

Chairs of Senedd committees

22 May 2024

Committee remits

Dear Chair,

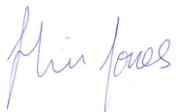
During the Business Committee's meeting on 14 May, we considered a letter from the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee regarding challenges in relation to that Committee's remit which have arisen from recent changes to ministerial portfolios.

The Business Committee agreed to write to other Senedd committees to invite you to provide any views that you have on current committee remits, in order that we can consider any issues that have arisen in a coordinated manner.

I intend for the Business Committee to return to consider these matters further ahead of the summer recess and would therefore be grateful to receive any views or reflections that your Committee has by Friday 21 June 2024. Please let me know if you anticipate having any difficulty responding in this timeframe.

I enclose a copy of the correspondence sent from the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee concerning their remit for context.

Kind regards,



The Rt Hon. Elin Jones MS

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg | We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Elin Jones MS

Llywydd

Chair of the Business Committee

10 May 2024

Dear Llywydd,

Committee Remits following the recent reconfiguration of the Welsh Government Cabinet

I am writing to request that the Business Committee consider the remits of policy committees following the appointment of the First Minister and subsequent reconfiguration of cabinet portfolios.

You will be aware that the recent changes to ministerial roles resulted in a significant redistribution of responsibilities, particularly those of the former Minister for Climate Change. The Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee's remit now covers the portfolios of four cabinet secretaries, encompassing diverse and substantial policy areas, as follows:

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy & Welsh Language

- Energy policy, including renewable energy
- Circular economy
- Ports policy, including freeports
- Oversight of Cardiff Airport
- Digital connectivity infrastructure

Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs

- All matters relating to climate change and the environment.

Cabinet Secretary for North Wales and Transport

- Rail services through the Wales and Borders franchise
- Bus services
- Active travel
- Roads policies



- Transport for Wales

Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government & Planning

- Planning, including Future Wales: The National Plan 2040
- National Infrastructure Commission
- Coal tip safety
- National Parks

I do not believe it is realistic to expect the CCEI Committee to scrutinise such a wide range of portfolios effectively. I am concerned that certain significant areas of Welsh Government policy will likely go without scrutiny because of the challenges presented by the changes to cabinet portfolios. Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's draft budget, in particular, is likely to prove difficult, especially considering the time constraints under which committees already operate.

I would be grateful, therefore, if the Business Committee would consider a reconfiguration of committee remits to streamline the number of Cabinet Secretaries the CCEI Committee is required to scrutinise. This could include the transfer of planning and related matters, as set out above, to the Local Government and Housing (LGH) Committee. This could also include transferring the matters that fall within the portfolio of the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy & Welsh Language to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs (ETRA) Committee.

These changes would decrease the number of Cabinet Secretaries requiring scrutiny by the CCEI Committee from four to two. However, they would not affect the number of Cabinet Secretaries requiring scrutiny by the ETRA or LGH committees.

Of course, given the overlapping nature of Senedd policy committee remits, I recognise that changes to the CCEI Committee's remit would not prevent the Committee from looking at a matter through the lens of the environment or climate change. However, these changes would mean that the CCEI Committee would not be the Committee with primary responsibility for scrutiny in that policy area.

I recognise the Business Committee will wish to consult other committees as part of this process and would be happy to discuss any issues with the Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

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