

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 1 October 2024

Meeting time: 09.00 – 09.45

Remote/ Private

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones MS, Llywydd (Chair) Heledd Fychan MS Jane Hutt MS Darren Millar MS
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk)
Others in attendance	David Rees MS, Deputy Presiding Officer Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk Siân Wilkins, Head of Procedures and Parliamentary Skills Bethan Davies, Head of Chamber and Committee Service Julian Luke, Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Service Helen Carey, Welsh Government

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

The Llywydd welcomed Members to the meeting. Apologies were received from Jane Dodds.

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

The Trefnydd informed Business Managers of the following changes to Tuesday's agenda:

- ~~Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Education: Welsh-medium education through late immersion (45 mins) *Postponed until 8 October*~~
- Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning: Tata Steel (45 mins)
- There will be no Voting Time.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 6.30pm

Wednesday

- Voting Time will take place after the short debate.

Plenary is unlikely to run past 7.10pm

3.2 Three week timetable of Government Business

The Trefnydd informed Business Managers of the following changes to the Three Week Timetable of Government Business:

Tuesday 8 October 2024

- Statement by the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Social partnership (45 mins)
- Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Education: Welsh-medium education through late immersion (45 mins) *postponed from 1 October*

Tuesday 15 October 2024

- Statement by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: Circular economy opportunities and outcomes of Circular Economy Hotspot Cymru 2024 (45 mins)
- Statement by the Minister for Further and Higher Education: Tertiary education (45 mins)

Darren Millar requested an oral statement on service changes within the Hywel Dda University Health Board. Heledd Fychan also requested oral statements on the findings of the Commission for Welsh-speaking Communities, and on cross border co-operation in the NHS. The Trefnydd indicated that she would give consideration to the matters raised.

3.3 Three week timetable of Senedd Business

The following changes were agreed to the Three Week Timetable of Senedd Business:

Wednesday 9 October 2024 –

- Debate on petition P-06-1474: Stop Natural Resources Wales closing Bwlch Nant yr Arian, Coed y Brenin & Ynyslas visitor centres (30 mins)

Wednesday 23 October 2024 –

- Member Debate under Standing Order 11.21(iv): Julie Morgan MS (Cardiff North) (60 mins)
- Joint debate on Committee reports regarding the Sustainable Farming Scheme and Farming Connect (90 mins)

- Debate on the Petitions Committee report: A cashless society? P-6-1335: Welsh Government should take steps to ensure vulnerable adults without bank cards can pay with cash (30 mins)
- Time allocated to Plaid Cymru (60 mins)
- Short Debate: Janet Finch-Saunders (Aberconwy) (30 mins)

Business Committee noted the estimated finish time of approximately 20.10 for Plenary on 23 October.

4 Legislation

4.1 Update on LCMs

Business Committee agreed to refer the LCM on the Renters' Rights Bill to the Local Government and Housing Committee and the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for scrutiny, with a reporting deadline of 29 November 2024.

5 Procedural Work

5.1 Review of guidance on virtual and hybrid proceedings

Business Committee returned to consider the current guidance on virtual and hybrid proceedings following discussions with their groups. Business Committee agreed that the guidance relating to the locations from which Members are able to join proceedings should be amended to state that Members would not be able to contribute whilst in a vehicle or using public transport. Business Managers also agreed that Members attending virtually should be expected to adhere to the same standards of behaviour and courtesy as those attending in person.

Business Committee agreed to trial the introduction of a system whereby Members wishing to vote remotely in Plenary would be required to notify the Llywydd in advance.

Business Managers noted that draft changes to the guidance, including those proposed by the Chairs' Forum relating to Committee proceedings, and proposals related to the arrangements for a trial of advance notification of an intention to vote remotely, will be presented at a future meeting.

5.2 Preparing for the Seventh Senedd: Proposals arising from the Senedd

Commission/Business Committee away day

The Deputy Presiding Officer introduced a proposal for the establishment of a new committee to consider future ways of working and preparations for the Seventh Senedd.

Business Committee agreed in principle to propose to the Senedd that a committee should be established, with the following arrangements:

- the committee should be chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer in a non-voting capacity (except in the case of the casting vote being needed);
- the committee should have four members (two representing Welsh Labour, one representing the Welsh Conservatives, and one representing Plaid Cymru);
- of the two spaces allocated to the Welsh Labour group, one should be filled by a member of the government, and one by a backbench member, representing the Labour group;
- the chair of the committee can consider inviting Jane Dodds MS and Rhys ab Owen MS to participate in the work of the committee in accordance with SO 17.49, or to provide evidence to inform that work;
- the chair of the committee to consider arrangements for enabling each member of the committee to have one person to attend meetings of the committee in a supporting capacity.

Business Managers expressed in principle support for possible broad areas to be included within the committee's remit and for this to be developed further as part of a motion to the Senedd.