

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

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

Elin Jones MS
Llywydd

11 July 2022

Dear Llywydd,

I am writing to you in your role as Chair of the Business Committee.

On Tuesday, the First Minister delivered his statement on the Welsh Government's legislative programme for the next parliamentary year. The First Minister announced that a Single Use Plastics Bill would be brought forward shortly. The CCEI Committee has long shown an interest in this subject and I would expect the Bill to be referred to the Committee in due course. In reference to the Bill, the First Minister said:

"the Bill will also support our ongoing legal challenge to the UK Internal Market Act. In the current litigation, brought by the Counsel General, the Court has indicated it would find it helpful to consider a practical example, in the form of a piece of Senedd legislation, against which it can test the issues under consideration. This Bill will provide that practical example, and in that context we will be seeking the agreement of Business Committee to expedite Senedd scrutiny."

I would like to share some initial views on this matter with the Business Committee.

First, it would be very difficult for the Business Committee to decide not to refer a Bill for scrutiny without first seeing the Bill in question. Standing Order 26.9 recognises this and says:

"Once a Bill has been introduced, the Business Committee must decide whether or not to refer consideration of the general principles to a responsible committee"

Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN
SeneddHinsawdd@senedd.cymru
senedd.cymru/SeneddHinsawdd
0300 200 6565

—
Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN
SeneddClimate@senedd.wales
senedd.wales/SeneddClimate
0300 200 6565

The Business Committee can only take such a decision after a Bill has been introduced.

Second, it would be useful if the Business Committee's decision could be informed by consultation with the responsible committee in question. I suggest that the Business Committee uses the time between the introduction of the Bill and the point when it makes its decision to consult with the responsible Committee.

Finally, it should be noted that no one outside the Welsh Government is currently aware of the detailed provisions of the Bill. A consultation took place around 20 months ago (between 30 July and 22 October 2020) on proposals to ban certain single use plastics but the responses have not been published. As it currently stands, the Stage 1 scrutiny process would be the only opportunity for stakeholders and the public to be consulted on the detailed provisions in the Bill.

I was invited to meet the Minister for Climate Change earlier today to discuss the proposed timetable for the Bill. During the meeting, the Minister gave a commitment to explore whether the Bill could be published in draft during the summer recess. If that is possible, it would enable the CCEI Committee (subject to members' agreement) to undertake a limited consultation over the summer to be followed, potentially, with oral evidence sessions early in the autumn. Given that a degree of scrutiny work would already be underway, the Business Committee might feel it would be appropriate to agree a curtailed timetable once the Bill is introduced, and, of course, following consultation with the CCEI Committee.

I hope this is helpful and provides a solution that results in a degree of public consultation and committee scrutiny of the Bill.

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.