

## Agenda – Plenary

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Meeting Venue:

Y Siambr – Y Senedd

Meeting date:

Wednesday, 7 February 2024

Meeting time: 13.30

### 189(v3)

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This meeting will be held in a hybrid format, with some Members in the Senedd Chamber and others joining by video-conference.

#### 1 Questions to the Minister for Economy

(45 mins)

The Presiding Officer will call party spokespeople to ask questions without notice to the Minister after Question 2.

[View Questions](#)

#### 2 Questions to the Minister for Health and Social Services

(45 mins)

The Presiding Officer will call party spokespeople to ask questions without notice to the Minister after Question 2.

[View Questions](#)

#### 3 Topical Questions

(20 mins)

##### To ask the Minister for Education and Welsh Language

[Heledd Fychan \(South Wales Central\)](#): What assessment has the Welsh Government made of the effect of increasing tuition fee caps and cutting postgraduate support grants on the probable number of students applying to study in Welsh Universities?

##### To ask the Minister for Finance and Local Government



[Peredur Owen Griffiths \(South Wales East\)](#): What consultation has the Minister held with local authorities across Wales before the Welsh Government allocates consequential funding to local authorities in Wales following the UK Government's announcement in January 2024?

#### **4 90 Second Statements**

(5 mins)

#### **5 Debate on the Local Government and Housing Committee report – Diversity in Local Government**

(60 mins)

**NDM8477** [John Griffiths \(Newport East\)](#)

To propose that the Senedd:

Notes the report of the Local Government and Housing Committee, 'Diversity in Local Government', which was [laid](#) in the Table Office on 17 October 2023.

Note: The response of the Welsh Government to the report was [laid](#) in the Table Office on 31 January 2024.

#### **6 Welsh Conservatives Debate – Housing supply**

(60 mins)

**NDM8479** [Darren Millar \(Clwyd West\)](#)

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Regrets that despite Wales needing at least 12,000 new homes every year, over the last decade the Welsh Government has barely built half that number.

2. Recognises figures released from the Office for National Statistics in 2023 that there are 103,000 truly vacant unoccupied dwellings in Wales.

3. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

a) establish a dedicated taskforce of planners to tackle the backlog in the slowest performing councils, and create a planning apprentice for every council;

b) support small developers in Wales to build homes on land owned by the Welsh Government and local councils, with a focus on meeting local housing needs; and

c) turn Wales's empty properties back into homes.

**The following amendments were tabled:**

**Amendment 1 [Heledd Fychan \(South Wales Central\)](#)**

Delete all and replace with:

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Notes:

a) that almost 90,000 households are on social housing waiting lists at present; and

b) that 11,273 individuals were in temporary accommodation, of which 3,403 were dependent children aged under 16 in October 2023.

2. Regrets:

a) that the Welsh Government has only delivered 5,775 units since 2021, despite the target to deliver 20,000 new low carbon homes for rent within the social sector during this government term; and

b) that over 139,000 social homes on rent had been lost to the open market, by the time the Right to Buy was abolished in Wales in 2019, contributing greatly to the current housing crisis.

3. Believes:

a) the solution to Wales's housing crisis lies in increasing the supply of affordable homes for medium- and low-income households, for rent and for purchase; and

b) that securing a much higher rate of homes in public and community ownership will also positively influence affordability in the wider housing market.

4. Welcomes:

a) the Co-operation Agreement commitment to publish a White Paper setting out proposals to establish a system of fair rents and new approaches to make homes more affordable; and

b) radical reform for the future set out in the White Paper on Ending Homelessness developed as part of the Co-operation Agreement.

5. Calls on the Welsh Government to rapidly accelerate the construction of social housing in order to meet or exceed the target to deliver 20,000 new low carbon homes for rent within the social sector.

**If amendment 1 is agreed, amendment 2 will be de-selected.**

**Amendment 2 [Lesley Griffiths \(Wrexham\)](#)**

Delete all and replace with:

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Acknowledges the challenges being faced by the housing sector, which are impacting housing supply across the United Kingdom.
2. Welcomes the action and investment being made in housing by the Welsh Government.
3. Notes the Welsh Government's ambitious commitment to deliver 20,000 low carbon, social homes during this term of Government.
4. Notes the Welsh Government's commitment to Unnos, together with Plaid Cymru, to support our councils and social landlords to improve the supply of social and affordable housing, including bringing more empty homes back into use.

## **7 Plaid Cymru Debate – The health service**

(60 mins)

**NDM8478 [Heledd Fychan \(South Wales Central\)](#)**

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Supports the heroic efforts of NHS staff in Wales as they provide care in challenging circumstances.
2. Notes the first anniversary of the Minister for Health and Social Services setting out the Welsh Government's priorities for the NHS in Wales.
3. Believes that:
  - a) health outcomes have worsened in the past year; and
  - b) a failure to act on the priorities has contributed to all health boards being in some form of escalation status.

#### 4. Regrets that:

- a) the number of patient pathways waiting for treatment was 758,815 in November 2023, compared to 731,102 in February 2023;
- b) 53.5 per cent of patients started their first definitive treatment within the target of 62 days of first being suspected of cancer in November 2023 , compared to 54.3 per cent in February 2023;
- c) the full time equivalent number of GPs in Wales was 1901 in 2013 and 1429.6 in 2023; and
- d) 66.7 per cent of patients spent less than 4 hours in A&E in December 2023, compared to 71.5 per cent in February 2023.

#### 5. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) set out a clear timescale to de-escalate intervention arrangements in every health board; and
- b) declare a health emergency.

#### **The following amendments were tabled:**

##### **Amendment 1 [Lesley Griffiths \(Wrexham\)](#)**

Delete all after point 2 and replace with:

#### Notes that:

- a) at the end of November 2023, the percentage of open pathways waiting less than 104 weeks was 96.7%, which is 20th successive improvement and the highest it has been since August 2021;
- b) in 2023, the average number of people referred onto the suspected cancer pathway per month has increased by 53% since 2020;
- c) in November 2023, nearly 14,800 people who were referred for suspected cancer were informed they did not have cancer, the second highest on record;
- d) there were more fully-qualified GPs working in Wales in June 2023 compared with the year before – an increase of 0.9%; and
- e) latest available data for December 2023 show a 51% reduction in average ambulance response time performance for amber calls, 29% improvement in

ambulance patient handover performance and a 20% reduction in patients spending over 12 hours in emergency departments before admission or discharge; when compared with the same month in 2022.

**If amendment 1 is agreed, amendments 2 and 3 will be de-selected.**

**Amendment 2** [Darren Millar \(Clwyd West\)](#)

Add as new sub-point at end of point 5:

develop and deliver a workforce plan for the Welsh NHS;

**Amendment 3** [Darren Millar \(Clwyd West\)](#)

Add as new sub-point at end of point 5:

set a target to eliminate two-year waits by September 2024 and create a taskforce to deliver it;

## **8 Voting Time**

## **9 Short Debate**

(30 mins)

**NDM8476** [Janet Finch-Saunders \(Aberconwy\)](#)

Faster access to hearing services in Wales

The Senedd will sit again in Plenary at 13.30, Tuesday, 20 February 2024

# Agenda Item 1

## Oral Questions tabled on 31/01/2024 for answer on 07/02/2024

The Presiding Officer will call party spokespeople to ask questions without notice after Question 2.

### MINISTER FOR ECONOMY

**Sarah Murphy** *Bridgend*

**1** OQ60656 (e)

What is the Welsh Government doing to support unemployed people to start their own business?

**Rhys ab Owen** *South Wales Central*

**2** OQ60653 (e)

What is the Welsh Government doing to support restaurants in Wales following several closures since the start of the year?

**Huw Irranca-Davies** *Ogmore*

**3** OQ60643 (e)

What engagement has the Minister had with Bridgend County Borough Council on the regeneration of cultural venues?

**Jayne Bryant** *Newport West*

**4** OQ60665 (e)

What action is the Welsh Government taking to support the economy in south-east Wales?

**Russell George** *Montgomeryshire*

**5** OQ60659 (e)

What is the Welsh Government doing to create more higher-paid jobs in mid Wales?

**Ken Skates** *Clwyd South*

**6** OQ60645 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on the economic value of the wood panel industry to Wales?

**Altaf Hussain** *South Wales West*

**7** OQ60646 (e)

What action is the Welsh Government taking to ensure the Welsh workforce has the necessary skills for the future jobs market?

**Jane Dodds** *Mid and West Wales*

**8** OQ60647 (e)

What assessment has the Minister made of economic opportunities for young people in Mid and West Wales?

**Sioned Williams** *South Wales West*

**9** OQ60644 (d)

What assessment has the Minister made of the economic and social impact of potential job losses at Tata Steel in Port Talbot?

**Darren Millar** *Clwyd West*

**10** OQ60650 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Government action to support businesses in town centres?

**Llyr Gruffydd** *North Wales*

**11** OQ60660 (w)

What assessment has the Minister made of the number of businesses that are likely to fail as a result of the Government reducing the level of business rate relief from 75 per cent to 40 per cent?

**Cefin Campbell** *Mid and West Wales*

**12** OQ60652 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Government efforts to improve broadband connectivity in Mid and West Wales?

## MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

**Sam Rowlands** *North Wales*

**1** OQ60638 (e)

What is the Minister doing to ensure value for money when procuring products for use in the NHS?

**Darren Millar** *Clwyd West*

**2** OQ60651 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on access to community mental health services in North Wales?



**Delyth Jewell** *South Wales East*

**3** OQ60663 (w)

What measures is the Welsh Government taking to retain doctors in the National Health Service in Wales?

**Sioned Williams** *South Wales West*

**4** OQ60637 (d)

How does the Government ensure that effective health treatment is available to people who misuse drugs?

**Vikki Howells** *Cynon Valley*

**5** OQ60641 (e)

Will the Minister provide an update on Welsh Government action to create a smoke-free generation?

**Cefin Campbell** *Mid and West Wales*

**6** OQ60661 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on GP contracts in Mid and West Wales?

**Mike Hedges** *Swansea East*

**7** OQ60636 (e)

Will the Minister make a statement on Welsh Government support for primary care?

**Rhys ab Owen** *South Wales Central*

**8** OQ60654 (e)

What consideration has the Minister given to introducing free NHS IVF services across Wales?

**Joel James** *South Wales Central*

**9** OQ60639 (e)

What assessment has the Welsh Government made of the impact on Welsh dentistry of EU legislation banning dental amalgam from 1 January 2025?

**Russell George** *Montgomeryshire*

**10** OQ60666 (e)

How is the Welsh Government supporting the provision of emergency services in mid Wales?

**John Griffiths** *Newport East*

11

**OQ60668 (e)**

What further steps will the Welsh Government take to support people with unmet health needs?

**Heledd Fychan** *South Wales Central*

12

**OQ60662 (w)**

What support will the Welsh Government be giving to the childcare sector to ensure they can raise staff wages in line with the new minimum wage from April onwards?