

Agenda – Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Hybrid – Committee room 1&2 Senedd and video Conference via Zoom	Robert Donovan Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 8 March 2023	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.30	SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

Private pre-meeting (09.15–09.30)

Public meeting (09.30–11.05)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

(09.30)

2 Papers to note

(09.30)

2.1 Letter from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

(Pages 1 – 9)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government's response to the letter from the Chair – Food (Wales) Bill
secondary food goals

Letter from the Chair to the Minister – 8 February 2023



3 Food (Wales) Bill – Evidence session 8

(09.30–11.00)

(Pages 10 – 29)

Peter Fox MS, Member in charge

Gareth Rogers, Bill Manager

Aled Evans, Legal Services

Samiwel Davies, Legal Services

Elfyn Henderson, Senedd Research

Attached Documents:

Research brief

4 Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill LCM

(11.00–11.05)

(Pages 30 – 42)

Attached Documents:

Legal Advice Note

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

(11.05)

Private (11.05–11.35)

6 Consideration of evidence following the meeting

(11.05–11.20)

7 Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill LCM

(11.20–11.30)

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Darren Millar MS
Acting Chair
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

28 February 2023

Dear Darren

Thank you for your letter of 8th February requesting an account of how current cross-departmental Welsh Government policy is already achieving the Food (Wales) Bill's secondary goals. Annex A contains a table which compares the Bill's secondary goals (as described in section 3(1) (left hand column)) alongside relevant existing or planned Welsh Government policies (right hand column). In some cases a policy is relevant to more than one goal so there is repeat reference. At the start of some goals there is a short explanation of any principal policy before the detailed description of the goal is considered.

I trust this is helpful for your committee and look forward to discussing the Bill when I attend on 1 March.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lesley Griffiths'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales

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.

Annex A

Economic Wellbeing	Welsh Government policy
	<p>The principal policy is the Strategic Vision for the food and drink manufacturing and processing industry. This sets a vision and mission focussed on business growth which simultaneously benefits people and society, promoting Wales and celebrating the industry’s success. The Strategic Vision itself is a food industry focussed strategy and connected to the wider Welsh Government economic development strategy Prosperity for All - The National Strategy and the post-pandemic economic reconstruction focus of the Economic Resilience and Reconstruction Mission.</p>
<p><i>creating new economic opportunities through promotion of locally produced food</i></p>	<p>The Strategic Vision outlines 10 action areas which include building business and supply chain networks, and the development of UK market opportunities through the promotion of selected food markets and festivals in conjunction with tourism development, and building a ‘food and drink Wales’ brand domestically and in export markets. A key commitment is to support applications to the UK Geographic Indicator product schemes, raising the Welsh GI product family from 16 to 22 products by 2025. GI products project provenance and heritage and can create promotional opportunities</p> <p>The Trade Development Programme undertaken as part of the Strategic Vision includes comprehensive business development support. Aspects of this are being developed in pursuit of increasing the opportunities to supply Welsh food and drink to meet the needs of the Universal Free Primary School Meals policy. Food is also within the scope of the socially responsible procurement duty under the Social Partnership and Procurement (Wales) Bill and the Wales Procurement Policy Statement Principles.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is developing a Community Food Strategy which will seek to support community scale ventures which develop opportunities for locally produced food.</p>
<p><i>promoting sustainable economic, social and community development</i></p>	<p>The policies mentioned above also apply.</p> <p>The Strategic Vision emphasises the approach to the food and drink industry is to create a prosperous and resilient Wales and a society that is healthier, happier and fairer with a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. The operational policy is support for businesses and others will be increasingly contingent on signing up to an Economic Contract and our partners demonstrating they are putting fair work, low carbon, sustainable use of natural resources, and the promotion of well-being into practice. How this is achieved is context specific and will include appropriate Terms and Conditions for Welsh Government support.</p>

	<p>A range of business support programmes are in operation which include capital grants (eg Food Business Accelerator Scheme), technical advice and commercial support (Food Innovation Wales / Project Helix), Cywain, Export Support programmes, market insight and meet the buyer support eg Trade Development Programme, Market Insight conference), business networking and clustering to develop supply chains and spread knowledge, promotional trade events (eg BlasCymru) and skills support through Food Skills Cymru.</p> <p>Welsh Government also has a range of complementary support programmes for the agriculture industry with Farming Connect providing knowledge, advice and subsidised support and the Farm Liaison Service providing advice about a range of grants and administrative matters.</p>
<p><i>encouraging better links between food producers, processors and consumers</i></p>	<p>The policies and programmes mentioned above apply. Business networking and clustering, and promotional trade events like BlasCymru are particularly relevant.</p>
<p>Health and Social</p>	
<p><i>Reducing malnutrition, food poverty and food insecurity</i></p>	<p>Welsh Government supports a number of policies, with Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales setting a comprehensive public health agenda for diet related health matters.</p>
	<p>Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales (HWHW) is a long-term policy taking a comprehensive approach to promoting healthier diets and addressing diet related chronic illnesses. Commencing in 2019 it focuses on creating healthy food environment, healthy people, healthy food settings, leadership and enabling change for all age groups and closing the health inequality gap with the most disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>In connection with HWHW and the Strategic Vision, Welsh Government is supporting food and drink industry reformulation of 25 products a year to make them healthier (under Food Innovation Wales and Project Helix).</p> <p>In school settings we are focussed on improved learning through the Curriculum for Wales and improved meals through commitment to revise regulations and introduction of the Universal Free Primary School Meals policy to provide all primary school children with free school meals by 2024. These policies are coherent with policy to tackle child poverty through the Child Poverty Strategy and the NHS Healthy Start programme to improve access to healthy food for all eligible pregnant women and parents of children under the age of 4 and the growing roll out of Big Bocs Bwyd which aims to ensure no child is hungry and every child learns about good food choices.</p>

	In broader, community focussed action addressing food poverty and insecurity (and reducing food waste), the Welsh Government supports the growth of FareShare Cymru which supports the redistribution of surplus edible food across Wales and also achieves significant reductions in potential food waste (see below).
<i>reducing obesity</i>	The above policies are relevant, especially Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales .
<i>encouraging equitable distribution of healthy and sustainable food within communities</i>	Support for Big Bocs Bwyd and FareShare Cymru is improving the distribution of food within communities. We are also improving the means to co-ordinate local action through increasing funding to local authorities to appoint local food co-ordinators who can spread the Food Sense Wales model. The commitment to develop a Community Food Strategy to encourage the production and supply of locally sourced food will aim to bring coherence, capacity and empowerment to community level food initiatives.
<i>promoting the social well-being benefits of food through community growing and allotments</i>	We support community growing and allotments through the Allotment Support Grant and comprehensive guidance as well as funding the Community Land Advisory Service .
<i>promoting the importance of consuming healthy food for improving physical and mental health and well-being</i>	Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales is the principal policy, with specific focus on making healthier food choices easier through addressing the ‘food environment’, improving people’s motivation and ability to make those choices, and encouraging active lifestyles.
Education	
<i>increasing the quality and accessibility of educational provision on food-related issues</i>	<p>The Curriculum for Wales is transforming education enabling learners to develop including gaining and applying knowledge about diet and physical and mental health. This is coherent with Healthy Weight Healthy Wales. The Eco Schools Wales programme inspires and empowers young people to drive positive environmental change and school based initiatives often include food growing projects. Outside the classroom, pupils will be experiencing better food and diet through roll-out of the Universal Free Primary School Meals policy.</p> <p>Comprehensive employee training is available to the food and drink industry through Food Skills Cymru. Food Innovation Wales through Project Helix provides knowledge transfers and training with funding support for a range of technical courses and educational qualifications, with over a thousand workers benefitting in the last year.</p> <p>Farming Connect provides knowledge transfer and upskilling support for agriculture businesses.</p>

<i>developing food skills to ensure better, healthier diets and well-being</i>	The above policies are relevant to this goal.
Environment	
	The Welsh Government's policies are guided by the Environment (Wales) Act , which recognises our nature, land, water and air as our ultimate resources and charts an integrated approach to managing our natural resources for long-term sustainability, and Prosperity for All: A Low Carbon Wales , which drives sector emission pathway planning to reduce the carbon footprint of manufacturing industry, land use and agriculture, and waste.
<i>lessening environmental impacts of food production, processing and consumption</i>	<p>The Agriculture Bill will create sustainable land management objectives including the production of food in a sustainable manner. The proposed Sustainable Farming Scheme will become the main support for agriculture to achieve the sustainable land management objectives, achieving food production and also lowering carbon footprints and delivering for nature. In the short term a Small Grants Efficiency Scheme provides capital support and Farming Connect provides support to build knowledge, skills and best practice.</p> <p>Support for the food and drink manufacturing and processing industry is organised under the Strategic Vision (see above). Comprehensive technical support and best practice guidance is provided through Food Innovation Wales / Project Helix and also through the networking of businesses through the Food and Drink Cluster Programme which itself includes a bespoke Sustainability Cluster. The Strategic Vision declares that Welsh Government support will be increasingly contingent on businesses committing to the industry vision which is one of 'rounded success' where improved sustainability and better carbon footprints are important elements. This policy is being pursued through applying the Economic Contract model and a policy to revise terms and conditions of business support.</p> <p>With regards to consumption the primary policy tool is Beyond Recycling which commits to reduce unnecessary waste including by consumer (see 'food waste goal'). We fund the Love Food Hate Waste campaign which provides public advice to save food from waste. Our Be Mighty – food recycling campaign aims to educate people to use the universal food waste collection and we support the UK wide Food Waste Action Week.</p>
<i>enhancing and regenerating the natural environment through food production</i>	The primary policy will be sustainable land management achieved by the specific objective for that in the Agriculture Bill and supported by the developing Sustainable Farming Scheme.

<p><i>restoring and maintaining biodiversity and habitats through food production,</i></p>	<p>The above points about the Agriculture Bill and Sustainable Farming Scheme apply.</p>
<p><i>promoting a food system that mitigates and adapts to climate change and minimises Wales' global environmental footprint</i></p>	<p>While recognising that Wales's food system is deeply integrated within the UK wide food system, which includes significant import / export elements and is ultimately shaped by non-devolved policy for trade and borders, all Welsh Government policies outlined already are guided by the Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 goals one of which is A Globally responsible Wales. This is primarily being put into practice through the policies pursued for the food and drink manufacturing and processing industry (the Strategic Vision), and for agriculture through the Agriculture Bill and Sustainable Farming Scheme.</p> <p>At a community level the proposed Community Food Strategy will seek to support development of local, small scale approaches to food.</p>
<p>Food Waste</p>	
<p><i>Reducing food waste across the food system, including by food producers, processors</i></p>	<p>Beyond Recycling Strategy (BRS) is working to make the circular economy in Wales a reality and commits to eradicate all avoidable food waste by working with food producers and processors across the whole supply chain, to limit food waste in all settings. BRS sets a target to halve avoidable food waste by 2025, and by 60% by 2030.</p> <p>Within the food and drink industry practical support to achieve this change is provided through technical support offered by Food Innovation Wales / Project Helix, with financial support through other grant sources (see economic goal). In agriculture, Farming Connect provides support to improve business practice. Support from Business Wales and WRAP Cymru is also available.</p> <p>BRS is also focussed on reducing packaging waste and commits to consulting on a requirement for businesses to report food waste quantities and for major retailers to redistribute surplus edible food. Regarding that latter point, Welsh Government support for FareShare Cymru contributes to both fighting food poverty and reducing food waste, by supporting the redistribution of surplus edible food. Since 2015 FareShare Cymru has reduced food waste by approximately 16 million meals.</p> <p>Recognizing our place within the UK wide food system we are an active partner of The Courtauld Commitment 2030 agreement that enables collaborative action across the entire UK food chain to deliver farm-to-fork reductions in food waste, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water stress.</p>

Lesley Griffiths

Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

8 February 2023

Dear Lesley,

Food (Wales) Bill

On 25 January the Committee **took evidence** from representatives of food and drink producers and processors on the **Food (Wales) Bill** (the Bill). In a response to a question around your comments that the Bill could be resource consuming and bureaucratic Andy Richardson from the Food and Drink Wales Industry Board **suggested** before legislation is introduced, Welsh Government Departments should be challenged to show how they are delivering against the legislation's objectives.

Members thought this suggestion was interesting and would like to incorporate the approach into our scrutiny of the Bill. As such, Members would like to undertake an exercise using the food goals in the Bill to understand how current cross-departmental Welsh Government policy is already achieving the Bill's aims.

As you will be aware the Bill sets out two different types of food goals. The Bill's **Explanatory Memorandum** (EM) sets out that the primary food goal is the overarching goal of providing affordable, healthy, and economically, environmentally and socially sustainable food for the people of Wales. The EM sets out that the secondary food goals "underpin the primary food goal and cover specific areas including: Economic well-being, Health and social, Education, Environment and Food waste."

The Bill includes a table with a list of the secondary food goals and a description for each:

Goal	Description
Economic well-being	<p>Creating new economic opportunities through promotion of locally produced food.</p> <p>Promoting sustainable economic, social and community development.</p> <p>Encouraging better links between food producers, processors and consumers.</p>
Health and social	<p>Reducing malnutrition, food poverty and food insecurity.</p> <p>Reducing obesity.</p> <p>Encouraging equitable distribution of healthy and sustainable food within communities.</p> <p>Promoting the social well-being benefits of food, for example through community growing and allotments.</p> <p>Promoting the importance of consuming healthy food for improving physical and mental health and well-being.</p>
Education	<p>Increasing the quality and accessibility of educational provision on food-related issues.</p> <p>Developing food skills to ensure better, healthier diets and well-being.</p>
Environment	<p>Lessening environmental impacts of food production, processing and consumption.</p> <p>Enhancing and regenerating the natural environment through food production.</p> <p>Restoring and maintaining biodiversity and habitats through food production.</p> <p>Promoting a food system that mitigates and adapts to climate change, and minimises Wales' global environmental footprint.</p>
Food waste	<p>Reducing food waste across the food system, including by food producers, processors and consumers.</p>

Please can you set out how each Welsh Government department is delivering against the Bill's secondary food goals. Whilst I understand we are asking the Government to undertake a wide ranging piece of cross departmental work you will also be aware we are given very limited time to carry out legislative scrutiny. As such we would very much welcome a response ahead of our session with the Minister on 16 February and accept this means the response may be very high level. If that is not feasible I would be grateful if you could respond by 3 March as this would give us time to consider your response and incorporate it into stage one report of the Bill.

Yours sincerely



Paul Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

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

Agenda Item 3

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 4

Document is Restricted