

Jack Sargeant MS
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

20 August 2025

Dear Jack,

Request for information to inform scrutiny of Draft Budget 2026–27

I am writing to request written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27.

The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive. Of course, you should not feel limited by our request, and are welcome to address any other issues you believe will assist the Committee in its budget scrutiny work.

Given the overlap between your portfolio and that of the Minister for Further and Higher Education with regard to funding for skills, apprenticeships, and research and development, I have copied in Buffy Williams MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee (CYPE). We will review the evidence provided to CYPE in budget scrutiny as well as the evidence you provide to this Committee before making our report to the Senedd.

Please can you provide this information by 3 November 2025.

With many thanks for assisting us in our scrutiny work.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Davies



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

CC: Buffy Williams MS, Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee



Annex

Request for information from Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to inform the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee scrutiny of the draft budget 2026-27.

Presentation of the budget

The Committee will present its findings on the Draft Budget according to an agreed co-ordinated approach centred on four principles of financial scrutiny:

- affordability - to look at the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced;
- prioritisation - whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent;
- value for money - essentially, whether public bodies are spending their allocations well in term of economy, efficiency and effectiveness, i.e. outcomes; and
- budget processes – whether they are effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

A separate letter has been issued to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning to request details on the Draft Budget for the Economy MEG and preventative spending.

As well as general information on the individual Budget Expenditure Lines within your remit relevant to the Committee, we would like to receive the following information on the policies and issues set out below:

Skills & Employability:

- The total quantum of funding intended to be deployed on delivering the Young Persons Guarantee in 2026-27.
- The level of funding intended to be deployed to deliver Personal Learning Accounts in 2026-27.
- Detail of any specific skills and employability funding being offered to support those affected by Tata's decision to halt primary steel making in Port Talbot.
- Detail of any specific funding for sectors transitioning to net zero to upskill and reskill workers, including:

- details of funding for the Flexible Skills Programme and whether specific allocations are made to individual programmes.
- A consolidated list of all employability programmes funded by the Skills BEL, including:
 - the intended client base / beneficiaries of each programme;
 - whether they are part of a larger 'umbrella' scheme (i.e. the Young Persons Guarantee); and
 - a list detailing the main providers for each of the programmes including their 2026-27 contract values.
- Details of allocations to support economically inactive and disabled people into employment.
- Details of funding allocated to the WorldSkills UK competition, including forecasts of remaining funds to spend in 2025.
- Actual 2024-25 and forecast 2025-26 funding for the Creative Wales Skills Fund and how this is intended to be used.

Work-based Learning:

- The actual 2024-25 and forecast 2025-26 outturn for the apprenticeship programme and how this relates to the achievement of Welsh Government's target.
- Details of any transfers out of the 2026-27 Work-Based Learning Action to fund Degree Apprenticeships.
- Details of any funding utilised in 2025-26 and forecast to be used in 2026-27 to:
 - develop new apprenticeship frameworks; and/or
 - review existing apprenticeship frameworks.
- Details of all demand-management restrictions and actions to manage apprenticeship demand that are in-place, or will be introduced for the apprenticeship programme during 2026-27.
- Details of any changes to the funding of apprenticeships in response to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee's apprenticeships report.
- Details of any specific purposes of the funding provided to Medr in their role of allocating funding for apprenticeships.

Regional Skills Partnerships / Employer Engagement:

- Details of the funding to be provided to each Regional Skills Partnership and for what purpose.
- Details of Welsh Government's allocations to Careers Wales and how this is aimed at delivering desired outcomes for skills.

Social partnership and fair work:

- Details of allocations relating to the implementation of the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act, and whether these have changed from those predicted in the Regulatory Impact Assessment published to inform scrutiny of the Bill.
- Details of how allocations in the Draft Budget will support fair work initiatives and support increased payment of the Real Living Wage.
- Details of any allocations made to support the implementation of the Remote Working strategy.