

Committee update

Spring – Summer 2024

Welcome to our seventh committee update

This is the seventh bulletin for the Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee. It provides an overview of the Committee's recent activities and planned work to help you stay up to date and engage with the Committee's work.

It has been produced by the Clerking team which supports the Committee. If you have any feedback, please let us know using the contact details below.

Contact details

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Current Work

Future of Welsh Steel

Following the announcement from Tata Steel on 19 January 2024 regarding the shutting down of blast furnaces at its Port Talbot site, the future of Welsh Steel has been at the forefront of Members minds and the Committees agenda. Members heard from Tata Steel and the Minister for Economy on 7 February, after which the Chair released a statement, then from the steel unions and two panels of experts at its meeting on 29 February. The Committee then held an extraordinary meeting on 14 March with the Secretary of State for Wales. The Committee continues to work on this issue and has written to the Department for Business and Trade about securing the scrap steel supply for the proposed new electric arc furnace at the Port Talbot site, and to Tata following the announcement on 18 March of early closure of its coke ovens.

Green Economy

The Committee is undertaking an inquiry into the Green Economy with oral evidence sessions running throughout the Spring and Summer terms.

A consultation was held as part of this inquiry, which ran from 27 January to 7 March and received 37 responses.

Development Bank of Wales

The Committee is undertaking an inquiry into the Development Bank of Wales with oral evidence sessions running throughout the Spring and Summer terms.

The Committee held a consultation as part of this inquiry, which ran from 16 November to 4 January, and received 8 responses.

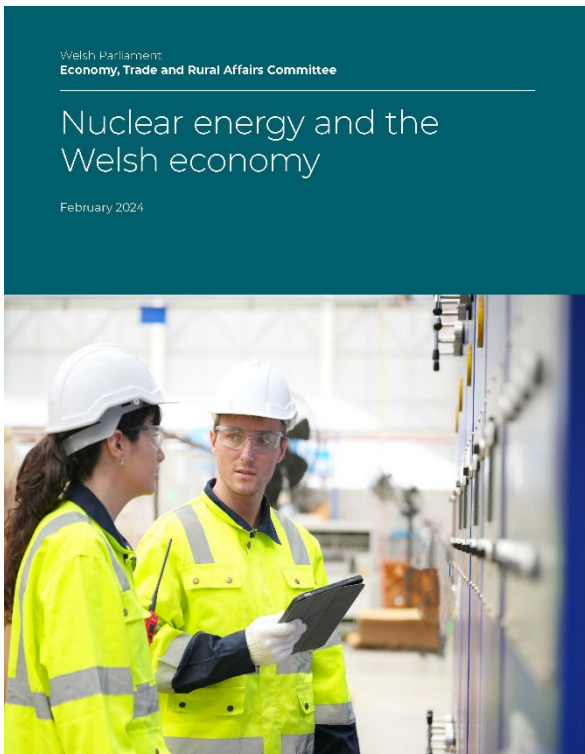
Research and Development

The Committee's consultation as part of a one-day inquiry into Research and Development ran from 4 October to 15 November, and received 15 responses.

On 30 November, the Committee received oral evidence from Funding bodies, higher education organisations, and the business sector.

A report will be published after Easter 2024.

Nuclear Energy and the Welsh Economy



Welsh Parliament
Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

Nuclear energy and the Welsh economy

February 2024



seneddswales

The Committee published its [report](#) 'Nuclear Energy and the Welsh Economy' on 21 February 2024, in advance of the announcement that UK Government has bought the site at Wylfa in North Wales.

In addition to seeking a response from Welsh Government, the Committee also [wrote to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, UK Government](#), for a response to recommendation 1.

A plenary debate on the report is scheduled for Wednesday 17 April.

Recent Activities

Farming Connect

On [22 February](#), the Committee held a one-day inquiry focusing on preparedness and capacity of Farming Connect to deliver future services required under the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) from 2025, as well as to support farmers during the transition. The Committee heard from the farming unions, young farmers, the Nature Farming Friendly Network, Confor, and Wales Environment Link.

Budget Scrutiny

The Committee scrutinised the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for 2024-25 on [18 January](#) and

[published its report](#) by the 5 February reporting deadline with a debate on the Draft Budget held in [plenary](#) the following day. A plenary debate and vote on the Final Budget was then held on 5 March.

Trade and Ports

As a follow-up to Members' visit to the Port of Holyhead last June, and evidence sessions held [in the Autumn term](#), the Committee discussed the Border Target Operating Model and the Windsor Framework with Baroness Lucy Neville-Rolfe DBE CMG, Minister of State at the Cabinet Office on [7 February](#).

General Ministerial Scrutiny

The Committee continues to hold regular scrutiny sessions with the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, and the Minister for Economy. The Committee held sessions with both Ministers on Wednesday 6 March.

Forward Work Programme

The Committee has agreed its work programme into Summer 2024. The published work programme indicates the current intentions of the Committee at the time of publishing; however, it may change at any time to respond to external events. The Committee's work is expected to include continuing to look at the Development Bank of Wales; the Sustainable Farming Scheme; and the Green Economy and skills for net zero. The Committee will also be hearing from cabinet members appointed by the incoming First Minister, will undertake ; a Committee visit; and plans to attend the Royal Welsh Show in July.

Remit

The Committee was established on 23 June 2021, with a remit encompassing (but not restricted to): economic development, regeneration, skills, trade, research, and development (including technology and science), and rural affairs.

Committee Members



Committee Chair:
Paul Davies MS
Welsh Conservatives



Hefin David MS
Welsh Labour



Luke Fletcher MS
Plaid Cymru



Samuel Kurtz MS
Welsh Conservatives



Vikki Howells MS
Welsh Labour



Buffy Williams MS
Welsh Labour