

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

—
**Climate Change, Environment,
and Infrastructure Committee**

Elin Jones MS
Llywydd

3 February 2022

Dear Llywydd

Thank you for your letter of 7 January in which you request feedback to inform the Business Committee's review of Senedd committee remits and the timetable of meetings. The Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure (CCEI) Committee considered your letter in its meeting on 20 January and agreed that I should respond as follows.

The Senedd is a small parliament with approximately 45 Senedd members to populate its committee system. Inevitably, there will be challenges in striking the right balance between bolstering the capacity of the committee system and ensuring the members who make up that system can contribute in a meaningful way. Ideally, there might be more committees meeting more frequently. However, this would compromise individual members' capacity. There is a limit to what can be achieved realistically with the current number of Senedd members.

As a Committee, we believe that despite the constraints under which we and the system are operating, we have been able to prioritise our work to ensure that the matters that fall within our remit can be considered in the time that is available to us.

We believe the current timetable offers some advantages, including the ability for the Committee to use a whole day of meetings to immerse itself in a policy area. We recognise, however, that not all committees meet in this pattern. We also believe that the flexible approach taken by the Business Committee to additional meetings has been positive. It will need to continue to respond to business, such as Senedd Bills. We would be grateful if the Business Committee could consider its approach to setting deadlines for the work it remits to committees. It should ensure that the time available reflects the limitations of the overall timetable, such as the frequency of meetings.

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In terms of committee remits, we note there is an overlap in aspects of the remits of several committees, which risks some policy areas "falling through the gaps". The Business Committee should consider how better coordination of committee work programmes can be ensured to identify not only gaps but also potential synergies. In a similar vein, we believe the Business Committee should consider how to embed joint-working in the work of Senedd Committees – currently, arrangements are ad hoc and not as efficient as they could be.

Overall, we believe it is too soon to make fundamental changes to the committee timetable or committee remits. We have just started the third term of this Senedd; the committee system has been in place for less than two of them. Moreover, the system has mainly existed in a virtual world – it will face new challenges as committees transition to meeting in hybrid formats more regularly or in-person. It would be prudent for the Business Committee to delay any fundamental changes until it has a greater understanding of the nature of these challenges.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

