

Y Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd Environment and Sustainability Committee

Alun Davies AM
Minister for Natural Resources and
Food
Welsh Government

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru
National
Assembly for
Wales



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Annwyl Alun

I am disappointed and frustrated at the lateness in which the Committee received your budget papers. Receiving papers less than 48 hours before a Committee meeting has a grave impact on the Committee's ability to scrutinise your budget. It also shows a lack of respect for the Committee, its Members, and the importance of its role in scrutinising the Welsh Government.

This is particularly vexing because I wrote to you on 5 August outlining the key areas we wanted the budget paper to cover. This provided your officials with ample time to prepare the information that the Committee wanted. Yet despite this, the papers were not received until after 11am on Monday 14 October. The Committee's courtesy in giving you, and your officials, sufficient time to prepare was not returned and as of yet no satisfactory reason for this delay has been given. I trust that you will be able to provide us with a full and frank explanation for this when you give evidence to the Committee tomorrow.

An on-going issue which has been raised by our Committee and other Assembly committees' has been the need for the Welsh Government to improve the level of information and transparency around the budget. Receiving papers so late is a barrier to this transparency. While we welcome the detailed information that was provided in the paper when it finally arrived, the fact it was received so late almost negated the usefulness of the information provided.

This lateness puts the Committee in breach of our Standing Orders requirement to publish documents at least two working days before a Committee meeting. Additionally, it contravenes the protocol between the Assembly and Welsh Government that papers will be provided one week before a Committee meeting.

I trust that you will be in a position to assure me, and my committee colleagues, that such significant delays will not occur in the future.

We will be highlighting our concerns about this directly with the Finance Committee.

Yn gywir

Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM
Chair – Environment and Sustainability Committee

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