

Dear Colleague,

A call for information – Welsh Government Draft Budget proposals for 2023-24

The Committees of the Welsh Parliament are seeking information to inform their scrutiny of the Welsh Government's 2023-24 Draft Budget proposals. We are interested in exploring expectations of the 2023-24 Budget, including financial readiness for the financial year and the impact of the 2022-23 Budget.

The Welsh Government's Draft Budget is usually published in October. However, this will be the fourth consecutive year that its publication will be delayed, until after the UK Government autumn fiscal event.

The Welsh Government has announced it is planning to publish the outline and detailed draft Budgets together by 13 December 2022 at the latest, and the final Budget on 28 February 2023.

The **Finance Committee** looks at the Welsh Government's Budget from a strategic, overarching perspective. We also work with the other Senedd Committees to ensure that proposals for specific departments, or ministerial portfolios are considered in detail. Committees will each undertake their own focussed evidence sessions in order to examine the areas of the Budget that fall within their respective remits. Further details on Senedd Committees and the budget process can be found in **Annex 1**.

In this paper we have detailed specific questions in **Annex 2**. You can answer any/all of these, or just let us know in general terms about your views in relation to the Draft Budget.

The Finance Committee has undertaken a number of engagement activities, seeking the views of individuals and organisations on areas that should be prioritised in the Welsh Government's Draft Budget. These views were reflected in the **Committee's Engagement report** which helped inform a Committee led **Plenary debate on Welsh Government spending priorities**, held on 13 July 2022.

Disclosure of Information

Before submitting information to the Committee, please ensure that you have considered the **Senedd's policy on disclosure of information**. Alternatively, a hard copy of this policy can be requested by contacting the Clerk, Owain Roberts (0300 200 6388 seneddfinance@senedd.wales).



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Providing information to the Committee

Interested parties are invited to submit written evidence to the Clerk of the Finance Committee to arrive by **Friday 18 November 2022**. If you wish to contribute but are concerned that you won't be able to meet this deadline, please speak with the Committee Clerk on 0300 200 6388.

The Senedd has two official languages, Welsh and English. In line with the [Senedd's Official Languages Scheme](#), the Committee requests that documents or written responses to consultations intended for publication or use in Senedd proceedings are submitted bilingually. When documents or written responses are not submitted bilingually, we will publish in the language submitted, stating that it has been received in that language only.

We expect other organisations to implement their own standards or schemes and to comply with their statutory obligations.

[Guidance on submitting written evidence to Committee consultations](#) is available on the Senedd's website.

Yours sincerely



Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Chair of the Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Annex 1- Background information

Who are we?

The **Finance Committee** is a cross party committee of the Welsh Parliament, made up of Members from three political parties represented at the Welsh Parliament.

The Committee is not part of the Welsh Government. Rather, the Committee is responsible for reporting on proposals laid before the Welsh Parliament by Welsh Ministers relating to the use of resources.

Who are the other Committees involved in scrutinising the Budget?

The other Committees involved in scrutinising the Budget are:

- Children, Young People and Education Committee
- Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee
- Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee
- Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
- Equality and Social Justice Committee
- Health and Social Care Committee
- Legislation, Justice, Constitution Committee
- Local Government and Housing Committee

What is the Welsh Government's Draft Budget?

The Draft Budget proposals must contain details of the amount of resources the Welsh Government proposes to use in the following financial year and indicative figures for the subsequent two financial years. More specifically it should set out:

- the use of resources and cash to be withdrawn from the Welsh Consolidated Fund by the Welsh Government, Senedd Commission, Audit Wales and Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
- how expenditure proposals will be financed, including taxation and borrowing plans.
- income to be retained by those organisations (rather than being surrendered to the Welsh Consolidated Fund).



The Welsh Government will provide a narrative document which sets out allocations within departments, how proposals align with priorities and desired outcomes. The Welsh Government will also provide forecasts of taxation, borrowing and debt.

Why are we not issuing this consultation after the Welsh Government's Draft Budget proposals have been published?

Responding to this consultation will not preclude stakeholders from also providing information, evidence, concerns and suggested areas for scrutiny to Senedd Committees **after** the publication of the Welsh Government's outline and detailed Draft Budget proposals.

However, there is a very limited time for stakeholders to suggest areas of concern to Committees after the detail of the Draft Budget has been published. By undertaking this consultation now, we hope stakeholders will have more time to consider the potential impact of the Budget.



Annex 2

Consultation questions

1. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2022-23 Budget, including funding related to the recovery of the pandemic? Have Welsh Government business support policies been effective as the economic outlook for 2023-24 continues to worsen?

2. How should/could the Welsh Government support the economy and business following the pandemic, Brexit and inflationary and other economic pressures?

- How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2023-24 financial year, how will inflation impact on your ability to deliver planned objectives, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?

3. With inflation and costs of living issues continuing to escalate, what action should the Welsh Government take to help households cope with this latest crisis?

- How should the Budget address the needs of people living in urban, post-industrial and rural communities and in supporting economies within those communities?

4. Are Welsh Government plans to build a greener economy clear and sufficiently ambitious? Do you think there is enough investment being targeted at tackling the climate change and nature emergency? Are there any potential skill gaps that need to be addressed to achieve these plans?

6. Is the Welsh Government using the financial mechanisms available to it around borrowing and taxation?

7. The Committee would like to focus on a number of other specific areas in the scrutiny of the Budget. Do you have any specific comments on any of the areas identified below?

- Welsh Government policies to reduce poverty and gender inequality. Is enough support being given to those people living in relative income poverty?
- How/whether the approach to preventative spending is represented in resource allocations (Preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early).
- How resources should be prioritised to tackle NHS waiting lists for planned and non-urgent NHS treatments. Do you think the Welsh Government has a robust plan to address this issue?
- The sustainability of NHS, social care, further and higher education, local government and other public services more generally. Is the Welsh Government providing adequate support to the public sector to enable it to be innovative and forward looking through things like workforce planning.



- Whether there has been adequate investment from the Welsh Government in basic public sector infrastructure.
- Support for children and young people whose education, development, and mental health and well-being have been affected by the pandemic. Is there enough infrastructure investment targeted at young people?
- Whether it is clear how evidence and data is driving Welsh Government priority setting and budget allocations.
- Is support for third sector organisations, which face increased demand for services as a consequence of the cost of living crisis and the pandemic, sufficient?
- What are the key opportunities for Government investment to support 'building back better' (i.e. supporting an economy and public services that better deliver against the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act)?

