

Agenda – Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3, Senedd

Meeting date: 21 May 2025

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Manon George

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Pre-meeting registration

09:00–09:15

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions, and declarations of interest

09:15

2 Welsh Government's International Strategy Inquiry – Evidence session with technology representatives (Panel 5)

09:15–10:05

(Pages 1 – 15)

Professor Siraj Shaikh, Professor in Systems Security, Swansea University

Chris Meadows, Director, CSconnected

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Break

10:05–10:15

3 Welsh Government's International Strategy – Evidence session with tourism and culture representatives (Panel 6)

10:15–11:15

Patricia Yates, Chief Executive Officer, Visit Britain



Eluned Hâf, Head, Wales Arts International

Break

11:15–11:25

4 Evidence session with the new Chair of S4C

11:25–12:10

(Pages 16 – 25)

Delyth Evans, Chair, S4C

Attached Documents:

Research brief – S4C

5 Papers to note

12:10

5.1 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026–27

(Pages 26 – 28)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Finance Committee: Advising the programme of engagement for the forthcoming draft budget – 9 May 2025

5.2 International Relations Annual Report 2024

(Pages 29 – 34)

Attached Documents:

Correspondence from the First Minister: Responding to the Committee's International Relations Annual Report 2024 – 9 May 2025

5.3 UK–Ukraine 100 Year Partnership Agreement

(Pages 35 – 38)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the First Minister: Requesting further information about the UK–Ukraine 100 Year Partnership Agreement – 23 April 2025

Letter from the First Minister: Providing further information about the UK–Ukraine 100 Year Partnership Agreement – 15 May 2025

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

12:10

7 Welsh Government's International Strategy – Consideration of the evidence received

12:10–12:20

8 Evidence session with the new Chair of S4C – Consideration of the evidence received

12:20–12:30

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Agenda Item 4

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

Agenda Item 5.1

Finance Committee

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Chair, Children, Young People, and Education Committee

Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee

Chair, Health and Social Care Committee

Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee

9 May 2025

Dear Committee Chairs,

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27: Engagement

At our meetings on 12 March and 30 April 2025, the Finance Committee (the Committee) considered its programme of engagement for the forthcoming Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27. I am writing to Chairs of subject committees to share our thinking. The Committee has agreed to undertake a number of engagement activities prior to the publication of the Draft Budget later this year. These include, a stakeholder event, focus groups held with the general public, and various other approaches to gather the views of young people.

Stakeholder Event: Bangor

This year's stakeholder event will take place at the Huw Owen Hall, Management Centre at Bangor University on Thursday 19 June. This will be an opportunity for the Committee to hear directly from interested organisations/individuals on the expected Draft Budget proposals, as well as their views on the Welsh Government's approach to setting the budget and prioritising resources. As cross-Committee engagement with stakeholders on the budget is crucial to effective scrutiny, I would like to invite Committee Chairs or a Member of your Committee to join the event. If Chairs or Members are interested in attending, please contact the clerking team seneddfinance@senedd.wales by 23 May.



Citizen engagement focus groups with the Welsh public

On behalf of the Committee, the Senedd's Citizens Engagement Team will be holding a series of focus groups on the Draft Budget with the Welsh public. The team has undertaken similar exercises over the past few years and the aim of this work is to form a cross-sectional study to allow the Committee to monitor perspectives and attitudes over time. Participants will be sourced through similar partner organisations to cover the same demographics as last year, and groups will be organised to focus on particular policy areas. The Citizens Engagement Team will circulate the dates of sessions to all Committees, should any Members wish to participate. In addition, there will be opportunities for individuals to share their views with Members of the Committee at the Urdd National Eisteddfod, the National Eisteddfod and at the Royal Welsh Show. This will allow an opportunity for Members to hear first-hand from the citizens of Wales where spending should be prioritised.

Youth Engagement

To further complement our engagement work, the Committee will hold a workshop with Members of the Youth Parliament (WYP). In previous years it was extremely informative to hear openly from young people about the issues concerning and directly affecting them. We are keen to continue building on this invaluable work and will be inviting the youth Members to participate in a workshop again this year.

We have also decided to invite Members of the WYP to participate in one of our Committee meetings in the Autumn term. Further details will be confirmed in due course.

Finance Committee Plenary Debate on the Welsh Government spending priorities

The Committee intends to hold a Plenary debate on Wednesday 16 July on the Welsh Government's spending priorities for 2026-27. The outcomes of our engagement work will inform and feed into this debate, which will provide the best opportunity to influence the Welsh Government spending priorities before the Draft Budget is published later in the year. As ever, we would very much welcome the participation of Committee Chairs, as well as other Members, as part of this debate, to ensure that the Welsh Government's spending plans are informed by the views and priorities of Senedd Committees.

Approach to budget scrutiny

I will shortly be writing to Chairs, with regard to the Committee's approach to budget scrutiny, including information on the consultation and timetable once the Trefnydd has notified the Business Committee of the Draft Budget publication dates before the summer recess.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the Draft Budget process, please feel free to contact me or the Clerk to the Finance Committee, Owain Roberts, 0300 200 6388, seneddfinance@senedd.wales.

Yours sincerely,



Peredur Owen Griffiths
Chair, Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.





Response to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee's Annual Report on International Relations 2024

09 May 2025

The Welsh Government thanks the members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee (CCWLSIR) for their annual report on international relations.

The Welsh Government response to the eight recommendations is outlined below. The Welsh Government notes the conclusions of the report.

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Responses to the Committee's Recommendations

Recommendation 1

We call on the Welsh Government to provide a progress update on the actions listed in the International Strategy and its actions plans, as per the commitment made by the First Minister during evidence to the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister in December 2024.

Response: Accept in principle

The Welsh Government has faced significant geopolitical shifts, a global pandemic, and a war in Europe since the launch of the International Strategy in 2020. These events have necessitated a flexible and adaptive approach from both the Government and the Strategy itself. Consequently, some of the actions outlined in the 2020 document are no longer relevant or feasible and we have progressed in areas that were not identified five years ago such as sports diplomacy and gender equality in sub-Saharan Africa.

The First Minister has directed officials to focus on delivering tangible outcomes rather than reviewing or rewriting existing strategies. Officials will continue to report on the strategy's three core objectives and associated Action Plans, as they have done to date through our Annual Report. However, the 2025-26 Annual Report will include an update against the 15 aims set out in the Delivery Plan, which was published on 3 April 2025.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 2

Beyond the International Strategy Delivery Plan, it is important that the Welsh Government develops mechanisms to monitor delivery of its priorities on an ongoing basis. We call on the Welsh Government to include in annual reports provided to this and future Committees, updates on progress to deliver priorities and specific actions listed in its strategies.

Response: Accept

Officials were pleased to provide the Committee with a detailed technical briefing on the International Strategy Delivery Plan on 2 April.

The Welsh Government will look to build into its annual reports an update on progress against key priorities. An update on progress against the International Strategy Delivery Plan will be included in our 2025-26 Annual Report.

This recommendation will be considered further in the development of any new potential International Strategy in the future.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 3

We call on the Welsh Government to provide a list of methods it uses to report on outcomes, in light of the First Minister's statement, that its annual reports are "just one of the methods" used.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government uses a range of methods to report on outcomes. In addition to annual reports, the government also uses other opportunities to report including oral statements, written statements, press releases, press interviews, answers to Senedd questions, appearances before Senedd Committees and evidence papers.

Internal methods of reporting outcomes include monthly reports to ministers from across the international relations teams in Wales and overseas, providing updates on progress against the International Strategy. 'Wales and' years evaluation reports also provide information on outcomes.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 4

We call on the Welsh Government to explain the rationale for changing the name of its annual overseas network reports to 'international relations annual report' and what implications, if any, this has for what is included in the reports.

Response: Accept

Delivering international success relies on excellent teamwork. Our work overseas does not happen in isolation; it is supported by teams in Wales, working with the offices overseas to jointly deliver the aims of the International Strategy and its associated action plans. The same is true for Wales-based international engagement - this is supported by our teams on the ground around the world, with international success relying on collaboration. The 2023-24 annual report was changed to more accurately reflect the breadth of our international activity, and the reality that the overseas offices and the international relations team in Wales are one team, delivering together.

The change offers the Committee a fuller, and more rounded picture, of the international engagement and activity across the year, at home and overseas. It also provides an opportunity for the Committee to learn more about the work of the Wales and Africa programme, which is an integral part of our international delivery that was previously excluded from the annual report because it was delivered from Wales, rather than by a team based in market.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 5

We call on the Welsh Government to list all international bilateral agreements on its dedicated webpage.

Response: Accept in part

The Welsh Government already publishes on its webpage, all of the active agreements signed at ministerial level, that cover multiple policy areas. This website was created on the back of a recommendation by the Committee.

However, documents that could be considered international agreements are being signed regularly across the whole of government to enable the delivery of outcomes and to list every document that could be considered an international agreement would take too much time to gather, distract from delivery, and would not drive forward the delivery of our objectives. It is for individual policy areas to determine if they want to publish details of their international agreements.

The agreements listed in the Committee's annual report were not cross-cutting agreements, they were sector-specific relating to the compound semiconductor industry. Taking into consideration the parameters set out above, the webpage is up to date.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 6

We call on the Welsh Government to proactively notify this Committee when new international bilateral agreements are signed.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will put mechanisms in place to notify the Committee when new cross-cutting international bilateral agreements are signed.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 7

We call on the Welsh Government to provide an update in relation to the implementation of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, including its priorities for Welsh traditions to be recognised and protected, and on intergovernmental discussions.

Response: Accept

The UK, as the signatory of the UNESCO Convention, is the 'state party' and therefore holds the reins on the two broad obligations of the Convention: to create inventories of living heritage and ensure the safeguarding of living heritage in their territory.

The UK approach to these obligations has been developed and agreed with full transparency and through close collaboration with Welsh Government and other devolved nations. The approach has also been heavily influenced by the models and lessons learnt by other countries.

DCMS launched a public consultation at the beginning of 2024 to inform how the first stage of implementation - the creation of the UK inventory - will work. Wales will have its own inventory within an overarching UK inventory. Subject to agreement, I expect the first call for inventory content will take place in summer 2025 and that the inventories could be published by early 2026.

The consultation report, detailing the way forward, is due to be published in April 2025.

An important point of clarity is that the UNESCO Convention relates to any living heritage being practised within a territory – living heritage in Wales will not necessarily need to be intrinsically Welsh to appear on a Wales inventory. When the call for items for inclusion is launched, it will refer to living heritage practised in Wales. The call-out for content will also focus on ensuring that items for listing on the inventories are generated and supported by practising communities, and not by Government.

Our draft Priorities for Culture include the ambition: 'Our intangible cultural heritage is an intrinsic part of our national story – it is recorded, supported to thrive and shared with others for the benefit of future generations.' The inclusion of this strategic ambition means that Welsh Government and all sector stakeholders will work together to record and support our living heritage in Wales.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 8

We call on the Welsh Government to confirm whether it has revisited the matter of St David's Day becoming a Bank Holiday in Wales with the new UK Government, and its response.

Response: Accept

St David's Day is widely celebrated across Wales and all over the world. Bank holidays are decided by the UK Government. We have previously asked the UK Government for the Senedd to have the powers to make St David's Day a bank holiday. Discussions are ongoing with the UK Government.

In terms of international relations activity, we will continue to use the global opportunity that St David's Day brings to raise the profile of Wales around the world through ministerial activities and other events. This year, the UK Government also undertook a programme of activity, utilising materials that we provided to support engagement across the world and in London.

Financial Implications: None

Eluned Morgan MS
First Minister
Welsh Government

23 April 2025

UK-Ukraine One Hundred Year Partnership Agreement

Dear Eluned,

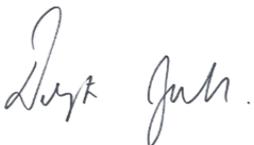
At our Committee meeting on 2 April 2025 we considered a letter and report from the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee relating to the UK-Ukraine One Hundred Year Partnership Agreement.

We agreed to write to you to request more information in relation to this agreement, including

- what role the Welsh Government may have in delivering the partnership, particularly in devolved areas such as cultural exchanges;
- the treaty's implementation in Wales, including the involvement of Welsh organisations and Welsh Government delivery partners;
- the Welsh Government's view on the treaty's opportunities and benefits to Wales; and
- whether regular UK-wide intergovernmental discussions are taking place to coordinate the implementation of the new arrangements.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.





Delyth Jewell MS
Committee Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1SN

15 May 2025

Dear Delyth

I am writing in response to your letter regarding the UK-Ukraine 100 Year Partnership Agreement.

The Treaty, and a supporting Declaration, signed in January 2025, provides a framing for the intended areas of cooperation between the UK and Ukraine. The Declaration captures high-level activities and political commitments across nine 'pillars', some of which are outside the competence of the devolved administrations.

This is a UK Government-led agreement, reflecting the closer relationship the UK has developed with Ukraine since the start of the unprovoked and illegal invasion by Russia.

The Welsh Government was consulted on a near-final draft of the Declaration and secured amendments to ensure Wales can contribute to its delivery across devolved areas, where time and resources allow. I am not aware that the UK Government has allocated funding towards the delivery of the Declaration, outside of the named commitment on military assistance. I would therefore fully expect any proposed Welsh Government involvement in co-operation projects to go through the relevant Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers for approval.

Officials attend quarterly updates on the implementation of the partnership agreement and the UK Government Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government has recently established the UK-Ukraine Local Authority Partnership Contact Group, with the WLGA as a member representing Welsh local authorities.

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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.

If Welsh organisations or delivery partners want to be involved in co-operation projects under the Declaration, they can go through the relevant UK Government department, and officials can help with signposting if required.

The Welsh Government's overarching position on Ukraine is clear. I issued a Written Statement in March which reaffirmed our unwavering support to Ukraine and its people. I am pleased that through our international engagement activity, we have continued to build relations with colleagues and partners in the country. Since the start of the conflict, Academi Heddwch and the Wales Centre for International Affairs held a discussion and making resources available to understand and discuss the conflict. Wales Arts International and British Council Wales facilitated an online session last year to nurture cultural exchanges in partnership with the Ukrainian Cultural Foundation and the Ukrainian Institute following a delegation who visited Wales to explore connections.

Yours sincerely



Eluned Morgan