

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd**  
**Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd**



**Llywodraeth Cymru**  
**Welsh Government**

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/1557/23

Paul Davies MS,  
Chair  
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee,

[SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales](mailto:SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales)

14<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Paul,

Thank you for your letter of 31 May, regarding the recommendations made by the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, about the Food (Wales) Bill. You requested my responses to recommendations 2, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16, and 17, which I have provided annexed to this letter.

I found your report helpful and have considered each recommendation carefully. The examination of food policy during scrutiny of the Bill has been useful in revealing the need to communicate the wide range of food related policies across the Welsh Government more clearly. Accordingly, I committed on 24 May to publish a short document to do this and work has begun with the intention to publish later this year.

With the fall of the Bill, my Department has restarted work on the Community Food Strategy.

Regards,

**Lesley Griffiths AS/MS**  
**Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd**  
**Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd**

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1SN

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Lesley.Griffiths@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Lesley.Griffiths@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

## Annex – the Welsh Government’s response to recommendations in ETRAC’s Food (Wales) Bill report

Report recommendation	Welsh Government response
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b> The Welsh Government must improve its approach to the food system by ensuring policies are joined-up and complementary. This could either be through this Bill or by non-legislative means. If the Bill falls, the Welsh Government must examine which elements of the Bill it could take forward by a non-legislative route.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>Welsh Government agrees the importance of policies being joined up and complementary. Accordingly policies are shaped by the well-being goals and ways of working enshrined by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Relationships between food related policies are connected during their development and delivery. However, the Welsh Government accepts stakeholders do not perceive this, so to improve policy communication the Welsh Government has committed to publishing a short document this year to summarise food related policies and how they join up across policy areas and with the (WFG Act) well-being goals.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4</b> If the Bill falls the Welsh Government should commit to publishing a document setting out all of its food policies, across departments, and how these align against its key overarching objectives. This document should be regularly updated.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted</b>.</p> <p>During the 24 May General Principles debate the MRANWT committed to publishing a short cross-portfolio document setting out all its food policies and how these are aligned with other government departmental policies. This document will provide a high level account of policy focus on food matters. The Welsh Government plans to publish the document in 2023.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> If the Bill falls the Welsh Government should undertake a gap analysis exercise of existing targets of relevance to the food system, and in</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>Welsh Government already has comprehensive food related policies</p>

<p>consultation with stakeholders introduce new targets to fill any gaps.</p>	<p>in place with supporting targets. We are satisfied there are no significant gaps but we are committed to monitoring and where evidence suggests a target needs revision or there is a gap we will consider change. Policy development and monitoring is usually undertaken in partnership with stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> If the Bill falls the Committee recommends that the Welsh Government should either establish an internal food policy board or work with the Future Generations Commissioner to create a dedicated food-systems post to drive joined-up food policy in Wales, with the aspiration of delivering affordable and healthy food that is economically, environmentally, culturally and socially sustainable for people now and in the future. The Minister should update the Committee on the work of this board on an annual basis.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>The MRANWT announced in the Senedd Food (Wales) Bill debate on 24 May that the First Minister would chair a cross Welsh Government forum to ensure good policy join up is achieved and communicated. A forum took place on 13 June and consequently work has started across portfolios to identify food related policies relevant to the food publication to be published later this year and, also policies relevant to the Community Food Strategy.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 9</b> Regardless of whether the Bill proceeds or falls, the Committee supports the development of a national food strategy by the Welsh Government with the key aim of joining up Welsh Government food policy across departments.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>The Welsh Government has a detailed strategic approach to food matters already, with comprehensive and related policies in place. These have specific targets and progress indicators and are developed and progressed with reference to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 which provides a common strategic framework for policy making. If gaps are identified in this policy spectrum, specific policies are created (for example the Community Food Strategy). The Welsh Government is not persuaded there is a case for an additional superarching national food strategy as it would duplicate</p>

	<p>existing food and food related policies. The Welsh Government does recognise, however, a need for a short document to summarise food related policies and how they join up across policy areas and with the (WFG Act) well-being goals, which will be published later in 2023.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 10</b> The national food strategy should include existing and any new food targets set.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>rejected</b> in view of the response to recommendation 9. The Welsh Government already sets targets for specific food related policies.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12</b> If the Bill falls and the recommendation to establish an internal food board within Welsh Government is taken forward this board should have an oversight role regarding development and implementation of the strategy.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>The First Minister chaired an internal Food Forum on June 13 to ensure good policy join up is achieved and communicated. Work has started across portfolios to identify food related policies relevant to a Welsh Government food publication to be shared with the Committee and to be published later this year. Work has also restarted to identify all policies relevant to the Community Food Strategy (CFS). The CFS will be developed taking account of cross-portfolio interests and contributions.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 16</b> If the Bill falls the Minister should, via appropriate guidance, encourage actions that would promote the implementation of local food plans to encourage the use of locally sourced food by public sector organisations</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>The Welsh Government is already supporting Local Food Partnerships through the funding of their development and employment of co-ordinators. We are considering how this work might be developed as one of the elements of the Community Food Strategy. Local Food Partnerships are potentially a strong model to identify and address food related actions at a local level through bringing the means and capacity to collectively</p>

	<p>identify needs and to plan for them. There is a potential link to develop between them and public bodies and public service boards to provide focus for action on local food matters in both a bottom up and top down way.</p> <p>The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 creates a socially responsible procurement duty on certain public bodies to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of its area by carrying out public procurement in a socially responsible way. This new duty has the potential to increase the procurement of locally sourced food. Additionally, the roll out of the universal free primary school meals policy is increasing the public procurement of food and is creating opportunities for the sale of locally sourced food.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 17</b> - If the Bill falls the Welsh Government should encourage more emphasis on food sustainability at a local level through the best mechanisms available under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015. This could be through including a new Well-being indicator/s with milestones to support a better food system. This should result in Public Services Boards further considering public procurement and sustainability of food in their well-being plans and assessments.</p>	<p>This recommendation is <b>accepted in principle</b>.</p> <p>The evidence suggests food issues are not being considered systematically or consistently by public bodies individually or by public service boards, although there are some good examples of practice.</p> <p>The response to recommendation 16 includes reference to local food partnerships and the socially responsible procurement duty which are both potential means to increase emphasis on food sustainability at local levels. The Welsh Government is also mindful of the potential relevance to this recommendation of the Future Generations Wales Commissioner “listening exercise” to inform his priorities and the work of the Wales</p>

	<p>Net Zero 2035 Challenge Group. These may indicate whether revision of the FGW Act indicators and milestones would encourage more focus on food sustainability.</p>
--	---