

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb hwn i [ymgyngoriad y Pwyllgor Biliau Diwygio](#) ar [Fil Senedd Cymru \(Aelodau ac Etholiadau\)](#).

This response was submitted to the [Reform Bill Committee consultation](#) on the [Senedd Cymru \(Members and Elections\) Bill](#).

#### SCME426 Ymateb gan: | Response from: John Kitchen

---

- Dear committee,
- To maintain the relevance of my comments to the matters being discussed I will use the consultation document as a template.
- If passed, the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill will:
  - Increase the size of the Senedd to 96 Members.
  - *I believe this to be wholly inappropriate given the burgeoning costs of the administration and the dire financial position that the Welsh Government is in. Competing items such as health, education and road maintenance and renewal all demand preference if and when finance becomes available. This depends on robust action to prevent unnecessary spending and reduction in bureaucracy that stifles business growth*

Decrease the length of time between Senedd ordinary general elections from five to four years.

- *I strongly oppose this which whilst appearing innocuous adds more than 20% to the costs of the present election process whilst not providing any tangible benefit*
- Increase the maximum number of Deputy Presiding Officers from one to two.
- *Unnecessary waste and duplication*



- Increase the legislative limit on the size of the Welsh Government to 17 (plus the First Minister and Counsel General), with power to further increase the limit to 18 or 19.
- *The reason for this is unclear. Opposed*
- Require candidates to, and Members of, the Senedd to be resident in Wales (by disqualifying candidates and Members who are not registered to vote in a Senedd constituency).
- *This would result in persons resident in Wales being unable to vote or apply as candidates for roles in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland. If to be considered this must be put to a public vote, as part of a referendum on independence.*
- Provide a mechanism for the Seventh Senedd's consideration of job-sharing of offices relating to the Senedd (by requiring the Llywydd in the Seventh Senedd to propose the establishment of a Senedd committee to review specified matters).
- *This is too vague. What exactly would be the benefits.*
- Change the Senedd's electoral system so that all Members are elected via closed list proportional representation, with votes translated into seats via the D'Hondt formula.
- *This is totally undemocratic. The public lose the democratic right to vote for and elect their chosen representative. It gives a platform within party political structures for jobs for the chosen few. Appears to be based upon the electoral mechanism of the Communist Party of China*
- Repurpose and rename the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales; provide the renamed Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) with the functions needed to establish new Senedd constituencies and undertake ongoing reviews of Senedd constituency boundaries; and provide instructions for the DBCC to follow when undertaking boundary reviews.

- *Why? This provides no clear financial or managerial benefit again in straitened times this is an unnecessary drain on resources best spent elsewhere if they are indeed available at all*

▪

- SUMMARY
- Senedd has announced that there is a very serious financial situation.
- There are massive demands across the board for increased spending and priorities must clearly be made. If everything is a priority then of course nothing is a priority!
- However, health, a devolved power has slipped below other nations by more or less any measure, be that ambulance response times or waiting times for elective surgery. BCUHB within that area of devolution holds an unenviable position as probably the worst performer across the board.
- If you ask any member of the public, your electorate, which they want: millions spent on a Senedd Reform or improvements to the Welsh NHS it is to use common parlance, a no brainer!
- Education.
- STEM is what the employers want taught but this appears secondary to vanity projects
- Transport
- Not one single advanced nation has adopted a no road building programme. Here in north wales millions has been wasted on the much needed Red Route. This impacts north east wales, the industrial heart of the economy. It has impact on jobs, wealth creation, international trading and desirability as a place to set up new and exciting businesses.
- Today the news is about young people leaving the country. The projected reforms will not stop that. They need good, well paid jobs, a culture of excellence and an enthusiasm for success.
- The economy needs bolstering, business rates and taxes need to be slashed to encourage, as in Eire a pro business anti red tape model.

- Stop blaming Westminster, goodness knows there are many problems there but Wales after Northern Ireland receives the second highest amount from central government.

This is a short summary of what I consider priorities and I accept they have been may not fit with the Senedd view. Nonetheless as a health care professional, as a business person, as a homeowner, as a parent and grandparent I believe in democracy.

This is my voice and opinion.

However I am concerned having seen the outrageous disregard given to a petition, the largest such petition in U.K. let alone Welsh history, that any observations regarding the Reform of the Senedd will be given the same degree of cavalier disrespect.

Yours truly

John Kitchen