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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Peredur Griffiths
Chair, Finance Committee

9 January 2026

Dear Peredur

Senedd Cymru (Member Accountability and Elections) Bill

Thank you for the Finance Committee's report in relation to the Senedd Cymru (Member Accountability and Elections) Bill published on 19 December 2025. Please see my responses to the set of recommendations within the report at Annex 1.

I am providing a written response to the Stage 1 Committee reports in advance of the general principles debate.

I would like to express my thanks to the Committee for scrutinising the Bill and its supporting documentation. I look forward to continuing to work with Members as the Bill progresses through the Senedd process.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Member Accountability Bill Committee and the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Annex 1

Committees Recommendation	Welsh Government Response
<p>Recommendation 1. The Committee recommends that the Counsel General continues to work closely with electoral administrators, the Electoral Commission, political parties, the Senedd Commission and the Commissioner for Standards to refine cost estimates during the Bill's passage through the Senedd, ensuring the Regulatory Impact Assessment remains robust and reflects any changes to the Bill.</p>	<p>Accept</p> <p>As is standard practice, following Stage 2 proceedings, my officials will revise the Explanatory Memorandum to the Bill, including the RIA. In developing the revised EM, my officials will engage with key stakeholders to reflect changes to the financial implications as a result of any amendments.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2. The Committee recommends that the Counsel General, in consultation with the Senedd Commission, establishes the estimated cost of providing lay members with an induction and ongoing support, and incorporates this into a revised Regulatory Impact Assessment after Stage 2.</p>	<p>Accept</p> <p>My officials will engage with Senedd Commission officials to attempt to make an assessment of the costs of an induction programme for lay members.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3. The Committee recommends that the Senedd Commission establishes a separate and clearly identifiable budget line for lay member costs in its annual budget documentation to ensure clarity and transparency.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>I note that this recommendation is for the Senedd Commission to respond to.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4. The Committee recommends that the Counsel General, in consultation with the Senedd Commission and the Commissioner for Standards, establishes the opportunity costs associated with undertaking own-initiative investigations and incorporates this into a revised Regulatory Impact Assessment after Stage 2.</p>	<p>Accept</p> <p>My officials will engage with Senedd Commission officials and the Commissioner for Standards to further attempt to assess the opportunity costs associated with undertaking own-initiative investigations.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5. The Committee recommends that the Bill be amended to include a statutory requirement for a post-implementation review, triggered by the first use of the recall poll, and that the review should include an assessment of the associated costs and benefits of the legislation.</p>	<p>Accept in principle</p> <p>I agree with the principle of the Committee's recommendations, that a review of a new system should be undertaken once it has been utilised. However, I do not consider that it is necessary to create a statutory review duty in respect of Recall Polls, and there may be complications by it being tied to the first use of the recall poll.</p> <p>I am conscious that the Bill already requires the Electoral Commission to prepare and publish a report on the administration of any recall poll, and that as the financial regulations provisions are developed, consideration will be given to the extent</p>

to which spending incurred by registered campaigners or equivalents is required to be reported to Constituency Returning Officers or the Electoral Commission.

The Welsh Government, as a matter of course, publishes the administration costs incurred by Constituency Returning Officers, and recharged to the Welsh Consolidated Fund in respect of Senedd elections, and the Welsh Government will take the same approach to administration costs incurred in respect of recall polls.

Given that a recall system is - at its heart - policy owned by the Senedd, I consider that it would be most appropriate for the Senedd to undertake any such post-legislative review. This is in line with the approach taken with regards to the Senedd Reform programme as a whole and set out in the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act. It is of course open to the Senedd to undertake any such review of the operation of a recall system, and the Senedd should have the discretion to determine the most appropriate time to do so.