025-26, including both a comparison with the actual budget in addition to any revised baseline which is used. We would also appreciate a summary of the key changes between 2025-26 and 2026-27.

If a revised baseline is used, we request a breakdown of amounts which have been removed from or added to the 2025-26 budget and an explanation in each case of why it is deemed appropriate to use the revised baseline rather than the actual budget set in 2025-26 for comparisons.

For significant changes to budget lines, we request an explanation of whether money is being taken from/returned to central reserves or allocated from/to other budget lines either within or outside the MEG.

Detail of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) allocations and explanation of changes

We request a breakdown of the 2026-27 Education MEG by Action, and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), with Final Budget 2025-26 allocations, First Supplementary Budget 2025-26 allocations, forecast 2025-26 outturns, and 2024-25 final outturns all included. If indicative budgets are being set beyond 2026-27, we request details of those as well. In the past, we have requested commentary on each of the Actions within the Education MEG. Prior to last year, this was provided in an annex. We note that last year a separate commentary was not provided and the information was provided in the main body of the paper, along with a budget table at Annex A and a list of changes at Annex B. We found that approach to be satisfactory and would be content with the same this year. However, if there are any Actions that are not covered by the issues requested, we would appreciate an explanation of what those Actions fund.

To confirm, we would still like an analysis and explanation of significant changes to Actions and BELs since the First Supplementary Budget 2025-26 (June 2025).

If the Welsh Government uses a revised baseline budget for comparative purposes, we request that the actual 2025-26 First Supplementary Budget allocations are also presented alongside 2026-27

draft budget allocations as well as an explanation of the reasons for the re-calculation of the baseline (as mentioned earlier).

Education priorities and other strategic priorities

Information on how the Education MEG aligns with, and is prioritised according to, the Welsh Government's relevant priorities and key objectives, including:

- An updated assessment from the Cabinet Secretary on the extent to which she believes the Education MEG contains the resources necessary to deliver Welsh Government priorities and key objectives.
- Information on any ongoing negotiations with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language to maximise the level of resources available for education, including funding for schools' core budgets through the Local Government Settlement.
- Details of how allocations to and within the Education MEG align with the Programme for Government.
- In light of the [Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language's announcement on 1 July](#) that the 2026-27 budget will simply increase departmental budgets by inflation, rather than reflecting new policies and priorities, how the Cabinet Secretary for Education has been able to take account of emerging and escalating issues since the 2025-26 budget was set.
- Whether, and if so how, the Cabinet Secretary intends to target resources at addressing any cross-cutting themes or priorities across the MEG as a whole.

Children's rights and other cross-cutting considerations

In line with assessing whether 'due regard' has been given to article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Welsh Government's duties under the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure, we request:

- The overall Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) for this draft Education MEG for 2026-27, which sets out how children's rights are put into effect in these budget allocations, with reference to specific articles in the UNCRC as relevant.
- If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this.
- A copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment as well as assurances that this assessment demonstrates that the duty of "due regard" to the UNCRC has been exercised.

- Details and/or examples of any changes made to initial allocations within the Education MEG following considerations of children’s rights, equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, or the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a result of impact assessments, or where these assessments have had a direct influence on the setting of budgets.

Costs of legislation

- Details of allocations within the 2026-27 budget intended for the implementation of primary legislation passed in the past two Senedd terms, including the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022, the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation, for example the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill.
- Financial implications in 2026-27 of any relevant subordinate legislation.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Information on any remaining provision in the Education MEG in 2025-26 and 2026-27 for dealing with and recovering from the impact of the pandemic, for example the status of the former “Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS)” funding that was amalgamated into the Local Authority Education Grant from 2024-25..

Impact of cost of living pressures on delivery of education services

- An update on the implications of cost of living pressures and energy prices on the operational delivery of education institutions – across early years, schools, colleges, universities and training providers.

Budget monitoring and the current financial context

- Information on the processes in place for monitoring budgets within the Education MEG throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls.
- Details of any changes to the 2025-26 Education MEG that are already anticipated in the Second Supplementary Budget.

Specific areas

Funding for school budgets

- An explanation of whether and how the Welsh Government has prioritised funding for schools in the 2026-27 Draft Budget (in both the Housing and Local Government MEG and the Education MEG).
- How the review of the school funding formula (published February 2025) and proposed School Funding, Budget Statements and Outturn Statements (Wales) Regulations 2026 have been taken into account in the Welsh Government's approach to providing funding intended for schools in 2026-27.
- The Cabinet Secretary's perspective on the level of school budget reserves, in the context of the 31 March 2025 data due to be published in late October 2025.

Funding for school improvement and raising standards

- An explanation of how the Draft Budget 2026-27 supports school improvement and raising standards of education, and how it reflects changes taking place under the School Improvement Partnership Programme.
- Details of the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) in 2026-27, including a breakdown of its four strands.
- Details of how much LAEG was paid to each local authority in 2025-26, including a breakdown by the four strands.
- An updated assessment undertaken on the impact of the amalgamation of individual grants into the LAEG in 2024-25 and how the Welsh Government is assuring itself that there has not been any dilution of previously ring-fenced activities and interventions.
- Information on budget allocations to support efforts to improve standards of literacy and numeracy and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.
- Funding for the Curriculum for Wales grant support programme and details of numbers and values of grants awarded.
- Any other funding to support the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.

The cost of living and reducing the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes

- Information on how resources within the Education MEG are being used to meet the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation on

educational outcomes – including from the “Tackling barriers to attainment” BEL or from the LAEG.

- Information on budget provision for the School Essentials Grant and expenditure in 2025-26, including the number of pupils supported, and projected in 2026-27.
- Information on how resources within the Education MEG are being used to support learners in post-16 education with the impact of cost of living pressures, and to address the impact of deprivation on outcomes (including, for example, through additional hardship funding for providers, or through existing student support funding such as the Education Maintenance Allowance).
- Any remaining budget provision for the roll out of universal free school meals in primary schools in 2025-26 and whether any budget is needed for this in 2026-27. Whether any further consideration has been given to extending eligibility in secondary schools, especially given the decision in England to extend free school meals to all pupils in households receiving universal credit. If not, how the Welsh Government plans to use any Barnett consequential arising from the decision in England.
- A breakdown of any grant funding provided to local authorities in 2025-26 for the universal provision of free school meals in primary schools.
- Any other funding within the Education MEG for initiatives to tackle the cost of living and the deprivation/attainment negative correlation, for example school holiday enrichment/summer of fun/food and fun projects, including an updated explanation of how these projects and funding streams relate to each other

Education workforce

- Details of budget allocations to finance Initial Teacher Education (ITE), including funding and initiatives targeted at addressing shortages in particular subjects or areas, and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.
- Details of budget allocations to support professional learning for current teachers, including in light of the ongoing implementation of education reforms.
- Information on funding provided by the Welsh Government to the Education Workforce Council.
- Information on funding to establish and fund the new national professional learning and leadership body. How this compares to the funding for the National Academy for Educational Leadership and whether funding for the new body directly replaces this.

- Details of any budget provision for meeting the costs of the teachers' pay award for academic year 2025/26 including a breakdown between the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years and the respective mechanisms used (whether direct grant or incorporated into the local government settlement).
- Information on any funding to support policy regarding the supply teaching workforce.

Emotional and mental health of children and young people

- Budget provision from the Education MEG in 2026-27 for the whole-school/system approach to emotional and mental health.
- Details of funding from the Health and Social Care MEG to complement work in schools on this area.
- Information on any budget provision to support the emotional and mental health of young people in post-16 education.
- Budget provision for the action plan and wider response to tackle peer on peer sexual harassment among learners.

Behaviour and violence

- Budget provision from the Education MEG for addressing problems arising from behaviour and violence in schools and colleges (including for example actions arising from the round table on violence and safety and the national behaviour summit – both held in May).

Pupil absence

- Information on any specific budget provision to address rates of pupil absence or an identification of which budget lines support such work more generally (including for example Family Engagement Officers and Community Focused Schools).

Sport and physical activity

- Information on how the Education MEG supports the provision of sport and physical activity for children and young people, whether inside or outside school, and how this relates to any initiatives or funding in the Health and Social Care MEG such as for Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales.
- How capital funding through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme is supporting sport and physical activity among children and young people.

- Details of funding to support the education of Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners in 2026-27 and how this is being distributed as part of the LAEG.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

- An updated summary of the position of funding for supporting learners with their ALN, both from the ALN BEL and the Reform strand of the LAEG.
- The implications of the review that has been carried out and what this has shown about the required levels of ALN funding.
- An updated assessment of whether the ALN reforms are proving to be cost-neutral.
- Information on how funding for ALN provision featured in the review of the school funding formula and how it is being considered as part of the proposed School Funding, Budget Statements and Outturn Statements (Wales) Regulations 2026.
- The latest position on funding for the training of educational psychologists in Wales and any grant funding arrangement with higher education institutions, for example Cardiff University.

Estyn

- Details of Estyn's core budget allocation for 2026-27 and which MEG/BEL this is located in.
- The outcome of work undertaken with Estyn to manage the impact of not being able to provide any additional funding this time last year (other than inflationary uplifts) to support the new inspection cycle (mentioned in last year's paper).

Qualifications

- Details of funding allocated to Qualifications Wales in 2026-27 and an updated assessment of whether it has enough funding to fulfil its remit and any reform work expected of it.

Welsh in education

- Details of allocations in the Education MEG to support the Welsh Government's policies for Welsh in education, and the education sector's role in meeting the Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers.

- How allocations in the Education MEG relate to other budgets supporting the Welsh language, for example the Welsh Language Action in the Central Services and Administration MEG.
- Where funding for implementing the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 is located in the Welsh Government's budget and how much is allocated..
- Information on funding allocated for enhancing the Welsh in education workforce.

Seren programme

- Details of budget provision to support the Seren programme and the Widening Participation Project.

Early years education and childcare

- Whether the funding in the LAEG to support alignment of funding rates in nursery education in non-maintained settings, and childcare within the Childcare Offer, is continuing in 2026-27. Narrative on any impact on aims to 'align' rates on the decision from April 2025 to increase the hourly rate for childcare providers from delivering the Childcare Offer from £5.00 to £6.40 an hour from the Health and Social Care MEG (and Welsh Government's commitment to review this rate annually from now on.)
- Details of any other funding from the Education MEG to support the non-maintained sector's delivery of early childhood / nursery education and the Curriculum for Wales, and how this relates to funding for the responsibilities of the Minister for Children and Social Care in relation to early years and childcare.

Youth work

- Details of how the 2026-27 Education MEG supports statutory and voluntary youth services and budget provision for meeting the Programme for Government commitments in respect of strengthening youth services.
- How this Draft Budget 2026-27 reflects the findings and work of the [Youth work funding review](#).
- Details of how the 2026-27 Education MEG supports the Youth Work Strategy for Wales, the work of the Implementation Board and work to establish a national body for youth work in Wales as set out in the [Written Statement: A national body and statutory framework for youth work \(27 June 2025\)](#).

Offender learning

- Information on budget provision in 2026-27 and any changes to how this will be spent compared to previous years.

Funding for Medr

- Total funding for Medr in 2026-27 and the Welsh Government's expectations on how Medr will allocate this (more detailed points listed below)

Further education, sixth forms and adult community learning

- How much of Medr's total allocation in 2026-27 is intended for sixth forms and further education colleges, and any specific uses of this funding.
- Details of 2025-26 funding allocated to Medr for individual sixth forms (or local authorities) and colleges, and what this funding is to support.
- Details of any hypothecated funding to further education institutions or sixth forms beyond their usual core grants.
- The allocation for Adult Community Learning.
- The complete 2024-25 and 2025-26 programme values used in the calculation of FE and sixth form funding.
- Details on how financial support increases have impacted the draft budget (specifically the increase of the Welsh Government Learning Grant (FE) and the increased thresholds for eligibility for EMA)

Higher education, and post-16 student financial support

- How much of Medr's total allocation in 2026-27 is intended for higher education, and any specific uses of this funding.
- Details on how the draft budget supports and reflects the financial positions of Welsh higher education institutions
- Details on how increases to student support for eligible part-time and full-time undergraduate students in Wales, as well as support for postgraduate masters and postgraduate doctoral study, have influenced the draft budget.
- Details on whether decisions to raise the tuition fee limit for undergraduate studies has influenced allocations to Medr

- Details of the Medr allocation, including details of any hypothecated funding, or funding which is intended for specific activities including mental health and student well-being.
- Details of any 2026-27 allocation intended for the delivery of degree apprenticeships and if it is intended to be used to recruit new apprentices or to teach out existing apprentices.
- Details of any capital funding to be made available to Medr, including any conditions to be placed on it by the Welsh Government.
- Details of any contingencies / reserves / non-allocated funds within any of the 2026-27 tertiary education related BELs, including the BELs within the post-16 Learner Support Action; details of how the funds are / can be deployed; and details of any deployment of them during 2025-26.

Other post-16 education provision

- Information on the Welsh Government's expectations on how Medr will use its total allocation to fund other post-16 education provision.
- Details of funding for the International Learning Exchange Programme (Taith) including its extension to March 2028.
- Details of budget provision for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, either from the Education MEG or the Welsh Language BEL of the Central Services and Administration MEG.

Young Person's Guarantee

- Details of budget provision from the Education MEG which contributes to the Young Person's Guarantee and how this relates to funding from the Economy, Energy and Planning MEG.

Capital funding for school and college infrastructure

- Information on budget provision for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and progress of the programme to date, including expenditure and numbers of projects completed/approved to date under Band B.
- A projection of when Band B is likely to be completed by and an update on the next phase of the programme consisting of local authorities' 9-year investment plans.
- An updated assessment of the implications of the cost of living, for example energy prices and construction costs, for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, including any impact on the progress and costs of projects.

- The financial implications from the Welsh Government's carbon net zero policies and how this affects the Education MEG in 2026-27.
- Provision within the Education MEG – and clarification of whether capital or revenue – for school and college repairs and maintenance, in both 2025-26 and 2026-27, and confirmation of whether this is part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Capital funding for childcare

- Confirmation of the status of the Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme, which was originally due to end Spring 2025 but received further funding in 2025-26, and whether there are any allocations to extend this into 2026-27.
- Information on capital funding from the Education MEG for the Childcare Offer and Flying Start programme and any allocations for the purposes of the commitment to roll out Flying Start childcare to all 2 year olds.

Capital funding for the Community Focused Schools initiative

- Information on arrangements for funding aimed at increasing the community focused nature of education estates and adapting premises for community use.

Rebecca Evans MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

20 August 2025

Dear Rebecca,

Request for information to inform scrutiny of Draft Budget 2026–27

I am writing to request written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27.

The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive. Of course, you should not feel limited by our request, and are welcome to address any other issues you believe will assist the Committee in its budget scrutiny work.

We have written separately to the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to request information relating to Skills & Employability, Work-based Learning and Regional Skills Partnerships / Employer Engagement.

Please can you provide this information by 3 November 2025.

With many thanks for assisting us in our scrutiny work.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex

Request for information from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning to inform the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee scrutiny of the draft budget 2026-27.

Presentation of the budget

The Committee will present its findings on the Draft Budget according to an agreed coordinated approach centred on four principles of financial scrutiny:

- affordability - to look at the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced;
- prioritisation - whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent;
- value for money - essentially, whether public bodies are spending their allocations well in terms of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, i.e. outcomes; and
- budget processes – whether they are effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

Please provide the following for the Economy draft budget as a whole:

- a breakdown of the 2026-27 Draft Budget, and any future indicative budgets, by Spending Programme Area, Action and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), both revenue and capital, along with 2025-26 Budget allocations as a comparison;
- details of the evidence base for budget decisions;
- a narrative description of the main policies and programmes funded by each BEL;
- details of the processes in place for monitoring budgets throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action to get the budget back on track or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls;
- details of any policy or programme evaluation reports/reviews which have informed changes to the Draft Budget to help to ensure value for money;
- how draft budget allocations relate to the First Minister's priority of 'more jobs', and each of the four priorities in [Economic mission: priorities for a stronger economy](#);
- the implications of increased cost of living and doing business on budget allocations and programmes;

- any implications for the Draft Budget relating to EU transition following the UK's withdrawal from the EU;
- how the Minister is managing any negative impact on budgets within the portfolio arising from the ending of Structural Funds and/or seeking to take advantage of any opportunities that may arise;
- how the Draft Budget provides for the implementation of legislation passed in the Senedd, as well as any relevant UK legislation;
- what account has been taken of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in deciding draft budget allocations;
- details of how the Draft Budget has been influenced by equality, sustainability and Welsh language impact assessments;
- how the Draft Budget reflects the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation and poverty; and
- how the Welsh Government has planned for demographic changes in preparing the Draft Budget, particularly the need to plan for an ageing population.

Preventative Spending:

We will consider preventative spending as part of our scrutiny of the Draft Budget. The definition of preventative spending adopted for this purpose is:

... spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early, thereby delivering better outcomes and value for money.

With this definition in mind, we request information on:

- the proportion of the Economy budget allocated to preventative spending measures;
- details of specific policies or programmes relevant to the remit of this Committee that are intended to be preventative, and how in practice public services are being transformed to ensure they are sustainable in future; and
- how the value for money of such programmes is evaluated, with a particular focus on what the specific inputs and intended outcomes are.

Individual budget expenditure lines

As well as general information on the individual BELs relevant to the Committee, we would like to receive the following information on the policies and issues outlined below:

- details of the costs and/or any work undertaken to assess the cost of delivering these policies in 2026-27;
- how the delivery of the policy and its associated outcomes will be monitored and evaluated to demonstrate value for money; and
- how equality, sustainability and consideration for the Welsh language have influenced budget allocations.

Economy:

- Allocations to support businesses, including details of how these assist SMEs and larger businesses;
- any allocations to support property infrastructure and development of employment sites;
- details of allocations to support regional economic development, including the Local Growth Fund, Tech Valleys, Freeports and Investment Zones ;
- any allocations to support the individuals and communities impacted by Tata's decision to halt primary steel making in Port Talbot, to supplement the funding provided by the UK Government;
- financial allocations to support the foundational economy;
- the Development Bank for Wales – including allocations to the Green Business Loan Scheme, the Green Homes Wales Scheme, and support for employee-owned businesses;
- financial allocations to Business Wales;
- support for key manufacturing sectors such as aerospace, automotive and steel;
- the allocations to deliver Welcome to Wales: priorities for the visitor economy 2020-25, including the 'Wales Tourism Investment Fund' and 'Brilliant Basics Fund';
- any allocations in relation to the visitor accommodation regulation legislative proposals;
- allocations to each of the four city and growth deals;
- support to deliver 'Together for retail: a Wales Retail Forum action plan'; and
- allocations to support businesses and workers in the transition to Net Zero, such as those to support the creation of sustainable green jobs, and those that ensure that workers will have the necessary skills for these jobs.

Research, Development and Innovation

- Details of any funding during 2026-27 intended to resource Welsh Government's five priorities for research, development and innovation in Wales; including any funding aimed at ensuring Wales has a fair share of available research, development and innovation funding including any EU funding replacements;
- details of any funding during 2026-27 intended to resource the Innovation Strategy for Wales; and
- details of the funding for research and innovation across the whole of Welsh Government.

Trade

- Detail of implementing new arrangements and obligations under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement;
- details of implementing post-Brexit UK trade agreements, including relevant legislation;
- the financial allocations to deliver the Welsh Government's International Strategy's 'Export Action Plan for Wales', to include implications arising from the publication of the International Delivery Plan in April 2025; and
- details of allocations to attract inward investment into Wales.

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Deputy First Minister and
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

20 August 2025

Dear Huw,

Request for information to inform scrutiny of Draft Budget 2026–27

I am writing to request written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27.

The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive. Of course you should not feel limited by our request, and are welcome to address any other issues you believe will assist the Committee in its budget scrutiny work.

Please can you provide this information by 3 November 2025.

With many thanks for assisting us in our scrutiny work.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Annex

Request for information from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to inform the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee scrutiny of the Draft Budget 2026-27.

Presentation of the budget

The Committee will present its findings on the Draft Budget according to an agreed coordinated approach centred on four principles of financial scrutiny:

- affordability - to look at the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced;
- prioritisation - whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent;
- value for money - essentially, whether public bodies are spending their allocations well – economy, efficiency and effectiveness (i.e.) outcomes; and
- budget processes – whether they are effective and accessible, and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

Please provide the following for the Rural Affairs draft budget as a whole:

- a breakdown of the 2026-27 draft budget by Spending Programme Area, Action and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), both revenue and capital, along with 2025-26 Budget allocations as a comparison;
- details of the evidence base for budget decisions;
- a narrative description of the main policies and programmes funded by each BEL;
- details of the processes in place for monitoring budgets throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action to get the budget back on track or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls;
- details of any policy or programme evaluation reports/reviews which have informed changes to the draft budget to help to ensure value for money;
- the implications of increased cost of living on budget allocations and programmes;
- any implications for the draft budget relating to EU transition following the UK's withdrawal from the EU;

- how the draft budget provides for the implementation of legislation passed in the Senedd, as well as any relevant UK legislation;
- what account has been taken of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in deciding draft budget allocations;
- details of how the draft budget has been influenced by any equality, sustainability and Welsh language impact assessments;
- how the draft budget reflects the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation and poverty; and
- how the Welsh Government has planned for demographic changes in preparing the draft budget, particularly the need to plan for an ageing population.

Preventative Spending:

We will consider preventative spending as part of our scrutiny of the Draft Budget. The definition of preventative spending adopted for this purpose is:

... spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early, thereby delivering better outcomes and value for money.

With this definition in mind, we request information on:

- the proportion of the Rural Affairs budget allocated to preventative spending measures;
- details of specific policies or programmes relevant to the remit of this Committee that are intended to be preventative, and how in practice public services are being transformed to ensure they are sustainable in future; and
- how the value for money of such programmes is evaluated, with a particular focus on what the specific inputs and intended outcomes are.

Individual budget expenditure lines

As well as general information on the individual Budget Expenditure Lines relevant to the Committee, we would like to receive the following information on the policies and issues outlined below:

- details of the costs and/or any work undertaken to assess the cost of delivering these policies in 2026-27;
- information relating to how the delivery of the policy and its associated outcomes will be monitored and evaluated to demonstrate value for money; and



- how equality, sustainability and consideration for the Welsh language have influenced budget allocations.

Rural Affairs

Programme for Government 2021-2026:

An explanation of how the budget allocations within your portfolio align to the Programme for Government. How the Rural Affairs budget allocations address the Welsh Government's commitment to respond to the climate and nature emergencies across all policy areas.

Preventative Spend:

- Details of the proportion of portfolio budget allocated to preventative spending measures and how this has increased compared to last year's budget.
- Details of which specific policies or programmes in the portfolio are intended to be preventative.

Evidence-based policy making

- An explanation of how you have used evidence in prioritising your draft budget allocations and how you will monitor and evaluate programmes to ensure they provide value for money and inform future budget setting processes.
- Details of how the development of the Draft Budget has been informed and influenced as a result of consultation with stakeholders.

Well-being of Future Generations Act

- Examples of how the Act has informed decisions on specific budget allocations.
- Details of how the impact assessment process has influenced the development of the Draft Budget, including examples of where a decision has been assessed against the Welsh Government's well-being objectives.

Equality, Welsh language and children's rights assessment

- Details of how you have considered the impact of the Draft Budget on groups with protected characteristics and the Welsh language, including details of any relevant impact assessments.
- Details of how children's rights have been considered in the budget decisions for the portfolio.

Specific areas of policy

I would be grateful if you could provide information about budget allocations in the following policy areas, and the purposes for which they have been allocated:

- the development and implementation of agricultural policy including the proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme for Wales, including:
 - the transition from interim replacement schemes such as the Habitat Wales Scheme, the Organic Support Payment and the Integrated Natural Resources Scheme to the Sustainable Farming Scheme;
 - the continuation of the Basic Payment Scheme for those not joining the Sustainable Farming Scheme; and
 - the process of farmers transitioning to the new Sustainable Farming Scheme such as outreach e.g. support for Farming Connect and administrative arrangements;

the development of fisheries policy, including the delivery of Fisheries Management Plans, and continued financial assistance for the marine, fisheries and aquaculture sectors following the end of the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF);

- Bovine TB Eradication Programme (including Delivery Plan, testing and compensation),
- Other animal disease control such as avian flu and bluetongue;
- key policies included in the new Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-26 including outcomes of the work around licensing of animal welfare establishments, activities and exhibits;
- livestock identification and movement policy; and
- development and implementation of food and drink policy, including the Community Food Strategy;

Please could you also provide an update on discussions with the UK Government about future funding for agriculture support.

Legislation

I would be grateful if you could provide information about the budget allocations for the implementation of existing and planned primary legislation; the implementation of planned and

existing subordinate legislation; and for the implementation of any relevant new UK legislation. This should include the implementation, enforcement and review of the Water Resources (Control of Agricultural Pollution) Regulations 2021.

Oversight of borders policy

- Details of funding related to oversight of borders policy, including as it relates to Border Control Posts (BCPs) and a potential UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) agreement.

Jack Sargeant MS
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

20 August 2025

Dear Jack,

Request for information to inform scrutiny of Draft Budget 2026–27

I am writing to request written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27.

The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive. Of course, you should not feel limited by our request, and are welcome to address any other issues you believe will assist the Committee in its budget scrutiny work.

Given the overlap between your portfolio and that of the Minister for Further and Higher Education with regard to funding for skills, apprenticeships, and research and development, I have copied in Buffy Williams MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee (CYPE). We will review the evidence provided to CYPE in budget scrutiny as well as the evidence you provide to this Committee before making our report to the Senedd.

Please can you provide this information by 3 November 2025.

With many thanks for assisting us in our scrutiny work.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

CC: Buffy Williams MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

Annex

Request for information from Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to inform the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee scrutiny of the draft budget 2026-27.

Presentation of the budget

The Committee will present its findings on the Draft Budget according to an agreed co-ordinated approach centred on four principles of financial scrutiny:

- affordability - to look at the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced;
- prioritisation - whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent;
- value for money - essentially, whether public bodies are spending their allocations well in term of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, i.e. outcomes; and
- budget processes – whether they are effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

A separate letter has been issued to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning to request details on the Draft Budget for the Economy MEG and preventative spending.

As well as general information on the individual Budget Expenditure Lines within your remit relevant to the Committee, we would like to receive the following information on the policies and issues set out below:

Skills & Employability:

- The total quantum of funding intended to be deployed on delivering the Young Persons Guarantee in 2026-27.
- The level of funding intended to be deployed to deliver Personal Learning Accounts in 2026-27.
- Detail of any specific skills and employability funding being offered to support those affected by Tata's decision to halt primary steel making in Port Talbot.
- Detail of any specific funding for sectors transitioning to net zero to upskill and reskill workers, including:

- details of funding for the Flexible Skills Programme and whether specific allocations are made to individual programmes.
- A consolidated list of all employability programmes funded by the Skills BEL, including:
 - the intended client base / beneficiaries of each programme;
 - whether they are part of a larger 'umbrella' scheme (i.e. the Young Persons Guarantee); and
 - a list detailing the main providers for each of the programmes including their 2026-27 contract values.
- Details of allocations to support economically inactive and disabled people into employment.
- Details of funding allocated to the WorldSkills UK competition, including forecasts of remaining funds to spend in 2025.
- Actual 2024-25 and forecast 2025-26 funding for the Creative Wales Skills Fund and how this is intended to be used.

Work-based Learning:

- The actual 2024-25 and forecast 2025-26 outturn for the apprenticeship programme and how this relates to the achievement of Welsh Government's target.
- Details of any transfers out of the 2026-27 Work-Based Learning Action to fund Degree Apprenticeships.
- Details of any funding utilised in 2025-26 and forecast to be used in 2026-27 to:
 - develop new apprenticeship frameworks; and/or
 - review existing apprenticeship frameworks.
- Details of all demand-management restrictions and actions to manage apprenticeship demand that are in-place, or will be introduced for the apprenticeship programme during 2026-27.
- Details of any changes to the funding of apprenticeships in response to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee's apprenticeships report.
- Details of any specific purposes of the funding provided to Medr in their role of allocating funding for apprenticeships.

Regional Skills Partnerships / Employer Engagement:

- Details of the funding to be provided to each Regional Skills Partnership and for what purpose.
- Details of Welsh Government's allocations to Careers Wales and how this is aimed at delivering desired outcomes for skills.

Social partnership and fair work:

- Details of allocations relating to the implementation of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act, and whether these have changed from those predicted in the Regulatory Impact Assessment published to inform scrutiny of the Bill.
- Details of how allocations in the Draft Budget will support fair work initiatives and support increased payment of the Real Living Wage.
- Details of any allocations made to support the implementation of the Remote Working strategy.



Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Welsh Parliament,
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

29 July 2025

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your letter of 2 July addressed to Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning regarding Petition P-06-1488 to “establish a ‘Care Society’ to tackle the Long Covid crisis in Wales”. Your letter has been passed to me, as these issues fall under my portfolio.

I note that the petition calls for:

- Workplace adjustments such as flexible hours, remote work, and discrimination protections; and
- a Universal Basic Income pilot, examining how financial support could empower people to contribute to society, regardless of health status.

Regarding workplace adjustments, employers are responsible for ensuring their employees are supported during periods of ill health and to return to work after any period of illness, including Long-Covid. Where necessary, they should make reasonable adjustments to facilitate this. We expect organisations to be fulfilling their requirements as employers, as outlined by the Equality Act 2010 in providing reasonable adjustments for disabled staff. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the regulator for the provisions of the Equality Act, 2010. Regulation of public bodies is not a matter for Welsh Government. The Equality Advice and Support Service (equalityadvisoryservice.com) may provide a useful source of information.

Recognising the particular issues NHS staff were experiencing, in July 2023 NHS Wales Employers developed a guidance document to [support colleagues with Long COVID-19 to return to work](#). This guidance reminded employers of the need to consider, on a case-by-case basis following discussions between manager and member of staff, whether it is appropriate to provide ongoing enhanced sick pay support above half pay or no pay. The

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

guidance also asked line managers to consider every option open to them, to explore the flexibilities, and to do their utmost to support individuals with Long-Covid to return to the workplace wherever possible.

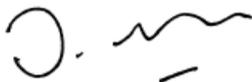
Regarding a Universal Basic Income Pilot, any future consideration of the use of a basic income in Wales will need to be informed by the learning from the Basic Income for Care Leavers in Wales pilot. The pilot will conclude later this year and will be subject to a comprehensive evaluation, which is due to run until early 2027. The pilot is not intended to respond to the efficacy of all possible uses for basic income.

The Welsh Government's Plan for Employability and Skills includes the priority of supporting people with a long-term health condition to work. Our Communities for Work+ programme which provides specialist employment advisory support and intensive mentoring for people, has also made strong progress in supporting participants who identify as disabled or having long term health conditions. This accounts for more than 20% of those supported.

Furthermore, the Welsh Government's In-Work Support Service provides rapid access to tailored occupational therapy, physiotherapy and psychological therapy services. The services are designed to help employed or self-employed people return to work or manage a health condition in work.

The Welsh Government is supporting people with health conditions, including Long Covid, to play their role in the Welsh economy, remain in work, and access work through a number of initiatives. We will continue to support people to access their entitlements, to maximise their incomes and to access sustainable employment.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a circular mark followed by a series of wavy lines and a short horizontal stroke.

Jeremy Miles AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Iechyd a Gofal Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs

Agenda Item 4.10



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: HID-PO-377-2025

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

31 July 2025

Dear Andrew,

At the General Scrutiny session I attended on 17 July I promised that I would follow up with further information relating to BTV-3 vaccinations and animal movements.

I can confirm that the vaccination numbers are for vaccinated animals and not for individual doses. The breakdown by animals is as outlined below as at 23 July 2025:

- Vets have reported vaccination of 154,260 animals (103,970 cattle, 48,904 sheep, 200 camelids, 1,186 goats).
- Animal keepers have reported vaccination of 79,694 animals (48,403 cattle, 30,898 sheep, 192 camelids, 201 goats).

Regarding animal movements, my officials are gathering the numbers and I will write back to you on this in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

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Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change
and Rural Affairs

Rebecca Evans MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

Jack Sargeant MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

1 August 2025

Dear Huw, Rebecca and Jack,

Follow-up to Committee Meeting of 17 July 2025

Thank you all for attending your respective general scrutiny sessions with the Committee on 17 July 2025. During the sessions, several points of follow-up were raised which you committed to address in writing. In the case of the rural affairs session, there were also multiple questions the Committee was unable to reach in the time frame, but would appreciate a response on. For clarity, these are all set out below:

Rural Affairs

Bluetongue

- How many fewer livestock units have moved into Wales, since Bluetongue restrictions came into place?



Fisheries

- How will your development and implementation of Fisheries Management Plans be impacted by the newly agreed extension to UK-EU fishing arrangements to 2038?
 - How are you engaging with the fishing industry in anticipation of the extension?
 - How are you engaging with the fishing shellfish industry in anticipation of the likely introduction of a UK-EU sanitary and phytosanitary agreement?

Agricultural pollution regulations

- Why are some of the recommendations made by Dr Susannah Bolton's review of the agricultural pollution regulations identified as taking over three years to implement?
- Will the Welsh Government be publishing a programme of works setting out how and when all the recommendations will be implemented? If so, when?

International Trade

As discussed in the session, you committed to write to us regarding confirmation that the Welsh Government is not making any public investment in any company that is investing in armaments to Israel.

Economy and Skills

During the final session, there was commitment to provide the Committee with the following information:

Skills

- when available, a timeline on when we can expect an announcement on construction apprenticeships and the reintroduction of a level 2 qualification
- Correspondence from the Minister for Further and Higher Education with a fuller response on rolling out junior apprenticeships
- Specific figures on the uptake of rail degree apprenticeships.

Economy

- The specific detail on property development at Brocastle

- Any information available on the dashboard data shared with the Transition Board with regards to outcomes and next steps for those affected by Tata redundancies in Port Talbot.

I look forward to your responses to these questions and queries, which the Committee would be grateful to receive by 18 September.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref - AH-064-001

Andrew RT Davies, MS
Chair
Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs Committee

4 August 2025

Dear Andrew,

Please find attached the recommendations from the recent Project Assessment Review of the Development Bank of Wales (DBW).

The six recommendations have been accepted in full by the Senior Responsible Officer and the DBW Partnership team will take these forward working with the most appropriate Welsh Government and DBW leads within the specified deadlines.

I am pleased to note the Review Team found the arrangements between the Welsh Government Partnership Team and DBW are effective, and the bank is well placed to deliver on its objectives and targets set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Team also found comprehensive and robust due diligence is undertaken in respect of the bank's customers, which mitigates financial and reputational risk, and the bank follows robust processes to follow up on complaints, of which there are few. In line with the findings of good practice for both complaints handling and due diligence there were no specific recommendations for further actions related to either of these areas.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

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Summary of Report Recommendations:

The Review Team makes the following recommendations prioritised using the definitions below.

Ref	Recommendation	Risk* and Issue Identified with Evidence	Classification	Critical, Essential, Recommended	By When
R1	Welsh Government to conclude talks with HMT to resolve outstanding issues relating to the reclassification of DBW.	Concluding these negotiations between Welsh Government and HMT is a necessary precondition for establishing a stable budgetary framework between Welsh Government and DBW, without which the Bank may not be able to fully deploy available capital to meet demand.	5. Financial Planning and Management	Critical	DO NOW
R2	Continue to work closely with DBW to ensure that any additional budget cover required is established in a timely manner.	If demand for the Bank's services exceeds its budget cover, additional steps will need to be undertaken to secure this from the Welsh Government or otherwise to enable the bank to manage demand. Clarifying the processes and timing for such arrangements within annualised budgeting parameters is necessary to mitigate delivery risks. Actions by the bank to limit investment could lead to reputational damage if not carefully handled.	5. Financial Planning and Management	Essential	ONGOING

R3	Document the Partnership Team's key processes and key contacts and roles within DBW to ensure business continuity in the case of staff changes or absence.	Loss of corporate knowledge could result in less effective oversight arrangements by the Partnership Team.	4. Change Management and Transition	Essential	By November 2025
R4	<p>Work with DBW to develop a Communications and Engagement strategy to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote a clearer understanding of DBW's role by Senedd members, government, existing and potential customers and the public • ensure that a broader spectrum of views is taken into account in DBW's planning and communications, including potential customers, relevant interest groups (e.g. BVCA), departments. 	DBW's role may not be fully understood, and its planning may be developed with a narrower than optimal view, both of which could limit its impact.	2. Stakeholder Management	Essential	By March 2026
R5	Proceed with updating the Framework Document even if the classification issue is not yet fully resolved.	The Framework Document is out of date, which could lead to misunderstandings about DBW's role or to the document becoming irrelevant and ignored.	7. Commercial Strategy and Management	Essential	By December 2025
R6	Consider whether the content and the level of detail in the Framework Document is appropriate given the arm's length relationship between the Welsh Government and DBW.	The arm's length nature of DBW could be compromised if the Framework Document is too prescriptive or if any of the content is policy- rather than framework/foundation-led.	7. Commercial Strategy and Management	Recommended	By December 2025

Pack Page 55

*Risk denotes risks, issues, assumptions and key dependencies

- **Critical (Do Now):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome it is of the greatest importance that the portfolio/programme/project should take action immediately.
- **Essential (Do By):** To increase the likelihood of a successful outcome the portfolio/programme/project should take action in the near future. *[Note to review teams – whenever possible Essential risk based recommendations should be linked to programme/project milestones e.g. before contract signature and/or a specified timeframe e.g. within the next three months.]*
- **Recommended:** The programme/project should benefit from the uptake of this recommendation. *[Note to review teams – if possible Recommended risk based recommendations should be linked to portfolio/programme/project milestones e.g. before contract signature and/or a specified timeframe e.g. within the next three months.]*

Ein cyf/Our ref

Andrew RT Davies
Chair
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
AndrewRT.Davies@senedd.wales

4 August 2025

Dear Andrew,

Further to the meeting of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee on 17 July, I agreed to write to you to provide more detail on Welsh Government funding to companies that do business with Israel.

As I indicated at the Committee session, I can confirm that no Welsh Government export support funding has been provided to Welsh companies to support the direct sale of armaments to Israel since the start of the war on 7 October 2023.

Indeed, the Welsh Government is not aware of any products made in Wales being directly supplied to Israel.

The Committee will know that the UK Government is responsible for arms export licenses. The Welsh Government supports the UK Government's decision to impose sanctions, including the suspension of the direct sale of F-35s and components to Israel.

A recent press notice by Amnesty International stated that a Welsh Government grant had been given to a company which manufactures and exports armaments used in Israel. For clarity, the Welsh Government funding was provided to the Wales-based automotive branch of the company, which manufactures tubing parts for electric buses. The grant was used to support building renovations to safeguard more than 50 automotive jobs in Crumlin. The company has 32 different locations across 14 countries, and it has confirmed that none of its defence work takes place in Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

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Agenda Item 4.14



Valley Greyhound Stadium
2 Tywn Road, Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed
CF82 7SP

08 August 2025,

Dear Mr. Davies,

I wanted to offer my thanks to you as Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, for flagging the scrutiny of the proposed Bill to ban greyhound racing in Wales during your committee meeting on 17th July 2025. Despite the Welsh Government's intention to ban greyhound racing, the Valley Stadium continues to be an integral part of our community, supporting businesses and families who rely upon the track as a cornerstone of licensed greyhound racing in Wales.

Following the securing of our licence from the Greyhound Board of Great Britain in 2023, we have undertaken considerable and continued improvements both in terms of the facilities on offer and the standards we uphold. These improvements have allowed the Valley to be preserved as a community asset and cultural touchstone, while ensuring the highest standards of greyhound welfare.

Whilst the Minister himself has not visited the Valley Stadium to view these improvements first hand we would like to offer your Committee the opportunity visit the stadium. This would provide a vital opportunity to engage directly with those individuals and groups who are passionate supporters of greyhound racing, and who are devoted to improving the welfare of racing greyhounds. We believe this should be an important and integral part of the Bill scrutiny and consultation.

I would be very grateful for your consideration of the above, and we look forward to hearing from you and your colleagues in regards to our engagement as part of the consultation and scrutiny process. We would also welcome sight of the letter from the Business Committee, which outlines the timescales for the proposed introduction of the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Katie Bennison
Valley Greyhound Stadium

Katie Bennison
Valley Greyhound Stadium
2 Tywn Road
Ystrad Mynach
Hengoed
CF82 7SP

19 August 2025

Dear Katie,

Proposed ban on greyhound racing in Wales

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the proposed forthcoming Bill on greyhound racing.

I can confirm that no decisions have yet been taken by the Business Committee about the timetable for the Bill, nor about the Committee to which the Bill will be referred for Stage 1 scrutiny.

Further information will be shared with stakeholders in due course, and I would encourage you to monitor our web pages for more detail in the new term.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Agenda Item 4.15

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/JH/1886/25

Mike Hedges MS
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

11 August 2025

Dear Mike,

In accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, I am writing to notify you that a Budget Cover Transfer between UK Government, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT) and Welsh Government, to support digital inclusion activity in Wales has been agreed.

The funding is made up of £185,418 (revenue) and £254,950 (capital) which will further our work aligned to the Digital Strategy for Wales, Mission Two, and the Well-being of Future Generations Act National Indicator, Status of digital inclusion.

The funding is for Financial Year 2025-2026 only.

- Welsh Government will share learnings and best practice for how the funding is used to support digital inclusion with UK Government and devolved Governments.
- Welsh Government will continue to be in open, engaged, dialogue with UK Government and devolved Governments on approaches to tackling digital exclusion and work aligned to the Minimum Digital Living Standard (MDLS).

I have also copied this letter to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca-Davies MS and the chairs of the Social Justice Committee, Health and Social Care Committee, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee, Local Government and Housing Committee, Children, Young People and Education Committee and the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Hutt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke above the first letter "J".

Jane Hutt AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyfiawnder Cymdeithasol, y Trefnydd a'r Prif Chwip

Agenda Item 4.16

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DC/JS/00471/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

12 August 2025

Dear Mike,

In accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, I am writing to report on the latest meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) held on 16 July 2025.

The meeting was chaired by the UK Government Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP. Gordon Lyons MLA, Minister for Communities and Dr Caoimhe Archibald, Minister for the Economy attended for the Northern Ireland Executive and Angus Robertson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, attended for the Scottish Government. I represented the Welsh Government at this virtual meeting.

The discussion covered the need for more regular engagement at official level, Creative Industries Sector Plan, the impact of AI on the creative industries, the BBC Charter Review and international activity including Creative Europe. During the meeting I stressed the importance of engagement with the nations on cross-UK activity, raised concerns regarding the use of the Internal Market Act to spend in areas of devolved competence in Wales, the need to support our sectors to embrace the benefits of AI whilst also providing adequate protections and highlighted the need for reasonable timescales in which to review the BBC Charter Renewal draft Terms of Reference.

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

21 August 2025

The Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill

Dear Andrew,

At its meeting in July, the Business Committee considered a paper on year five of the Welsh Government's legislative programme. The paper set out proposed timetables for a number of Bills, including a forthcoming Bill on the regulation of visitor accommodation in Wales.

The Business Committee has since agreed in principle that this Bill should be referred to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee for Stage 1 scrutiny.

For your consideration, I enclose at Annex A an indicative timetable for the Bill. I would be grateful if you could provide us with your views on the proposed timetable.

Kind regards,



The Rt Hon. Elin Jones MS

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Annex A: Illustrative Timetable for the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation Bill

Milestone	Date
Introduction to the Senedd	20 October 2025
Deadline for Stage 1 Committee consideration	19 December 2025
Stage 1 ends – Plenary debate on general principles and motion on financial resolution (if necessary)	13 January 2026
Stage 2 begins	14 January 2026
Earliest possible date for Stage 2 consideration	4 February 2026
Stage 2 ends – deadline for Stage 2 Committee	13 February 2026
Stage 3 begins	16 February 2026
Stage 3 in Plenary	10 March 2026
Stage 4 in Plenary	17 March 2026
Royal Assent	April 2026

Rt. Hon. Elin Jones MS

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

10 September 2025

Dear Llywydd,

The Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my views on the proposed timetable for the Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill. I would like to reiterate my concerns regarding the length of the proposed Stage 1 for the Bill which I highlighted in my letter dated 23 July.

I believe the proposed timelines are too short to allow the quality of scrutiny I would expect to be provided by any Senedd Committee. High-quality scrutiny is a vital part of lawmaking and results in better legislation. Since there is insufficient time left in the Senedd calendar for the thorough Stage 1 process this Bill deserves prior to dissolution, I believe the Bill's introduction should be reconsidered. The incoming Government can then decide, after the election, whether to proceed with this Bill and if so, will be in a position to give our successor Committee adequate time to perform its vital scrutiny role.

Tourism is a cornerstone of the Welsh economy. According to Welsh Government research, in 2022 visitor accommodation alone generated 1.2% of Welsh GVA, which is just under £1bn for our economy, and was responsible for around 2% of all jobs. Money spent by visitors staying in accommodation also supports other businesses in Wales. Around 12% of all Welsh jobs are part of the wider Visitor Economy. Substantial changes to visitor accommodation, such as those we anticipate to be included in this Bill, will have a big impact on Welsh jobs and our economy so therefore warrant serious consideration.

If the Committee is to meet the reporting deadline proposed in your letter for Stage 1, I estimate we will only be able to hold a three-week public consultation. A key part of the Committee's role in legislative scrutiny is to gather the views of interested parties and reflect these in the Stage 1 report. Three weeks will not provide stakeholders sufficient time to digest the Bill and submit a full, high-quality response, especially if they are a representative organisation and need to consult their members. Furthermore, many visitor accommodation businesses are very small and do not have the resources to closely monitor the Senedd's work. Such businesses may not have time to respond within three weeks, or worse, may not even be aware there has been a consultation until it has closed.

This licensing scheme is the result of a manifesto pledge and a commitment in the Programme for Government. It is not emergency legislation responding to a sudden incident or emerging risk. I remain disappointed that the Welsh Government did not plan its five-year legislative programme well enough to provide the Committee with adequate time to carry out our role and provide proper scrutiny of their proposed legislation.

I fully understand that the Business Committee is a political body and, as such, I expect politics will prevail over the need to make good legislation. So, I anticipate we will need to work with the timing set out in the draft timetable. If this is the case, I would like to reiterate my requests for mitigations from the Welsh Government. These are that:

- The Welsh Government stands by its commitment to publish the Bill when it is sent to the Llywydd for pre-introduction and should go further than this by publishing the draft Bill as soon as is practically possible if that is before it is sent for pre-introduction. If this is not possible, I would request that an early private draft Bill is shared with the Committee, with the understanding that we could then share this draft with key stakeholders. This would ensure those organisations have as much time as possible to contribute to the Committee's work.
- The Welsh Government stands by its commitment to make officials available to give a private technical briefing prior to the Bill's introduction. I believe it is necessary given the limited time Members will have to digest the Bill.

To reiterate, I am deeply concerned by the proposed timetable. If this is the timetable we must work to, the Committee will need to 'cut its cloth' accordingly and carry out the best scrutiny we can given the time allowed. However, this will not be of the quality I would normally expect and the Committee may not be able to afford the same level of detailed and appropriate consideration to all elements of the Bill.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet
dros Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for
Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Agenda Item 4.18

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: HID-PO-408-25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair - Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

22 August 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to let you know that the Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will be held on 8 September. I will be representing the Welsh Government and chairing the meeting.

The meeting is expected to focus on water quality, the EU-UK Common Understanding Agreement, Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund, and the Sustainable Farming Scheme. After the meeting I will update you on discussions and a communique will be issued.

I have also copied this letter to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref HID/PO/446/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair - Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

16 September 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to let you know that the Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs meeting scheduled for 8 September 2025 has been cancelled. Officials are working to identify a new date. I will update the Committee when a new date is identified.

I have also copied this letter to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs committee.

Yours sincerely

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

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Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill

Response to the Economy,
Trade and Rural Affairs
Committee (July 2025)

In July 2025 the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee agreed its report on the Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill. The report includes two conclusions and one recommendation. This is the Welsh Government response to that report.

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1. Introduction

The Animal Welfare (Import of Dogs, Cats and Ferrets) Bill (“the Bill”) was introduced in the House of Commons on 16 October 2024. The Bill is a Private Members’ Bill, introduced by Dr Danny Chambers MP and is supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Bill makes provision to restrict the commercial importation and non-commercial movement of dogs, cats and ferrets into the United Kingdom from third countries on animal welfare grounds. The Bill completed its passage through the House of Commons on 4 July 2025 and received its First Reading in the House of Lords on 7 July.

Legislative consent is required as the Bill makes provision with regard to devolved matters in so far as it applies to Wales, notably, animal welfare. A Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) was laid before the Senedd on 21 May 2025. On 7 July 2025, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee (ETRA) agreed its report on the LCM. The Report contained two conclusions and one recommendation.

With thanks to the members of the ETRA for their report on the Bill, I have set out my response to the Report’s individual conclusions and recommendation below.

2. Response to the two conclusions

Conclusion 1

The Committee concludes:

“The Committee has found no reason to object to the Senedd agreeing the Legislative Consent Motion associated with the LCM.”

Response: The Welsh Government notes this conclusion.

Conclusion 2

The Committee concludes:

“Any regulations made under this Bill, should it be passed, must be carefully scrutinised to avoid unintentionally preventing animals which have had legitimate surgery or been abused but rescued and rehomed from travelling.”

Response: The Welsh Government notes this conclusion.

3. Response to the one recommendation

Recommendation 1

The Committee recommends:

“The Welsh Government should keep this Committee and its successor informed about any intention to use the regulation-making powers provided for in the Bill.”

Response: Accept. The Welsh Government will ensure that the Committee, and its successor, are kept informed about developments relating to the Bill and its implementation, including any intention to use the regulation-making powers provided for within it. This will be done as part of our normal scrutiny and reporting arrangements with the Senedd.

Financial Implications: None.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: RE/PO/428/2025

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

02 September 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to notify you of the Inter-Ministerial Group for Business and Industry (IMG) and the meeting which will take place on 9 September 2025.

The IMG will be chaired by Scottish Government's Minister for Business and Employment, Richard Lochhead MSP. Liz Lalley, Director of Economic Strategy and Green Growth, will represent the Welsh Government at the meeting as I will be attending another Ministerial event.

The discussion will focus on the implementation of the UKG Industrial Strategy and provide the opportunity for a discussion about skills and a presentation from Skills England.

I have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Finance Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

I will provide an update after the meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Our ref: RE/PO/439/2025

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

10 September 2025

Dear Mike,

Further to my letter dated 2 September and in accordance with the inter-institutional relation agreement, I am writing to notify you the Inter-Ministerial Group for Business and Industry due to take place on 9 September was postponed.

I will notify you once a new date has been confirmed.

I have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Finance Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Agenda Item 4.21



Andrew RT Davies
Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd, Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1SN

11 September 2025

Dear Chair,

We are pleased to announce that the Full Business Case (FBC) for Anglesey Freeport has now been approved by both the UK and Welsh Government.

Additionally, Stena Line's plans for Prosperity Parc, a major 200,000sqm data and technology park located within one of our designated tax sites, has received outline planning permission. The plans have been forecast to create up to 1,200 new jobs on the Island, with the potential to generate £578 million GVA at its peak, and support UK investment in data and renewable energy.

Full Business Case

Anglesey Freeport will deliver upon the Welsh and UK Government's shared objectives around the broader Industrial Strategy Zones programme, including ensuring the Freeport operates as a hub for global trade, innovation and investment, supporting local talent and embracing new employment opportunities, particularly within low-carbon energy.

The Freeport will deliver significant investment and long-term economic benefits for the island and North Wales, helping to address our local and regional needs. This investment will further help protect the Welsh language and maintain sustainable communities.

Following our update earlier this year on the approval of our Outline Business Case and designation of two of our tax sites, 'Anglesey Prosperity Zone,' and 'Central Anglesey Tax Sites', the approval of our Full Business Case means that all required instruments are now in place and the Freeport will transition into its delivery phase.

We are finalising our Memorandum of Understanding with UK and Welsh Government and are hopeful that this will be agreed in early autumn. Once approved, the site will help unlock £25mil in government seed capital, enabling the establishment of the Freeport as a business entity. We also anticipate approval of the North Anglesey Tax Site later this year.

Prosperity Parc

Whilst we have been finalising our business cases, progress has been made on-the-ground to ensure the Freeport can deliver its vision at pace.

We are pleased that outline planning permission has been secured on Prosperity Parc, the former Anglesey Aluminium site located just outside of Holyhead and within our 'Anglesey Prosperity Zone' tax site. The success of this application marks a major step towards delivering on our key growth commitments.

The plans include over 220,000 sqm of data centre, industrial and office development as part of a new low-carbon campus. The site will also host a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to benefit from its existing grid connection.



At its peak, the proposals are forecast to generate up to £578m of growth each year in the local economy and create around 1,200 jobs. The project will also channel targeted investment into local training, education, and skills development. This will ensure communities from across Anglesey and North Wales can benefit from opportunities close to their homes, helping to protect the region's culture and heritage.

Our plans align with the UK Government's ambitions to kickstart economic growth, including at a regional level. As part of our vision, the site will be at the forefront of the AI revolution, and we have submitted a bid for Anglesey as part of DSIT's AI Growth Zones initiative.

We appreciate your support as we have progressed our business cases.

Should you wish to discuss the Freeport further, or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@angleseyfreeport.co.uk.

We look forward to working with you on our vision for Anglesey Freeport, and to help secure a positive economic future for North Wales.

Kind regards,

Ian Hampton
Managing Director of
Anglesey Freeport
Stena Line

Dylan Williams
Chief Executive
Isle of Anglesey County Council

**Economy, Trade, and
Rural Affairs Committee**

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Rebecca Evans MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

Welsh Government

Anna McMorrin MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Wales Office)

House of Commons

17 September 2025

Dear Rebecca and Anna,

Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals

Due to their key objectives as drivers of economic growth, this Committee and its predecessor have taken a keen interest in the four Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals. Following on from work undertaken by the Committee on the Deals in 2023, we decided to seek an update from the deals and stakeholders in the 2025 summer term. The aim of this work was to undertake a quick 'health check' on progress from each of the deals. To inform this work the Committee:

- took evidence on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal and the Mid Wales Growth Deal on 4 June;
- took evidence on the Swansea Bay City Deal and the North Wales Growth Deal on 26 June; and
- held a public consultation.



This letter sets out a high level overview of the findings from those sessions, highlights some areas of concern and includes some questions the Committee would welcome answers to. Over all it is designed to be a pulse check on the four deals.

North Wales Growth Deal

The Committee has serious concerns about progress with the North Wales Growth Deal. We heard the Deal was significantly behind its targets on both private sector investment leveraged and jobs created. I note that the First Minister shares concerns about the Deal and told Plenary, in July, “we've got to accept the fact that it's been very disappointing, the pace that has been associated with the north Wales growth deal. That's why, as a Government, we are really trying to drive the corporate joint committee that is responsible for delivering on this.”.

Trawsfynydd

The North Wales Growth Deal faces significant challenges. The biggest challenge stems from the decision taken by Great British Nuclear not to pursue Trawsfynydd as a site for the deployment of Small Modular Reactors. In their written evidence Ambition North Wales stated the Trawsfynydd project originally “accounted for 12.5% of the jobs target and 40% of the investment target for the Growth Deal”. Ambition North Wales said they “remain committed to delivering on the original Growth Deal targets, but believe government need to be receptive to considering changes to these targets where appropriate given the changes since December 2020”.

In our evidence session they explained “We've looked at removing the projects that weren't viable within the timescale of the growth deal, and we've also changed how we work that portfolio in terms of having a reserve list. Some projects have been removed completely, some have moved to that reserve list. I think that's really important because it gives us flexibility to be a bit more dynamic in accepting new projects, and also creates an element of competitiveness in that money for those projects isn't ring-fenced until there's a clear business plan in place.”

Targets

Regarding investment Ambition North Wales told the Committee “At the moment, the actual private sector investment is very low—it's £1.8 million. That's before projects are actually in delivery. They are further education or higher education projects, and the level of match funding for them is much lower. Of the other six projects that are due to move into delivery, the investment target is £275 million, and 50 per cent of that would be from the private sector.”

Regarding job creation they told Members they were “Significantly behind the original forecasts” and went on to say “we've only seen 35 jobs created, but that's on the back of only one project in operation and three currently in delivery, so we hope to see a significant increase in that figure over

the next few years, as more and more projects move into delivery.” Ambition North Wales explained they felt that “the original [job creation] forecasts at the time of signing the deal were rife with optimism bias in terms of how mature some of the projects were and how quickly they would come into delivery”.

Funding

Ambition North Wales also stated there had been issues drawing down the funding for the Growth Deal. In their written evidence they told the Committee they were “disappointed by Governments decision not to award the annual funding drawdown of funding for the second consecutive year, we continue to work closely with Welsh Government and UK Government to increase the pace of delivery on the Growth Deal”. In our session they expanded on this saying they were seeking clarity from both governments as “When the letter for the first year came, it was made clear that the funding was still available, and it would just be re-profiled in later years. That sentence was not present in the letter this year, implying that there was a level of risk to that, and that's the ambiguity that we hope to clarify with Governments”.

Clarity needed

We accept there have been some challenges with the deal and appreciate the openness and candour of Ambition North Wales when giving their evidence. However, the Committee feels there are serious questions to be asked around both the performance of the Deal and the relationship between the Deal and the two governments.

It is imperative that something is done to ensure the North Wales Growth Deal can fulfil its aim, improve the North Wales economy and that citizens of North Wales can see benefits from the considerable funding allocated.

The Committee was disappointed to hear that Ambition North Wales was having to seek clarity from both governments on whether they would still receive the full £240 million. Given the challenges to delivery that Ambition North Wales is already facing, adding in additional uncertainty as to the funding it will have at its disposal this uncertainty cannot be helpful to anyone. It is vital this issue is clarified as soon as possible.

The Committee is concerned to understand how such a significant amount of the Deal's targets, 40% of the investment target and 12.5% of the jobs, rested on the success of one scheme. Especially as it was far from certain this would come to fruition and the ultimate decision on whether that scheme would proceed was completely out of the hands of Ambition North Wales. The decision making process here needs to be reviewed to ensure lessons are learnt.

Given the target of decarbonise all public buildings by 2030, the need to improve public transport and help households move away from fossil fuels to heat their homes, the Committee struggles to

understand why the Growth Deal members in North Wales are having such difficulty in finding sustainable alternative projects worth £50m.

The Committee recommends the Welsh and UK Governments:

- Ensure they are monitoring and supporting Ambition North Wales to deliver the deal but also that the considerable public funds allocated to the Deal will create the jobs and investment aimed for;
- Set out how they will support and monitor progress with the North Wales Growth Deal going forwards;
- Offer urgent clarity around the funding available to the North Wales Growth Deal; and
- Explore what lessons can be learnt from the Trawsfynydd project failure and its knock-on impact on the Deal.

Cardiff Capital Region

Job Creation

In their evidence session Cardiff Capital Region told us that they were “lagging slightly” on their target to create 25,000 new jobs. The Committee heard that the City Deal, 9 years on from being agreed, had created 1,537 new jobs to date. They said “the direct jobs that have been created are 1,537, of which construction was 1,152. We safeguarded 1,029. Graduate employment through our graduate scheme was 261. There were 93 apprenticeships”. However, they assured Members that they are “more than on track” achieve the target.

Cardiff Capital Region noted that a large proportion of the new jobs would be created as a result of the Metro work Transport for Wales was taking forward using part of the city deal funding, the told Members targets were “shared with Transport for Wales, but we would expect, on the present rate of progress, that it would be more like 27,100”.

When asked about how the job creation target was split between jobs created from the Metro work and the wider Cardiff Capital Region investment fund Cardiff Capital Region told the Committee “there's never been any conscious decision to split the targets. So, it's a question that we have as well: how do these get apportioned and how are they reported on?” Members were surprised to hear there was no clarity for Cardiff Capital Region, or Transport for Wales, as to their responsibility regarding the job creation target.

When asked about the regional spread of jobs created by the City Deal Cardiff Capital Region told Members “we don't monitor that per se, because it's a difficult thing”. They noted that economic

markets don't respect administrative boundaries but "we're trying harder, but it's quite a difficult thing to get to grips with".

Whilst we accept there can be a certain amount of ambiguity around the key beneficiaries of any public sector investment and particularly economic stimulus and that this can make it hard to understand how investments have benefited different areas. However, this is not a unique challenge to this project or Cardiff Capital Region. The Committee is concerned that, without a clear understanding of the geographical impact of support, Cardiff Capital Region cannot plan its work correctly and may inadvertently provide disproportionate favour or neglect different parts of the region.

Regarding job creation the Committee recommends the Welsh and UK Governments:

- Work with Cardiff Capital Region and Transport for Wales to ensure there are clear job creation targets for both the Metro and Wider Investment Fund parts of the City Deal; and
- Ensure Cardiff Capital Region is monitoring as best it can where job creation is being achieved to make sure they are not accidentally disproportionately favouring or neglecting different parts of the Region.

Aberthaw

Cardiff Capital Region has faced significant challenges following its purchase of the former Aberthaw Power Station site. Cardiff Council was the contracting authority for the contract which was awarded to demolish the site. In January they admitted liability in respect of a procurement challenge by an unsuccessful bidder in relation to that contract.

In our session Cardiff Capital Region **informed** the Committee that the legal action had been concluded and had involved a settlement figure of £5.25 million. They said that Deloitte had been commissioned to undertake an independent review and that the findings would be made public, subject to legal caveats. They also **noted** that this presents a reputational risk that they are mitigating "in various ways."

In a **previous session** in September 2023, Cardiff Capital Region explained Aberthaw was going to require serious investment. Referring to the purchase cost of £8.6 million and the £30 million allocated for demolition of the site they told the Committee "£40 million is a drop in the ocean—that won't even scratch the surface in terms of what's needed here. [...] We'll need hundreds of millions of pounds to make this a success and a reality that will benefit the region and local people in the Vale of Glamorgan as well."

In our most recent session they **reiterated** the opportunities they felt the site presented saying it was the project they got the most interest in "not just from UK domestic investors, but internationally, is



absolutely Aberthaw. That's because we've got proximity to the Celtic sea, two national grid substations, 18 million tonnes of pulverised fuel ash, which has a value, which is unique in the UK. We've got data centre providers knocking the door because they know the levels of connectivity they need to drive the compute power for the future."

However, they also revised the required funding considerably saying "we don't have deep enough pockets for what Aberthaw requires... we probably are talking about hundreds of millions, maybe even more than that—maybe bigger figures. But I think the intent is for us to get through the demolition, remediation phase, clear the site and, in the meanwhile, start talking up some of the opportunities that we're starting to build."

We are concerned that the City Deal has purchased the site at Aberthaw and embarked upon a project that will require an as yet unspecified amount of money (possibly more than a billion pounds) in order to make it a success. A significant amount of this money will need to be secured from the private sector, meaning that it is all the more important that Cardiff Capital Region takes all steps possible to mitigate the impact of recent events on investor confidence.

Regarding Aberthaw the Committee recommends the Welsh and UK Governments:

- Seek clarification from Cardiff Capital Region around the latest estimate of the total development costs for the Aberthaw project including where they see this investment coming from and share this information with the Committee; and
- Closely monitor the spending on Aberthaw to ensure there is best value for money and the project does not become an unchecked drain absorbing public money or a project where good money is thrown after bad.

Additional Investment Target

One of Cardiff Capital Region's targets is to leverage £4bn of additional investment in the region. When asked if they were on track to meet this target Cardiff Capital Region told the Committee "It's probably closer to two [billion pounds] at the minute, and that's because we haven't fully expended all of our investment fund or committed it."

This is concerning and the Committee will continue to monitor Cardiff Capital Region's progress on additional investment. I hope both the Welsh and UK Governments also share this concern and will also monitor progress in this area closely.

Swansea Bay City Deal

Progress to date

In our evidence session the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee (referred to as the City Deal or the Deal going forwards) told the Committee that they had **made** “significant progress in terms of moving them from the feasibility stage into the pre-delivery stage, and then into the delivery and completion stages.” They **told** Members they had “three projects completed to the value of about £113 million. As of the end of 2024-25, we've got six projects completed to the value of £210 million. Nineteen projects are in delivery, with an investment value of £761 million, against 17 projects previously advised, with a value of £415 million. Fourteen projects are currently in pre delivery, with a total investment of £403 million, against the 15 previously in pre delivery, with a total value of £711 million.”

They **highlighted** that they had committed all their capital, that 896 jobs have been created and they created £133 million of private sector investment. They said this was “good progress being made.”

Support for Port Talbot and Tata workers

The Committee heard that the Swansea Bay City Deal was working to support Neath Port Talbot Council and workers impacted by the closure of Tata’s blast furnaces. They **told** Members “we were already delivering the smart manufacturing interventions, we've got the South Wales Industrial Transition from Carbon Hub—SWITCH—project, and the skills and talent project. So, those interventions were ones that were equally helpful, given the impacts of the decisions on Tata Steel. The other projects that we are delivering, obviously, will create, hopefully, opportunities for people to move across, if they do lose their employment with Tata Steel, into other industries, help them to retrain, and, again, we're linked into the programmes that have been set up to help with that. Again, whilst the city Deal doesn't provide all of the answers, it is an integral part of assisting, and, again, what we were seeking to do anyway with the city deal should, hopefully, be beneficial to meeting some of those impacts created by the decisions on Tata Steel.”

Challenges

The Deal noted two main challenges. One was around the difference between the Swansea Bay City Deal and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal funding. They **explained** “we don't have the benefit of a growth fund like the capital region has, where it can invest or decide to deploy in different ways into things that it feels are important at this time. So, it's a double-edged sword—some benefits, some challenges.”

They also **highlighted** frustration around the way inflation had been handled. They told the Committee “the reality is we've experienced very high inflation that nobody anticipated, and yet there

is no acknowledgment of that in terms of any flexibility of the funding from central or Welsh Government”.

As part of this pulse check, the Committee is broadly content with progress from the Swansea Bay City Deal. Members were pleased to hear the City Deal is supporting the community in Port Talbot and workers who have lost their jobs. However, we would be keen to hear the Welsh and UK governments’ responses to some of the points raised by the deal concerning the challenges they face.

Specifically the Committee would like the Welsh and UK Governments to set out:

- Their views on the different conditions the Swansea Bay and Cardiff Capital Region deals have and any considerations around this they may make going forwards.
- Their position on the effect of inflation on the Swansea Bay City Deal, and the other three Welsh deals, including any additional funding they may supply or mitigation they may make to delivery targets.

Mid Wales Growth Deal

The Mid Wales Growth Deal is the youngest of the Welsh Growth Deals having been finalised in 2022. Growing Mid Wales written evidence to the Committee said “This year has seen the Growth Deal starting delivery in earnest, with investment decisions late in 2024 leading to projects moving into delivery.”

The written evidence from Growing Mid Wales highlighted that the economic landscape in Mid Wales is “uniquely challenged” and suggests that “access to private sector investment is disadvantaged compared to the economic diversity along the M4 and A55 corridors and the English border.”

In the evidence session, Growing Mid Wales told the Committee “we have to demonstrate some clarity of vision and some confidence in order to attract additional investment into the area. So, we don't want to be hesitating; we want to be clear-sighted and we want to be bold and, in that way, we will make sure that we close that funding gap. So, I don't want to mislead you here by showing overconfidence and you thinking that we're arrogant about our approach, but we do need to demonstrate confidence in order to attract investment.”

From a governance perspective the Mid Wales Growth Deal is an outlier. They have made a specific decision not to move management of their deal to their Corporate Joint Committee. Their written evidence states “the transfer of the Growth Deal into the CJC would incur significant costs and implementation challenges (owing to the fact that the CJC is a separate legal entity) and is currently not deemed to be a beneficial step for the region”. This is of course a decision for the local

authorities, however, the Committee will monitor this approach to see if/how it will impact delivery compared to the other Deals. I would also expect the Welsh and UK Governments to do the same.

As the Mid Wales Growth Deal has only just entered its delivery phase it is hard to draw any firm conclusions for the Deal as part of this pulse check. However we are interested to see the if the different approach to governance, i.e. not transferring the Mid-Wales Deal into the Corporate Joint Committee and would be keen to understand the two governments position on that. The Committee will continue to monitor the progress of the Mid Wales Growth Deal.

Regarding the evidence provided around the Mid Wales Growth Deal the Committee would like the Welsh and UK governments to:

- Set out any views the governments have on the decision not to transfer management of the Mid Wales Growth Deal to their Corporate Joint Committee;
- Monitor this different approach to governance from Mid-Wales compared to the other three deals to see if there are any clear advantages or disadvantages between the approaches; and
- Ensure the unique challenges faced by the Mid-Wales Growth Deal, such as economic diversity and access to private sector investment as outlined in their evidence, are factored in to any ongoing work with and support offered by the two governments to the Deal.

Continuity of Political Leadership

The Committee is concerned about the impact of changes in political leadership on the growth deals ability to deliver. Councillor Rob Stewart has been at the helm of the Swansea Bay City Deal since its inception and we feel that having a continuity of political leadership driving a specific vision forward may be one of the reasons that the Swansea Bay City Deal is performing well.

The growth deals represent areas with a plurality of political views and are long term projects set to deliver over the course of multiple local government, Senedd and Westminster electoral cycles. Of course, political leadership will change in that time and this is an important part of democracy. It is also right that new political leaders use all the leavers at their disposal to achieve the commitments they have made to their electorate. However, this creates a tension with the long term nature of the deals and of economic investment more generally.

So, there is a challenge here for all four growth deals – how can they retain a long term vision and corporate memory in order to support their delivery. This is an issue that all four deals will need to face if they are to deliver in the long term.

The Committee believes the UK and Welsh Government and the four deals must grasp this nettle. We recommend:

- The UK and Welsh Government work with the four growth deals to ensure lessons are learnt and best practice is shared to support the deals when transitioning through political leadership changes.

As outlined above, this letter serves to review the current status of the four deals. Since these deals are accountable for a substantial amount of public funding and have notable economic development targets, I would appreciate your response to the points raised and any perspectives you wish to share on the matter.

I have copied this letter to Cllr Charlie McCoubrey, Vice-Chair of the Ambition North Wales; Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Chair of Cardiff Capital Region; Cllr Rob Stewart, Chair of the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee; and Cllr Jake Berriman, Leader of Powys County Council.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

CC: Cllr Charlie McCoubrey, Vice-Chair of the Ambition North Wales

Cllr Mary Ann Brocklesby, Chair of Cardiff Capital Region

Cllr Rob Stewart, Chair of the Swansea Bay City Region Joint Committee

Cllr Jake Berriman, Leader of Powys County Council



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: RE/PO/447/2025

Andrew R T Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru

16 September 2025

Dear Andrew,

I wrote to Minister Shanks, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero on 2 September to provide my consent to the inclusion in the Statement of Strategic Priorities to Great British Energy matters which would be within the legislative competence of the Senedd. The Statement of Strategic Priorities has now been published and can be found [here](#).

Section 5 of the Great British Energy Act 2025 requires the Secretary of State to prepare a Statement of Strategic Priorities (SSP) for Great British Energy (GBE). Section 5(6) requires the consent of Welsh Ministers to the inclusion in the SSP of anything which concerns a matter, provision about which would be within the legislative competence of Senedd, if contained in an Act of the Senedd. Minister Shanks wrote to me seeking Welsh Ministers' consent to the inclusion of the references to 'clean energy' in the SSP so far as they relate to carbon capture, usage and storage technologies.

Partnership working is essential to the success of GBE and it will be important for the UK Government to deliver on its commitment that GBE will work collaboratively and in partnership with devolved governments, local government and communities. I also welcome the commitment in the SSP that the work of GBE will add to our local and community energy successes which have been a keen focus of our work in Wales to date.

My letter to Minister Shanks highlighted my view that the basis on which Welsh Ministers would consent to the SSP would be much wider than that highlighted in his letter and that the Senedd's competence in matters touched on by the SSP go beyond merely those concerning carbon capture, usage and storage technologies.

I also stated the paragraph describing energy activity here in Wales was less detailed than I would like and I have asked for additional work to identify how GBE will work with us to support delivery of the strategic vision articulated in national, regional and local spatial plans in relation to our shared energy and climate ambitions.

The Governance section of the SSP does not refer to how GBE activities will be closely aligned with devolved activities, especially given the complex interface between GBE's remit and devolved areas in Wales. A high level SSP is not the place for this detail to be set out. However, I will require our officials to continue to work on this to set out a process that clarifies how GBE activities will be

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

complementary to Welsh policies and delivery processes and establish a dispute resolution process to our joint satisfaction.

GBE's role in our energy future is important for the whole of the UK and its success is something all Governments of the UK can contribute to. My officials are already working to share their experience of delivery expertise with GBE and I have expressed my desire that GBE will build on the positive collaboration to date to increase the scale and pace of work made necessary by the climate emergency and energy crisis.

That pace on this occasion meant the UK Government requested consideration of the SSP within very short timescales. I was disappointed there was insufficient time allowed to write to the Committee and invite your consideration in advance of my decision. Although I have given my consent to the SSP, I have asked for additional work on governance to provide clarity on how the policies and priorities of Wales will be incorporated into GBE's work going forward. With that in mind, I welcome any views you and the Committee may have on the SSP as published. My officials will also work with UK Government to ensure additional time is provided for the next iteration of the SSP to allow time to engage with Senedd Committees.

I will also be writing to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee and will issue a Written Statement to inform Members of the Senedd.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio