

Welsh Parliament

Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

Welcome to our committee update

This update of the Committee's recent activities is aimed at widening engagement in the Committee's work and helping you to provide information and expertise to officials and Members. It has been produced by the Clerking team which supports the Committee.

Response to COVID-19

The Senedd is leading the way in scrutinising the Government during these challenging times. The Senedd was the first UK parliament to meet virtually and three full Plenary meetings of the 'Emergency Senedd' have already taken place. Future Plenary meeting agendas will be published on the Parliament's **website**.

Last week the Senedd took the next step in ensuring good scrutiny of the Government continues by resuming formal committee meetings. Committees will now meet virtually scrutinise matters relating to Coronavirus and other urgent business. The public can watch live on **Senedd.tv**.

The Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee was one of the first Committees to resume business. Members met on the 30 April to take evidence on the effects of Coronavirus on the Welsh economy, particularly looking at Welsh business and jobs and how effective government support has been. Members will heard from business leaders, trade unions and others affected. You can watch the session on Senedd TV **here**.

The Committee's twitter feed **@SeneddEIS** carries all our latest news, and details of inquiries and future committee meetings. It will help keep you informed of consultation deadlines and other developments and decisions taken in light of Covid-19. The Committee wishes all its stakeholders well at this difficult time.

Work undertaken - Spring 2020

Public procurement in the foundational economy

On 5 February, the Committee published its **report** (PDF 1,080KB) which contained 4 recommendations.

The Senedd is focusing on Covid-19 and other urgent timebound business at the moment so a date for plenary debate of this report has not yet been set.

Valleys Taskforce

The Committee launched an **inquiry** into the Valleys Taskforce in February. The Taskforce was established by the Welsh Government in July 2016, and will

operate for the duration of the Fifth Parliament until March 2021. It was set up as a catalyst for delivering regeneration and sustainable growth in the South Wales Valleys. The Committee still intends to carry out this inquiry, however further evidence-taking is delayed. Responses will be published on the website.

Retention payments in the construction sector

Following a joint meeting of the EIS Committee and the Finance Committee last October, both Committees wrote to the Welsh Government highlighting the evidence received and asking about Welsh Government's intentions. The Minister **responded** on 1 April.

Budget Scrutiny

The Committee **reported** on Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2020-21 in January - the Government's response to the report's 25 recommendations across the Economy, Infrastructure and Skills portfolio can be found **here**.

Bus Services (Wales) Bill

Welsh Government published the **Bus Services (Wales) Bill** on 16 March 2020 and the Minister for Economy and Transport issued a **written statement** about the Bill. On 1 April the First Minister issued the a written statement on **the Government's approach to legislation in light of Covid-19**.

Visits

On 4 March the Committee visited the **Data Science Campus, Office of National Statistics**. The visit was an

opportunity for Members to speak directly to degree apprentices about their experience of the pilot in Wales as part of the Committee's inquiry into Degree Apprenticeships in Wales. The Committee is grateful to the ONS and the apprentices for sharing their experiences.



Committee activity for the Summer term 2020

As discussed above the Parliament is currently focusing on the response to Covid-19, and time- pressured work. Because of this dates and topics of inquiry are subject to change depending on emerging priorities. The Parliament is committed to scrutinising and supporting the Welsh Government at this difficult time and will continue to review how it does this to ensure the best outcomes for the people of Wales.

Please follow us on Twitter or check our webpage for updates.

Remit

The Committee was established on 28 June 2016 to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising expenditure, administration and policy matters,

encompassing (but not restricted to): economic development; transport; infrastructure; employment; skills; and research and development, including technology and science.

Membership of the Committee was reduced from eight to six Members in June 2019.

Membership changes

Following a re-shuffle of Plaid Cymru's shadow portfolio responsibilities in January, **Helen Mary Jones** was welcomed onto the Committee in place of Bethan Sayed. The Committee is grateful to Bethan for her contributions to its work, and congratulates her on the safe arrival of her baby Idris Abbas on 2 April.

Assembly Name Change

As you may well know, from 6 May 2020 the National Assembly for Wales became the Welsh Parliament, commonly known as the Senedd. Members will be known as 'Aelodau o'r Senedd' (AS) or 'Members of the Senedd' (MS).

Our parliament today is a very different institution to the one established as the Assembly in 1999. Now with full law-making powers and the ability to vary taxes, the new name reflects the Senedd's constitutional status as a national parliament.

There will be changes that you will notice from 6 May, for example to the website and email addresses.

Key contact information about our new **domain names, email addresses and postal address** is available.

Contact details

You can email the Committee Clerking Team: **SeneddEIS@senedd.wales**

Phone us: **0300 200 6565**

Follow us on Twitter: **[@SeneddEIS](https://twitter.com/SeneddEIS)**

Website:
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Committee Members



Committee Chair:
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Welsh Conservatives



Mohammad Asghar MS
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