

Y Cyfarfod Llawn

Plenary

09/07/2024

Mae hon yn fersiwn ddrafft o'r Cofnod sy'n cynnwys yr iaith a lefarwyd a'r cyfieithiad ar y pryd.

This is a draft version of the Record that includes the floor language and the simultaneous interpretation.

3. Datganiad gan y Prif Weinidog: Y Rhaglen Ddeddfwriaethol

3. Statement by the First Minister: The Legislative Programme

Y Llywydd / The Llywydd 15:01:25

141 Yr eitem nesaf fydd y datganiad gan y Prif Weinidog ar y rhaglen ddeddfwriaethol. Vaughan Gething.

The next item will be a statement by the First Minister on the legislative programme. Vaughan Gething.

Vaughan Gething 15:01:39

First Minister of Wales

142 Diolch, Llywydd. It is a pleasure to be able to set out today the legislative priorities for my Government. I have been clear that we must focus our resources on what matters most in people's daily lives. Both our record of delivery and our plans for the future reflect our commitment to radical, progressive and transformative change for every corner of Wales.

143 Our legislative achievements over the last 12 months reflect this commitment as we have passed laws crucial for the long-term future of Wales. The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act, which received Royal Assent earlier this year, shows our commitment to improve the air that we breathe and to promote healthy soundscapes. As we move towards net-zero emissions by 2050, we need to transform our economy to power green prosperity. The Infrastructure (Wales) Act, passed in April, will play a key role in delivering our renewable energy targets and will simplify the consenting process for major infrastructure projects.

- 144 We are committed to ensuring effective, high-quality and sustainable health and social care to deliver better outcomes. In May, we introduced the Health and Social Care (Wales) Bill, which will eliminate private profit from the care of looked-after children as part of our programme to transform children's services. The Health Service Procurement (Wales) Act, which received Royal Assent this year, will enhance efficiency and patient-centred healthcare. Together with regulations later this year, this will deliver a new regime for the procurement of NHS services to meet the needs of the sector and the people it serves. These are an example of the significant subordinate legislation that underpins our legislative programme, including regulations to implement Acts of the Senedd, such as the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023.
- 145 Llywydd, the Bills we brought forward in the third year of the legislative programme will also make positive changes for democracy in Wales. The Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) (Wales) Act, which received Royal Assent last month, will create a modern Senedd, better able to represent and serve the people of Wales. Further measures to reform the Senedd will be considered when we debate the general principles of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill next week. We share an ambition across the Senedd to introduce a recall mechanism for Senedd Members and my Government stands ready to support that work. We have also committed to enable legislation for the Senedd to consider on the issue of deception by Members of the Senedd and candidates standing for election to the Senedd. We look forward to the recommendations of the Standards of Conduct Committee on both of these issues as part of its work on the accountability of individual Members.
- 146 Later this afternoon, we will consider Stage 4 of the Elections and Elected Bodies (Wales) Bill, which will develop an electoral system fit for the twenty-first century. Members will also consider amendments to the Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill at Stage 3 later today. The Bill forms part of our work to reform non-domestic rates and council tax. The final Bill of our year three programme, the Welsh language and education Bill, will be introduced next week. Our aim is to help pupils in Wales to become independent and confident Welsh speakers.
- 147 Llywydd, I now turn to those Bills that my Government will introduce in the rest of this Senedd term. We have a packed legislative agenda ahead as we continue to make laws that will deliver positive and progressive change. My Government is committed to improving transport networks, helping to tackle the climate emergency and restoring a sense of belonging, connection and community. We will radically reshape the public transport system, bringing forward a bus Bill to enable all levels of government in Wales to work together. We can then design bus networks that allow people to access reliable, sustainable services and to provide real options other than car journeys.

- 148 Llywydd, alongside this, we are committed to modernising taxi and private hire vehicle licensing to create a safer and fairer sector. So, we will consult on a draft taxi and private hire vehicles Bill this Senedd term, and we will continue to work with passengers, the trade and licensing authorities to take forward reforms through non-legislative means. Members may wish to note a declaration of interest concerning the company Veezu, in addition to my membership of the Unite and GMB trade unions.
- 149 We will continue to demonstrate our commitment to tackling the increasing threat to the environment by bringing forward an environmental principles and biodiversity Bill. This will establish a statutory environmental governance body for Wales, embed environmental principles into Welsh law and introduce a legal duty with targets to protect and restore biodiversity. The Bill signals our clear commitment that action and leadership to tackle the climate and nature emergency will remain as a top priority for this Welsh Government.
- 150 Coal tips are a legacy of Wales's mining past. The disused tips (mines and quarries) Bill will give greater security to the people living in their shadow. It will protect critical infrastructure and safeguard the environment by enshrining in law a sustainable, fit-for-purpose regulatory regime for disused tip safety.
- 151 Llywydd, I have been clear that we must focus our efforts on the issues that matter most to the people of Wales. Everyone should have somewhere to call home, and the safety of our residents is paramount. Our homelessness Bill will help people remain in their homes and focus on prevention and early intervention to significantly improve the homelessness and housing system. A suite of secondary legislation that brought in tighter building controls came into force in April. Our building safety Bill will extend this by establishing a new building safety regime. This will fundamentally reform the occupation and ongoing management of multi-occupied residential buildings and address fire safety issues.
- 152 We will introduce a Bill that will give local authorities powers to introduce a visitor levy. The money raised will support tourism, helping our communities and preserving the beauty of Wales for future generations. The visitor accommodation (regulation) Bill will enhance the visitor experience by ensuring visitor accommodation meets required standards. The Bill will establish a register of visitor accommodation and enable providers to demonstrate compliance with safety requirements.
- 153 Improving the accessibility of our law is another important facet of our legislative programme. Our next legislation Bill will remove obsolete and spent provisions from the statute book and formalise the system of making and publishing Welsh statutory instruments. I know that Members are keen to see the consolidation of planning law, which has become increasingly inaccessible and overly complex for operators and users of the planning system. We will bring forward a Bill towards the end of this Senedd that will simplify and modernise the law in this area.

- 154 The Welsh Government will seek to work in partnership with the UK Government in respect of UK legislation, and we will update the Senedd following the King's Speech later this month. There will also be a programme of subordinate legislation to implement UK Acts made in the previous parliamentary session. This includes the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024, which provided powers for Welsh Ministers to deliver reform in this area.
- 155 Llywydd, I would like to thank Senedd Members and committees, as well as our social partners and stakeholders, for the role that they play in developing and scrutinising legislation. Our legislative programme will make a real difference to people's lives, it will help to improve transport links across the country, protect people and our communities, and help us to tackle the climate emergency. I commend this programme to Members. I look forward to continuing to work together on these priorities to build an ambitious future for a fairer, stronger and greener Wales.