

Concise Minutes – Local Government and Housing Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 5

Meeting date: Thursday, 29 September 2022

Meeting time: 09.02 – 14.42

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/12970>

Hybrid

Attendance

Category	Names
Members of the Senedd:	John Griffiths MS (Chair) Mabon ap Gwynfor MS Jayne Bryant MS Joel James MS Sam Rowlands MS Carolyn Thomas MS
Witnesses:	Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change Emma Williams, Welsh Government Amelia John, Welsh Government Jo Larnier, Welsh Government Simon White, Welsh Government Tanya Wigfall, Welsh Government Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government



	<p>Reg Kilpatrick, Welsh Government</p> <p>Claire Germain, Welsh Government</p> <p>Emma Smith, Head of Planning and Performance, Welsh Government</p>
Committee Staff:	<p>Manon George (Clerk)</p> <p>Catherine Hunt (Second Clerk)</p> <p>Chloe Davies (Deputy Clerk)</p> <p>Jonathan Baxter (Researcher)</p> <p>Osian Bowyer (Researcher)</p>

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting of the Local Government and Housing Committee.
- 1.2. Joel James MS declared a relevant interest.

2 Ministerial scrutiny session – Minister for Climate Change

2.1. The Committee took evidence from:

Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

Emma Williams, Director of Housing and Regeneration, Welsh Government

Amelia John, Deputy Director Housing Policy, Welsh Government

Jo Larner, Head of Building Safety Programme, Welsh Government

Tanya Wigfall, Head of Residential Decarbonisation Programme, Welsh Government

Simon White, Head of Housing Legislation, Welsh Government

2.2. The Minister for Climate Change agreed to provide a paper outlining the formula for how social rent is set in Wales.

3 Ministerial scrutiny session – Minister for Finance and Local Government

3.1. The Committee took evidence from:

Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Local Government

Reg Kilpatrick, Director General, Covid Recovery & Local Government Group, Welsh Government

Claire Germain, Deputy Director, Local Gov Performance & Partnerships, Welsh Government

Emma Smith, Head of Local Government Finance Policy, Welsh Government

3.2. The Minister for Finance and Local Government agreed to provide:

- A note on the levels of reserves retained to deal with the cost-of-living crisis, following publication of the supplementary budget.
- A note on the ways in which local authority pension funds could be used to best effect Wales.
- Details of town and community council clerks that are politically active within councils.
- Further information on the impact of the removal of the digital democracy fund on local government's digital needs.

4 Papers to note

4.1 Response from the Welsh Government to the report on the inquiry into second homes

4.1.a The Committee noted the response from the Welsh Government to the report on the inquiry into second homes.

4.2 Letter from the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution in relation to local government electoral pilots

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4.3 Joint letter from Community Housing Cymru, the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru and Housing Leadership Cymru in relation to the Welsh Quality Housing Standard

4.3.a The Committee noted the joint letter from Community Housing Cymru, the Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru and Housing Leadership Cymru in relation to the Welsh Quality Housing Standard.

4.4 Letter from the Minister for Social Justice in relation to housing Ukrainian refugees

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4.5 Letter from the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in relation to complaint handling practices of local authorities in Wales

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4.6 Further information from the Minister for Climate Change in relation to community assets

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4.7 Paper from Dr Sarah Nason, Bangor University: Legislating to Empower Communities: Comparing Community Asset Acquisition Law in the UK

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

5.1. The Committee agreed the motion.

6 Ministerial scrutiny sessions – consideration of the evidence received under items 2 and 3

6.1. The Committee discussed the evidence received under items 2 and 3 and agreed to write to the Minister for Climate Change and the Minister for Finance and Local Government on a number of matters raised.

7 Consideration of the draft report on the inquiry into community assets

7.1. The Committee considered the draft report and agreed a number of changes.

8 Consideration of the approach to homelessness work

8.1. The Committee considered its approach to homelessness work.

9 Consideration of the approach to council tax reform work

9.1. The Committee considered the approach to council tax reform work.