

Concise Minutes – Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3 – Senedd

Meeting date: Wednesday, 17 July 2019

Meeting time: 09.15 – 12.32

This meeting can be viewed

on [Senedd TV](#) at:

<http://senedd.tv/en/5489>

Attendance

Category	Names
Assembly Members:	John Griffiths AM (Chair) Dawn Bowden AM Huw Irranca-Davies AM Mark Isherwood AM Caroline Jones AM Leanne Wood AM
Witnesses:	Ian Williams, Welsh Government Vivienne Lewis, Welsh Government Hannah Blythyn AM, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government
Committee Staff:	Naomi Stocks (Clerk) Catherine Hunt (Second Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk) Jonathan Baxter (Researcher) Hannah Johnson (Researcher)



1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

1.1 The Chair welcomed Members and members of the public to the meeting.

2 Inquiry into empty properties: evidence session 6

2.1 The Committee received evidence from:

- Hannah Blythyn AM, Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government
- Ian Williams, Deputy Director for Homes and Places, Welsh Government
- Vivienne Lewis, Regeneration Enforcement & Loan Manager, Homes and Places Division, Welsh Government

2.2 The Minister agreed to write to the Committee for additional information on the survey conducted by officials relating to the powers used by local authorities in bringing empty properties back into use. The Minister also agreed to provide information on the steps taken by the Welsh Government to ensure property owners are not able to avoid paying the council tax premium.

3 Papers to note

3.1 Correspondence from the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip regarding the implementation of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 – 4 July 2019

3.1a The Committee noted the correspondence from the Deputy Minister and Chief Whip regarding the implementation of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

3.2 Correspondence to the Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government regarding the inquiry into benefits in Wales – 10 July 2019

3.2a The Committee noted the correspondence to the Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government regarding the inquiry into benefits in Wales.

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

4.1 The Committee agreed the motion.

5 Inquiry into empty properties: consideration of evidence and key issues

5.1 The Committee discussed the evidence received under item 2. The Committee also discussed and agreed the key issues relating to the inquiry into empty properties.

6 Benefits in Wales: options for better delivery – consideration of key issues

6.1 The Committee discussed and agreed the key issues relating to the inquiry into benefits in Wales.

7 Discussion on the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2020–21

7.1 The Committee discussed and agreed their priorities for the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2020–21. The Committee also agreed to keep spare capacity in the autumn forward work programme to accommodate any changes to the budget timetable.