

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Remote – Digital

Meeting date: 21 June 2022

Meeting time: 09.02 – 09.58

Private

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones MS, Llywydd (Chair) Lesley Griffiths MS Siân Gwenllian MS Darren Millar MS
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk)
Others in attendance	Jane Dodds MS David Rees MS, Deputy Presiding Officer Siwan Davies, Acting Clerk and Chief Executive Julian Luke, Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber and Committee Service Helen Carey, Welsh Government

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

The Llywydd welcomed Members to the meeting.



2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed for publication.

3 Organisation of Business

3.1 This week's business

- There will be no Voting Time separate to Stage 3 proceedings of the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Bill.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 9.30pm.

Wednesday

- Voting Time will take place before the Short Debate.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 6.40pm.

3.2 Three week timetable of Government Business

The Trefnydd drew Business Managers' attention to the following changes:

Tuesday 28 June –

- Statement by the Minister for Social Justice: Basic Income for Care Leavers Pilot (30 mins) – re-ordered
- Statement by the Minister for Climate Change: Building Safety (30 mins)
- Statement by the Minister for Economy: Border Controls (30 mins)

Tuesday 5 July –

- Statement by the First Minister: The Legislative Programme (60 mins)
- Statement by the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution: The Historic Environment (Wales) Bill (45 mins)

3.3 Three week timetable of Senedd Business

Business Committee agreed to schedule the following items of business:

Wednesday 6 July 2022 –

- Motion to Annul The Non-Domestic Rating (Amendment of Definition of Domestic Property) (Wales) Order 2022 (30 mins)

Wednesday 13 July 2022 –

- Member Debate under Standing Order 11.21(iv): Jane Dodds – Basic Income and the transition to a zero carbon economy (60 mins)
- Finance Committee debate on the Welsh Government’s spending priorities for 2023–24 (60 mins)
- Debate on the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee Report: Refreshing Wales’ Bovine TB Eradication Programme (30 mins)
- Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins)

4 Review of Standing Order 34 and remote participation

4.1 Standing Order 34 provisions

Business Committee agreed to propose that Standing Orders SO34.2–4 (Designated Temporary Presiding Officer) are allowed to lapse on 1 August 2022 and Standing Orders SO34.5–8 (Acting Chair of Plenary Meetings) are incorporated into Standing Order 6.

4.2 Remote participation and voting in Plenary and committees

As part of its review of Standing Order 34 (emergency procedures), Business Committee considered whether remote participation and voting in Plenary and committee meetings should continue beyond the Covid–19 pandemic. In doing so, the Committee considered responses received from individual Members, party groups, the Chairs’ Forum and the Women’s Equality Network (WEN) Wales. Business Committee agreed that:

- remote participation in Plenary meetings should be maintained with further guidance to be issued encompassing a range of matters relating to attendance and conduct, including emphasising that it is the responsibility of Members participating remotely to secure a reliable connection to proceedings;

- committees should continue to be able to choose the format in which they meet on a meeting-by-meeting basis and that chairs of committees should make those decisions, including in relation to witnesses, having consulted with their committees;
- Standing Orders 34.14A–D permitting remote electronic voting in Plenary should be incorporated into Standing Order 12, to include that it is solely the responsibility of Members to ensure that they are able to access the voting system ahead of any votes. Business Committee agreed that further guidance should be issued in relation to the conduct of voting;
- Standing Orders 34.14E–F permitting remote electronic voting in committee meetings should be allowed to lapse and to propose that Standing Order 17 be amended to enable voting by roll-call in committee proceedings;
- Standing Orders 34.15–17 (Accessibility of Plenary Meetings) and 34.19–21 (Accessibility of Committee meetings) should be allowed to lapse;
- Standing Orders 12.1 and 17.40 be revised to clarify that virtual and hybrid meetings qualify as public meetings where a live broadcast is available.

Business Committee also asked for further consideration to be given to the continued necessity of technical breaks prior to voting time and the use of a PIN for voting, as well as whether party groups might be provided with increased information around which Members are present for voting.