

Rebecca Evans AS/MS  
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a Llywodraeth Leol  
Minister for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS  
Chair of Finance Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
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29 June 2023

Dear Peredur,

When we met on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June, we discussed the timetable for the 2024-25 Budget. I indicated that the Trefnydd would be writing to Business Committee two weeks before the end of the summer term to set out a draft timetable for when the 2024-2025 Draft Budget will be laid, and the annual budget motion will be tabled.

We acknowledged that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not yet published the date of the fiscal event in which we will learn the precise details of our budget settlement for the financial year 2024-25. While we already have indicative budget allocations under the multi-year Spending Review, the subsequent and substantial inflationary pressures coupled with significant uncertainty until we receive confirmation of our final settlement means we are likely to face challenging choices once our settlement is known. As a result, this means that once again we are obliged to recognise that the only prudent choice is to follow a budget timetable similar to the one employed in recent years, where we publish our draft budget late in the autumn term.

Publishing a draft budget when learning details of our final budget settlement at such a late stage presents challenges for both the development of departmental spending plans and their scrutiny by the Senedd. The timetable we intend to follow recognises the need to provide sufficient time to ensure we can effectively undertake our budget preparations and provide an appropriate level of detail in our budget documentation, while also ensuring the maximum available time for scrutiny in the Senedd.

Standing Order 20.6 makes provision for the Committee to make changes to the timetable at the request of the Government. Subject to this, and on the understanding that we will provide a firm timetable as soon as possible after the UK Government has made an announcement regarding its Budget, the Trefnydd has indicated that we are planning to publish the outline and detailed draft Budgets together on **12 December 2023**, and the final Budget on **27 February 2024**.

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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.

As we discussed, these dates would require the Finance Committee to publish its report on the Draft Budget on or before Monday 5 February to enable the debate on the Draft Budget to take place on Tuesday 6 February.

I remain mindful of both Standing Order 20.5 and the arrangements agreed between the Welsh Government and the Welsh Parliament regarding the period provided for scrutiny. Standing Order 20.5 provides, in 'normal' circumstances, for the Finance Committee to be given eight weeks to report on the outline budget proposals and five weeks for committees to consider the detailed Budget proposals. Whilst this cannot be termed a 'normal' year under the current version of Standing Orders and the Budget Protocol, we remain committed to ensuring the fullest possible scrutiny of our spending proposals. As a result, the timetable I have set out would enable 7 weeks and four days for scrutiny of the draft Budget, comprising 4 sitting weeks and four days and 3 non-sitting weeks.

If the Chancellor's announcement were sufficiently early to allow additional time for both the preparation and scrutiny of the Draft Budget, I would plan to revisit the publication dates.

As in recent years, recognising the impact to the Senedd I am happy to support the Committee's pre-budget scrutiny and will continue to provide information to the Committee prior to summer recess on various factors that can be drawn upon to inform future budget planning.

I am grateful for the Committee's understanding and trust these arrangements are acceptable given the circumstances, which are once again driven by external factors beyond our immediate control.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Rebecca Evans AS/MS**  
**Y Gweinidog Cyllid a Llywodraeth Leol**  
**Minister for Finance and Local Government**