

Rt Hon Elin Jones MS

Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

19 December 2025

Dear Llywydd,

Timetables for Bill scrutiny

As you will be aware, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee has recently completed its Stage 1 scrutiny of the general principles of the Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill. While my discontent with the timetable allocated for this scrutiny has been well rehearsed in previous correspondence, I would like to now reflect on the Committee's experience of working within this timetable.

As a Committee, we planned our approach according to the timetable set by Business Committee. In practice, this meant a particularly short window for evidence gathering, specifically:

- three Committee days over three consecutive sitting weeks on which to take oral evidence, which included two sessions with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language,
- a two week consultation period,
- the inability to revisit specific issues with stakeholders, and
- the inability to scrutinise a number of further points that were raised in additional evidence after our evidence gathering had been completed.

On the first point, while the Committee was able to schedule seven evidence sessions in addition to those with the Cabinet Secretary, the significantly reduced notice period for witnesses did cause issues for availability and for the Committee's flexibility in accommodating them. In some instances, letters were issued in place of taking oral evidence. While this allowed for targeted questions to be posed, I am sure you will appreciate this did not then allow for a full and frank discussion with Members



around the issues. This approach also meant that we had to hold our evidence sessions with the Cabinet Secretary on the same days as panels with stakeholders, so we had little time to digest the evidence and reflect fully before moving forward.

On the second point, while the Committee reached out to stakeholders to give notice that a consultation would be forthcoming in advance of the Bill's formal introduction, the condensed timescale for responses did frustrate the efforts of those who wished to provide evidence. Some of the comments the Committee received in relation to the timetable are highlighted below:

- The National Residential Landlords Association declined to submit detailed written evidence to the Committee, stating that "the short window provided for consultation is, regrettably, insufficient for us to meaningfully canvass our membership and prepare a robust, evidence-based submission."
- The Short Term Accommodation Association said: "the turnaround for evidence on the Bill has been very short and impeded a detailed consultation of members and additional data collection".
- Airbnb expressed strong concern about the "accelerated timeline for passage of the bill", saying that the timelines "feel excessively rushed", particularly given that "the bill will introduce major legal obligations on VAPs".

The Committee agreed that the timetable for Stage 1 scrutiny was insufficient, and while we were able to take a relatively broad range of evidence in the time allocated, it restricted our ability to carry out the thorough and proper scrutiny usually afforded to non-emergency proposals for primary legislation. Good scrutiny should be a cornerstone of good, robust, legislation, and I would like to draw your attention to the first recommendation in our report:

"Recommendation 1. Future Seneddau and governments should not take the timetable afforded to this Bill as a precedent for the making and scrutiny of non-emergency legislation. Such a short timeframe should be avoided unless exceptional circumstances demand otherwise."

I hope these reflections may be taken into account in preparations for the Seventh Senedd.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee