

Y Pwyllgor Cyllid | Finance Committee

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Response from Ian Summers

Given my previous employment with the Assembly I know the committee well and was fully aware of what to expect when I took on the role of adviser for the Best Budget Practice enquiry. I was not disappointed and was very pleased that Committee took on board virtually all my suggestions.

Going forward I am firmly of the view that the implementation of the recommendations in the Best Budget Practice Report coupled with the statutory duties in the Future Generations Act will necessitate a much harder and more focussed budget scrutiny process for the Finance Committee and also for other committees and AMs more generally. The Assembly will need to be better supported than ever before and this will, in my opinion necessitate the creation of a specialist Budget Unit as part of the Assembly staff. The Unit should have two to three staff dedicated to all aspects of budget scrutiny with the ability to call on/buy-in specialist expertise when needed. The staff should be suitably qualified and be able to speak with equal authority to those working on this matter within the Welsh Government. The Assembly deserves no less in order to be able to do its job of properly scrutinising the budget before approving it.

I would recommend that the committee considers this when preparing its legacy report.

Ian Summers