

Y Pwyllgor Busnes
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Business Committee

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Mark Isherwood MS

Chair of the Public Accounts and Public Administration
Committee

22 September 2021


Response to recommendations of the Fifth Senedd's Public Accounts Committee

Dear Mark

The Fifth Senedd's Public Accounts Committee made two recommendations to the Business Committee of the Sixth Senedd as part of its scrutiny of the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015: *Delivering for future generations: the story so far*.

We are pleased to be able to accept both recommendations. Please find our full response to those recommendations enclosed.

Yours sincerely



Elin Jones MS

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Recommendations (from *Delivering for future generations: the story so far*)

Recommendation 13. The Business Committee of the Sixth Senedd should ensure that the Senedd’s Committee structure facilitates effective scrutiny of legislation such as the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other matters that cross policy areas and Ministerial portfolios.

Recommendation 14. The Business Committee of the Sixth Senedd should give specific consideration to how post-legislative scrutiny of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 should be undertaken, and refer that body of work to an appropriate Committee or forum accordingly.

Response from the Business Committee

We accept recommendations 13 and 14.

We sought to address these recommendations in the proposals we made to the Senedd on the establishment of committees.

The remit of the Equality and Social Justice Committee includes “*implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015*” and an ability to scrutinise any area of policy from the perspective of the cross-cutting issues within its remit, including (but not restricted to): equality and human rights, and the implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Whilst it is for the ESJ Committee to determine how best to deliver its remit, we believe that emphasising the ability to work across policy boundaries will ensure all aspects of the WFGA can be pursued without restriction. It is also our hope that this approach acts as a catalyst for greater collaboration between committees when approaching cross-cutting scrutiny challenges.

We have ensured that there is capacity within the committee timetable to help facilitate joint-working between committees. It is now for committees to determine if and how they wish to take this opportunity.

Making one committee responsible for scrutiny of the implementation of the WFGA will hopefully ensure it receives focused post-legislative scrutiny, but this need not be done in isolation from the work of other committees.

Flexibility was an underpinning principle when designing the committee system. Committees are guided rather than bound by their remits and can pursue cross-cutting issues wherever they might lead in policy terms. To ensure that this is done effectively, communication between committees is

essential. We set this expectation in our report *Sixth Senedd Committees: Titles and remits*.

We have also agreed to propose that the Senedd establishes a Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister with a cross-cutting remit to “*scrutinise the First Minister on any matter relevant to the exercise of the functions of the Welsh Government.*” As in the Fifth Senedd, the Chairs’ Forum will provide a valuable space within which cross-cutting scrutiny challenges can be discussed and addressed by the Chairs of Senedd Committees.