

# Agenda – Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

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Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Committee Room 3	Robert Donovan
Meeting date: 16 September 2021	Committee Clerk
Meeting time: 09.30	0300 200 6565
	<a href="mailto:SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales">SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales</a>

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## Private pre-meeting

(09.15 – 09.30)

## Public meeting

(09.30)

### 1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

### 2 Paper(s) to note

(09.30)

#### 2.1 Letter from Auditor General for Wales

(Pages 1 – 2)

Attached Documents:

The Work of Audit Wales



## **2.2 Letter from Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee**

(Pages 3 – 5)

Attached Documents:

Committee Timetable

## **2.3 Letter from Chair of the Finance Committee**

(Pages 6 – 9)

Attached Documents:

Financial Scrutiny

## **2.4 Letter from the Welsh Language Commissioner**

(Pages 10 – 12)

Attached Documents:

Considering the Welsh language in the Committee's work

## **2.5 Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd**

(Pages 13 – 15)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response to the letter sent on the 23 March from the Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee during the last Senedd

## **2.6 Letter from Chair Children, Young People and Education Committee**

(Pages 16 – 17)

Attached Documents:

Children and young people's priorities for the Sixth Senedd

## **2.7 Letter from the Minister for Economy**

(Page 18)

Attached Documents:

Ministerial Forum for Trade

## **2.8 Letter from Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee**

(Pages 19 – 20)

Attached Documents:

Joint working between committees in the Sixth Senedd

## **3 Consideration of Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Professional Qualifications Bill**

(09.40 – 09.55)

(Pages 21 – 45)

Attached Documents:

Research Brief

Legal Advice Note

## **4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting**

(09.55)

## **5 Consideration of Draft Report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Professional Qualifications Bill**

(09.55 – 10.05)

(Pages 46 – 52)

Attached Documents:

Draft LCM Report

## **Break**

(10.05 – 10.15)

## **6 Strategic Planning Session**

(10.15 – 13.00)

(Pages 53 – 64)

Attached Documents:

Priorities for the Sixth Senedd: consultation response summary

Paul Davies MS  
Chair  
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs  
Committee  
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**Reference:** AC/277/caf

**Date issued:** 9 July 2021

Dear Paul

## The Work of Audit Wales

Congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee. I wish you every success in your new role and at the start of a challenging five-year period for public services in Wales.

My remit as Auditor General for Wales means that I am the statutory external auditor of most of the Welsh public sector and responsible for the audit of most of the public money spent in Wales. In September, I am planning to publish a series of 'Picture of Public Services' outputs. These will provide our take on the key financial and wider challenges facing public services over the coming years and will set out some of the key areas of public service delivery where I will be expecting public services to demonstrate progress. I hope that the outputs from this work will be of interest to all Members of the Senedd and that they will provide a useful point of reference for their future work.

I am expecting that the work of Audit Wales will continue to play a key role supporting the work of the new Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee (PAPAC), with PAPAC remaining our primary audience. However, I am also keen that Audit Wales uses its unique perspective and expertise to support the work of other Senedd committees where we have relevant audit intelligence to bring to bear. We would

therefore welcome the opportunity to be included on any wider consultations that your Committee runs. I am also anticipating that there will continue to be occasions where committees other than PAPAC might take the lead in scrutinising issues raised by my reports, where these are relevant and timely in the context of their own scrutiny work.

We have just recently published our latest [Annual Report and Accounts](#), which tells the story of our work during 2020-21 and links to some of our major outputs. Our Annual Report also summarises work in progress or planned to start later this year and we will be sharing further details with committee clerking teams over the summer. For example, we are considering some work to report on issues relating to the Welsh Government's support for business during the COVID-19 pandemic. This may draw on some of our data matching work under the National Fraud Initiative. We are also maintaining a watching brief on post-Brexit developments, following on from our work looking at preparedness in the previous Senedd.

If you or your Committee members would like to find out more about the work of Audit Wales, then please do not hesitate to get in touch. If Members have specific concerns about the use of public money, then we are always open to receiving correspondence. Members can either contact me directly or they can do so via our Audit Wales address [info@audit.wales](mailto:info@audit.wales). Further details about how we handle such correspondence are available on our website: [Raising a concern | Audit Wales](#).

I very much look forward to working with you over the next five years.

Best wishes,



**ADRIAN CROMPTON**

**Auditor General for Wales**

Paul Davies MS

Chair

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

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14 July 2021

Dear Chair

## Committee Timetable

I am writing to inform you of the Committee Timetable agreed by Business Committee at its meeting of 13 July.

The Business Committee has agreed a timetable that provides committees with fortnightly meetings, with the exception of the Legislation Justice and Constitution Committee which meets weekly due to the need to consider Statutory Instruments to strict deadlines.

A key message from the Chair's Forum of the Fifth Senedd was to ensure that there is flexibility within the arrangements for committees so that peaks in workload, or new tasks, can be managed. The Business Committee has sought to introduce this flexibility by varying the meeting time allocated to different committees. This reflects the type of work that different committees might need to undertake and reflects how working practices have evolved in recent years.

To this end, the timetable is fortnightly and has a number of additional meeting slots available within it, to accommodate peaks in the work of particular committees e.g. the Finance Committee when considering a draft budget, or a committee with Stage 1 legislative scrutiny responsibilities. By under-committing the timetabling capacity, there are greater opportunities for committees to work together as the possibility of membership clashes in each meeting slot is reduced.



In recognition of the known and expected legislative scrutiny responsibilities of some committees, the following committees are provided with a double meeting slot i.e. a morning and afternoon slot on a Thursday:

- Children, Young People, and Education;
- Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure;
- Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs; and
- Health and Social Care.

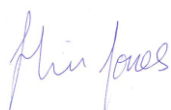
The remaining committees are provided with a single meeting slot i.e. one morning or afternoon meeting slot per fortnight. These committees are:

- Culture, Welsh Language, Communications, Sport, and International Relations;
- Equality and Social Justice;
- Finance;
- Local Government and Housing;
- Petitions;
- Public Accounts and Public Administration; and
- Standards of Conduct.

In order to provide some additional capacity for Bill scrutiny work, Fridays are also made available for committee Stage 2 scrutiny of Bills i.e. to provide an additional (and potentially longer) meeting for committees at this stage of the legislative process. The Business Committee will determine the allocation of any additional slots following a request from a committee.

The Business Committee has already indicated its intention to keep timetabling under review, so that it can respond to the needs of committees as the tasks they face change. Flexibility and responsiveness is at the heart of its decisions around timetabling for committees, and the Business Committee intends to review the committee structure and timetable around Easter 2022.

Yours sincerely





**Elin Jones MS**

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee



Senedd Cymru  
Welsh Parliament

# Agenda Item 2.3

Welsh Parliament  
**Finance Committee**

Chair, Children, Young People, and Education  
Committee  
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee  
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and  
Infrastructure Committee  
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee  
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,  
Sport, and International Relations Committee  
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

16 July 2021

Dear Committee Chairs

## Financial Scrutiny

At our meeting on 8 July 2021, the Finance Committee (the Committee) considered the programme of engagement for the forthcoming Welsh Government's Draft Budget and our approach to scrutiny. I am writing to all Chairs of subject committees to share our thinking.

## Timetable

In accordance with Standing Orders, the Trefnydd has written to the Business Committee setting out that the Draft Budget will be published on 20 December 2021 and the annual Budget motion considered in Plenary on 8 February 2022.

The Business Committee consulted with us on the proposed timetable. As noted in the Trefnydd's letter, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has indicated his intention to conduct a multi-year comprehensive spending review (CSR), which means the Welsh Government will not know its budget settlement until the CSR concludes in the autumn.



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I have written to the Business Committee to express our disappointment that the Draft Budget will be published in the Christmas recess. Whilst we appreciate the proposed timetable is due to the timing of the UK Government's CSR, this will be the third consecutive year that the proposed timetable has reduced the time available for scrutiny by the Senedd.

## Budget focus

The Committee has agreed to continue the approach followed in previous Senedds, whereby budget scrutiny is centred on the four principles of financial scrutiny: affordability, prioritisation, value for money and process. The principles are:

- **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, are public bodies spending their allocations well – economy, efficiency and effectiveness (i.e.) outcomes; and
- **Budget processes** - are they effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

The Committee would be grateful if your budget scrutiny follows these principles.

## Engagement Approach

The Committee will be considering its approach to engagement on the Draft Budget early in the autumn term. We would like this engagement to complement and inform the work of policy Committees. I would welcome discussing this individually with Chairs, or at the Chairs' Forum.

Following the practice in previous Senedds, the Committee is happy to undertake a consultation on behalf of all Committees. Given the proposed timetable, we consider it would be most suitable to issue our consultation at the start of the autumn term.

The Clerk to the Finance Committee will notify your Committee Clerks once the consultation has been issued and I would appreciate your assistance in promoting the consultation via your own communication tools to encourage and engage with a wider audience. The provisions in relation to the reporting by policy committees changed in 2017, and you are now able to report in your own right (if you so wish), and your reports can be used as a supporting document to the Draft Budget debate.



## Finance Committee-led priorities debate

The Finance Committee of the Fifth Senedd recommended that a future Finance Committee should hold an annual debate on the Welsh Government's spending priorities to allow Members the opportunity to debate and potentially influence spending priorities prior to the Draft Budget being published.

This year the Welsh Government scheduled its own debate on *Priorities for 2022-23 Budget Preparations*, which took place on Tuesday 13 July. The Committee wrote to the Minister for Finance and the Business Committee to seek agreement that in future years this will be a Finance Committee-led debate that takes place annually before summer recess, which the Minister and Business Committee have agreed to. In future years we would hope to undertake a public engagement exercise to inform this debate, and I would welcome your thoughts on how the Committees that scrutinise the Draft Budget can work together to gather the views of the public on what they feel should be the Welsh Government's spending priorities.

## Financial scrutiny of legislation

The Committee's core function is to undertake financial scrutiny of the Welsh Government and associated public bodies, however, financial scrutiny should be embedded into the scrutiny work undertaken by all Committees. The Committee now has limited time available and many statutory obligations to fulfil. Therefore, we have agreed to initially consider each Bill that is introduced into the Senedd to determine whether we will carry out scrutiny of the financial implications of a Bill depending on the levels of costs and transparency contained within the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). Should we decide not to undertake financial scrutiny of a particular Bill we will write to the relevant Stage one scrutiny committee to identify any points of interest that the Committee may wish to consider when reporting on the general principles of the Bill.

As this is the start of a new Senedd, I hope we can take the opportunity to explore ways of working collaboratively with other Committees to ensure the most effective financial scrutiny of the Welsh Government. I would like to suggest that we discuss this in further detail at a meeting of the Chairs' Forum.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the Draft Budget process, please feel free to contact me or the Clerk to the Finance Committee, Bethan Davies, 0300 200 6372, [seneddfinance@senedd.wales](mailto:seneddfinance@senedd.wales).

Yours sincerely





Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Chair of the Finance Committee

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





Comisiynydd y  
Gymraeg  
Welsh Language  
Commissioner

Paul Davies AS  
Chair  
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee  
[SeneddEconomi@senedd.cymru](mailto:SeneddEconomi@senedd.cymru)

19 July 2021

Dear Mr Davies

### Considering the Welsh language in the Committee's work

I am writing to you at the beginning of the sixth Senedd term to urge you to ensure that the Committee gives full consideration to the Welsh language in all aspects of its work.

In the Cymraeg 2050 Welsh Language Strategy the Welsh Government announced the vision of reaching a million Welsh speakers and increasing the percentage who speak Welsh daily to 20%. The strategy includes milestones to measure the success of its achievement, with the first milestone in 2021 and the next in 2026. During the sixth Senedd term it will be necessary to take a serious approach to holding the Government to account for the extent to which the Strategy is being achieved and the milestones reached. In that respect it is vital that the Welsh language is mainstreamed into wider legislation and policy and I am concerned that there is insufficient scrutiny of the impact of wider legislation and policy on the Welsh language in general. Indeed, Eluned Morgan, the previous Minister for Mental Health, Wellbeing and the Welsh Language, stated in a scrutiny session:

... I would suggest that actually, rather than just holding me to account when it comes to the budget, [...] that actually you ask the other Ministers, who've got huge amounts of money, what they're doing within their budgets in relation to the Welsh language." (Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee meeting, 25 February 2021)

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Correspondence welcomed in Welsh and English

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I emphasise that the Welsh language should not be seen as a cultural issue alone as it is a living language in all communities in Wales and a main language in many of them. Those communities face a number of social and economic challenges that in turn challenge the viability of the Welsh language in those communities.

The Commissioner published a manifesto document<sup>1</sup> for the 2021 election stating that a wide range of factors affecting the Welsh language need to be considered. In the context of the committee's remit that document underlines that it is vital that the Welsh language is seen as a factor that can assist business growth and economic development. We recommended that the government should:

- Include an expectation for businesses seeking financial support from the Government to identify the Welsh language skills of its workforce and commit to using and developing those skills.
- Link the objectives of economic development strategies to those of Cymraeg 2050 by creating opportunities to support new businesses to establish in areas with a high density of Welsh speakers.
- Create quality public sector jobs in areas with a high density of Welsh speakers by supporting flexible working conditions and / or locations for those areas

With regards to the Committee's rural affairs remit in March this year the Commissioner responded to the Government's Agriculture (Wales) white paper. Our comments included the need to consider:

- the impact of the proposals on the family farms that support Welsh-speaking rural communities, as a result of the emphasis on environmental benefits at the expense of socio-economic benefits;
- the lack of recognition of the value of the Welsh language in showing premium products, and the lack of opportunity to capitalize on this unique aim;
- the need to increase and develop the use of the Welsh language within the sector through advice services and skills development plans;
- the need to introduce a financial stream that rewards businesses for linguistic as well as environmental benefits;
- the need to collect data on the Welsh language within the sector in order to set an evidence base that would inform future policy developments;
- the need to develop a thorough impact assessment that addresses the challenges and opportunities for the Welsh language of each proposal, and to identify mitigation measures for any negative impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> [Manifesto \(positif.wales\)](https://positif.wales)



The challenge for the new Government will be to act radically to ensure that we are on the right track to meet the 2050 targets and I believe that the committee has a vital role to play in the effort to ensure that it does so.

I hope that you will bear these comments in mind as you consider the committee's future work. I wish you every success in that work and look forward to contributing to it.

Yours sincerely,

Gwenith Price  
**Deputy Welsh Language Commissioner**



Ein cyf/Our ref: LG/571/21

Llyr Gruffydd MS,  
Chair Climate Change,  
Environment and Infrastructure  
Committee

[SeneddClimate@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddClimate@senedd.wales)

19 July 2021

Dear Llyr,

Please find below answers to issues raised in a letter dated 23 March from Mike Hedges MS, then chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee during the last Senedd regarding the export of Live Bivalve Molluscs.

In the intervening period, two of the beds in the Menai Straits have now achieved seasonal 'class A' status. While this does not on its own solve the issue, it will allow a level of exporting to resume.

I will answer each of the questions raised in the letter in turn.

**Q1. What is your understanding of the effect the re-classification has had on the LBM sector in Wales?**

Non-depurated LBMs from class B waters cannot currently be exported to the EU. While Defra will continue to work to re-establish this trade, industry are advised to seek ways to adapt their businesses to these new trading conditions. This has resulted in two areas achieving seasonal class A status (Class A Season runs from 1 July to 30 April, reverting to class B at all other times).

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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.

**Q2. You told us that officials are “in on-going dialogue” with the FSA about the reclassification of Welsh waters. Can you outline the nature of discussions and clarify what outcome you are seeking to achieve?**

Officials discussed the issue of re-classification of Welsh waters with the FSA and were assured the FSA had put in place an enhanced sampling plan for the Menai straits. This sampling plan subsequently led to the re-classification of two areas in the straits as seasonal class A.

Further discussions have taken place between officials and FSA concerning possible improvements to the classification process within the existing regulatory framework, balancing the need to support shellfish production in Wales with the protection of public health.

My officials will continue to work closely with the FSA on this issue.

**3. What is your understanding of the status of the re-classification? Is this a provisional classification and what is the FSA’s intention regarding this status?**

The classifications of shellfish harvesting areas the Menai are full classifications based on 3–5-year datasets and are, therefore, not provisional.

In the early part of 2020, a combination of severe weather and closure of public health laboratories for non-Covid work resulted in a gap in the dataset. The FSA has worked with the relevant Local Authorities to deliver an enhanced sampling plan to mitigate against the shortfall in the required number of samples. This has now been achieved and the number of samples is back within the recommended parameters in the FSA classification protocol.

The FSA is looking at the classification system to determine what improvements can be made to current procedures within the current legal framework, whilst ensuring the current high level of public health protection is maintained. As set out in the May [Chief Executive’s Report to the FSA Board](#), the FSA will now consider seasonal classifications pro-actively whenever *E. coli* results indicate a potential downgrade is needed, rather than rely on Local Authorities and harvesters to request consideration as was the case previously. We have already considered this in relation to investigations into recent results in Menai Straits and will be updating classifications where relevant.

**4. What steps are you taking to improve the quality of Welsh waters to ensure that, in future, they will be classified as Class A?**

Improving our water quality needs a multi-year funding settlement and we rely on stakeholders and partners, in particular NRW and water companies. The pressures on the water environment include pollution from agricultural sources, industry, highway and urban run-off, waste water treatment works, private sewage treatment (e.g septic tanks), misconnections and CSOs.

Significant investment would be required to tackle all of the issues and would require co-operation from a number of stakeholders and partners.

There are currently 22 Shellfish Water Protected Areas (SWPAs) in Wales. When waters are designated as SWPAs, the aim is to protect and improve water quality to support the growth of healthy shellfish and contribute to good quality edible shellfish (where it is deemed cost proportionate).

NRW has monitoring programmes in place for each farmed SWPA to assess compliance against the microbial standard for shellfish flesh. NRW set the environmental programme for water companies to drive improvements. Investigations completed over the last 5-10 years, combined with a cost assessment to understand whether investment would be proportionate, identified improvements to be made to wastewater discharges in Menai Strait East.

Welsh Ministers are currently reviewing all Shellfish Water Protected Areas in Wales.

**5. Can you update the Committee on the outcome of your discussions with the UK Government on the continued trade with the EU of Live Bivalve Molluscs from Class B waters?**

The UK Government have retained competency on all matters pertaining to International Trade and exports. I continue to raise this issue with UK Government.

**7. You told us that, unless trade of Live Bivalve Molluscs can be resumed, aquaculture and shellfish producers would need “to look at their business models”. You also referred to the need for a “complete reconstruction of the sector”. What steps have you taken, or are you planning to take, to support the sector in this regard?**

On 11 March I announced £2.3 million investment in our coastal communities to support the seafood industry, harbour infrastructure and the marine environment. The £2.3m was divided between two main schemes, £1.3 million was allocated for the Seafood Sector Resilience Scheme, a targeted one off grant to eligible Welsh vessel owning fishing businesses, equivalent to 3 months fixed vessel costs capped at a maximum of £10,000.

The scheme also provided a grant to aquaculture businesses for the first three months of 2021 at 50% of average monthly gross revenue, (the highest grossing year 2017-2019) to a maximum cap of £40,500.

The remaining £1 million was allocated to the Small Scale Coastal Infrastructure Scheme which will be made available for all Port Authorities and Local Authorities around Wales to apply for grants of up to £100,000 for capital investment. This scheme will provide targeted environmental, operational, safety and security benefits for all users of Welsh ports and harbours by improving the overall performance, sustainability, safety and well-being of industries and the general public.

The longer term programme of support for the Marine and Fisheries sector will be developed and co-designed with stakeholders taking into account the response to Brexit and our Seas, the UK Fisheries Act, and the development of a Future Fisheries Policy.

Regards,



**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**

Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd  
Minister for Rural Affairs, North Wales and Trefnydd

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

**Senedd Cymru**

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To:

Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

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

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Equality and Social Justice Committee

Finance Committee

Health and Social Care Committee

Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Local Government and Housing Committee

Petitions Committee

Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee

20 July 2021

Dear Chairs,

## Children and young people's priorities for the Sixth Senedd

As the Senedd Committee responsible for scrutinising all matters relating to children and young people, it is our intention to ensure that the voices of children and young people are heard as a matter of course in our Committee's work. At our first meeting on 14 July, we agreed that this would be a key priority for us.

In order to inform our strategic planning and forward work programme, we intend to undertake a programme of tailored and meaningful engagement with children and young people. This work will begin in the autumn term. Our initial focus will be on asking children and young people what they think the priorities of the Sixth Senedd should be.

Given that the range of views held by children and young people will be of relevance to your respective committee remits, we will ensure that the results of this activity are shared with you, to ensure that your work can take account of their opinions. Our Committee team will ensure that your teams are kept up to date on the plans as they develop, and will confirm timescales in due course.

Kind regards,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

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



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Huw Irranca-Davies MS  
[Chair of Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee](#)

Paul Davies MS  
[Chair of Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee](#)

Welsh Parliament  
Cardiff Bay  
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26 July 2021

Dear Chairs,

I am writing to inform you that I attended the Ministerial Forum for Trade on the 14 July, with Greg Hands, Minister of State for Trade Policy and Ivan McKee, Minister for Business, Trade, Tourism and Enterprise. In this meeting, a general update was provided on on-going Free Trade Agreement (FTAs) negotiations, including the Comprehensive Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), EEA EFTA, Australia and New Zealand.

I raised concerns about the size of the Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQs) agreed in the Australia FTA and issues on animal welfare standards. I have asked for further information on the trade agreement to be shared when it is available and for these concerns to be taken into account as future deals are negotiated

Future trading arrangements with India, Canada and Mexico were also raised, and I have since provided a written response to Greg Hands outlining our initial views on each of these potential trade deals.

I will write to you again to inform you of the date of the next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

**Vaughan Gething AS/MS**  
Gweinidog yr Economi  
Minister for Economy

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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.

Paul Davies MS

Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

10 August 2021

Dear Paul,

### Joint working between committees in the Sixth Senedd

As the Senedd committee responsible for scrutinising all aspects of equality, social justice, and the Well-Being of Future Generations Act, our broad remit includes a number of important cross-cutting issues of mutual interest and potential joint working.

I would like to invite you to consider opportunities for joint working as part of any strategic planning discussions you may be having in your Committee in the autumn term.

### Early work on debt and women in the workplace

I want to make you aware that the Committee has agreed to conduct a short inquiry on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on levels of indebtedness in Wales. This work is currently at the scoping stage but is likely to look at how the pandemic has exacerbated existing trends in housing, consumer and personal debt, and the ability of public services to respond on behalf of those who may be struggling financially.

The Committee has also agreed to scope out work looking at the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on women in the workplace. The negative impacts of the pandemic have fallen disproportionately on women, particularly working women with caring responsibilities. This short inquiry is likely to look at the strategic importance of childcare on productivity levels, as well as how government and employers may respond to ensure equality and fairness as we recover from the pandemic.

We will be giving further consideration to these areas of work in the autumn and I would be happy to provide you with more information as these plans develop. If your Committee has any ideas for joint working you would like to discuss, please contact the clerking team.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light yellow background. The signature reads "Jenny Rathbone" in a cursive, flowing script.

Jenny Rathbone MS  
Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

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



# Agenda Item 3

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# Agenda Item 5

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# Agenda Item 6

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