

# Agenda – Plenary

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Meeting Venue:

Siambwr Hywel – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date:

Wednesday, 14 May 2025

Meeting time: 13.30

## 279 (v3)

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

### 1 Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government

(45 mins)

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

[View Questions](#)

### 2 Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Education

(45 mins)

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

[View Questions](#)

### 3 Topical Questions

(20 mins)

**To be answered by Minister for Children and Social Care**

[Mabon ap Gwynfor \(Dwyfor Meirionnydd\)](#): Will the Cabinet Secretary make a statement on the potential impact of the UK Government's Immigration White Paper on the social care workforce in Wales?

### 4 90 Second Statements

(5 mins)



**Senedd Cymru**  
**Welsh Parliament**

## 5 Member Debate under Standing Order 11.21(iv): Safeguarding the health of firefighters

(60 mins)

**NDM8812** [Luke Fletcher \(South Wales West\)](#)

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Notes:

- a) that firefighting exposes individuals to carcinogenic effluents, including benzene and toluene, which significantly increases mortality rates among firefighters relative to the general population;
- b) the work of the World Health Organisation's International Agency for Research on Cancer and their classification of cancer among firefighters as a Group 1 occupational hazard;
- c) that countries such as the United States, Canada, and Australia have officially recognised the link between exposure to toxic effluents and increased incidences of cancers; and
- d) the Fire Brigades Union's 'DECON' campaign and its vital efforts to help firefighters reduce harmful exposure to contaminants.

2. Recognises the findings of scientific research led by Professor Anna Stec at the Centre for Fire and Hazards Sciences, University of Central Lancashire, commissioned by the Fire Brigades Union, which reveals that surveyed firefighters aged 35 to 39 faced an age-specific cancer rate up to 323 per cent higher than that of the general population of the same age group.

3. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) collaborate with the Fire Brigades Union, fire and rescue services, and leading specialists in fire toxicology to mitigate the effects of carcinogenic effluents on firefighters in Wales;
- b) establish a preventative health programme to monitor and record exposures for all firefighters in Wales, including annual cancer screening as a minimum standard; and
- c) align Wales with international best practices in safeguarding firefighter health.

**Co-submitters**

[Llyr Gruffydd \(North Wales\)](#)

[Jane Dodds \(Mid and West Wales\)](#)

[Peredur Owen Griffiths \(South Wales East\)](#)

[Rhys ab Owen \(South Wales Central\)](#)

[Samuel Kurtz \(Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire\)](#)

## **Supporters**

[Delyth Jewell \(South Wales East\)](#)

[Hefin David \(Caerphilly\)](#)

[Jenny Rathbone \(Cardiff Central\)](#)

[Joel James \(South Wales Central\)](#)

[Sioned Williams \(South Wales West\)](#)

## **6 Debate on the Petitions Committee report: P-06-1482: Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances)**

(60 mins)

**NDM8899** [Carolyn Thomas \(North Wales\)](#)

To propose that the Senedd:

Notes the report of the Petitions Committee, ‘P-06-1482 Ban smartphones in all schools in Wales (with exemptions for exceptional circumstances)’, which was [laid](#) in the Table Office on 12 March 2025.

Note: The response of the Welsh Government to the report was [laid](#) in the Table Office on 7 May 2025.

## **7 Welsh Conservatives Debate – Taxation**

(60 mins)

**NDM8898** [Paul Davies \(Preseli Pembrokeshire\)](#)

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Regrets that:

- a) Welsh pay packets are the lowest in Great Britain;
- b) business deaths continue to outpace business births; and
- c) if council tax had risen by the same rate in Wales as has been the case in England since 2010, the average Band D household in Wales would be £350 a year better off.

2. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) deliver efficiency savings, outside of health, schools and farming budgets, to deliver a 1 pence cut in the basic rate of income tax;
- b) restore business rate relief to 75 per cent for the retail hospitality and leisure sector;
- c) eliminate business rates for small businesses; and
- d) ensure local referendums for councils proposing council tax rises by over 5 per cent in a single financial year.

**The following amendments were tabled:**

**Amendment 1 [Jane Hutt \(Vale of Glamorgan\)](#)**

Delete all and replace with:

To propose that the Senedd:

1. Notes:

- a) the average Band D council tax bill in Wales this year is £110 lower than in England and more than 256,000 low-income households in Wales receive support with their bills through the council tax reduction scheme;
- b) the business birth rate in 2023 in Wales was higher than in the south-east and south-west regions of England, and higher than in Northern Ireland; and
- c) growth in average weekly earnings for full-time adults in Wales has outpaced the UK over the last 10 years.

2. Recognises:

- a) ratepayers in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors have received more than £1 billion in additional business rates support over the last six years and almost half of all ratepayers pay no business rates at all.
- b) Welsh rates of income tax are forecast to contribute more than £3 billion to the Welsh budget this year; and
- c) local authorities are accountable to the people of Wales when setting budgets and council tax, based on the needs of local services.

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

**Amendment 2 [Heledd Fychan \(South Wales Central\)](#)**

Delete all and replace with:

Propose that the Senedd:

1. Notes:

- a) that tax as a proportion of UK GDP reached its highest level in over 70 years under the previous UK Conservative Government;
- b) the projected impact of the current UK Government's increase to employer national insurance contributions on average wage growth; and
- c) the continued burden of Brexit on Welsh trade and investment, and the cost to Welsh businesses and taxpayers of having to comply with additional red tape outside of the EU Single Market.

2. Regrets:

- a) the UK Labour Government's broken promise not to increase taxes on working people; and
- b) the UK Labour Government's decision to Barnetise Treasury core public sector reimbursements to national insurance contributions, which has left Wales facing a £65 million shortfall.

3. Believes:

- a) the present limitations of the Welsh Government's tax-varying powers are an impediment to effective policy-making in Wales, and
- b) that the Senedd should possess the devolved competence to set its own income tax bands, in line with the powers already devolved to the Scottish Parliament under the Scotland Act 2012.

4. Calls on the Welsh Government to:

- a) initiate the process outlined in the Government of Wales Act 2006 to seek powers currently reserved to Westminster to enable the Senedd to set all rates and bands for Welsh income tax.
- b) establish a preferential business rates multiplier for SMEs; and
- c) re-engage with the programme of council tax reform.

## **8 Voting Time**

## **9 Short Debate**

(30 mins)

**NDM8895** [Heledd Fychan \(South Wales Central\)](#)

Poverty isn't inevitable: how the Welsh Government and the UK Government can improve the lives of the people of Wales.

The Senedd will sit again in Plenary at 13.30, Tuesday, 20 May 2025