

# Amending Standing Orders

## Recall of the Senedd

March 2021

In accordance with Standing Order 11.7(iv), the Business Committee is responsible for making recommendations on the general practice and procedures of the Senedd, including any proposals for the re-making or revision of Standing Orders.

This report recommends the addition of a new Standing Order 12.3A to give the Presiding Officer the power to recall the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance, following consultation with the First Minister and the Business Committee.

The Senedd is invited to approve the proposals to amend the Standing Orders as at Annex A. The amended Standing Orders, if approved, are at Annex B.



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## 1. Background

1. Standing Order 12.3 provides that:

*If no plenary meeting is timetabled for a particular date or time, the Presiding Officer may, at the request of the First Minister, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance.*

2. Standing Order 34.9 makes temporary provisions to facilitate the continuation of Senedd business during the COVID-19 outbreak, but will cease to have effect on the dissolution of the Senedd, or when the Senedd so resolves, whichever is sooner. The Standing Order states:

*The Presiding Officer may, with the agreement of the Business Committee, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance related to public health matters.*

## 2. Business Committee Consideration

3. The Business Committee considered a range of options for amending the Senedd's recall provisions, including: making permanent, and expanding, the provision in Standing Order 34.9 to enable the Presiding Officer, with the agreement of the Business Committee to recall the Senedd for any matter; or requiring a recall on the request of a specified number of Members.

4. The Business Committee decided to propose a new Standing Order to enable the Presiding Officer to recall the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance, subject to consultation with the First Minister and the Business Committee. The Committee considers that this new provision will complement the existing provision whereby the Senedd can be recalled at the request of the First Minister.

## 3. Decision

5. The Business Committee formally agreed the changes to Standing Orders on 9 March 2021. The Senedd is invited to approve the proposed new Standing Orders at Annex B.

## Annex A – Proposed changes to Standing Order 12, and explanatory notes

### Standing Order 12 – Order in plenary meetings

Plenary meetings	Retain heading
<p>12.3 If no plenary meeting is timetabled for a particular date or time, the Presiding Officer may, at the request of the First Minister, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance.</p>	<p><b>Retain Standing Order</b> Standing Order included for information.</p>
<p><u>12.3A If no plenary meeting is timetabled for a particular date or time, the Presiding Officer may, having consulted the First Minister and the Business Committee, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance.</u></p>	<p><b>Insert new Standing Order</b> The proposed new Standing Order would enable the Presiding Officer to recall the Senedd following consultation with the First Minister and the Business Committee.</p>

## Annex B – Standing Order 12, as amended

### **Standing Order 12 – Order in plenary meetings**

- 12.3 If no plenary meeting is timetabled for a particular date or time, the Presiding Officer may, at the request of the First Minister, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance.
- 12.3A If no plenary meeting is timetabled for a particular date or time, the Presiding Officer may, having consulted the First Minister and the Business Committee, summon the Senedd to consider a matter of urgent public importance.