

Cyflwynwyd yr ymateb i ymgynghoriad y [Pwyllgor Cyllid](#) ar [Cyllideb Ddrafft Llywodraeth Cymru 2025-26](#).

This response was submitted to the [Finance Committee](#) consultation on the [Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26](#).

WGDB_26-27 27: Ymateb gan: RTPI Cymru - Sefydliad Cynllunio Trefol Brenhinol |
Response from: Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Cymru



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e-mail response sent to: SeneddFinance@senedd.wales

Dear Sir/Madam,

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27.

The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the largest professional body for town planners in the UK and Europe and represents 27,000 members in over 80 countries worldwide, with approximately 1200 members in Wales. The Institute has been shaping planning policy and raising professional standards for over 100 years and is the only body in the UK to confer Chartered status to planners, the highest professional qualification. The RTPI champions the power of planning in creating prosperous places and vibrant communities. Our ambition is to promote healthy, socially inclusive, economically and environmentally sustainable places.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Welsh Government Draft Budget for 2026-2027.

“Good planning ensures the right development is put in the right place”
(Future Wales: The National Plan 2024)

Planners balance economic, environmental, societal and cultural demands and play a key role in the provision of homes and jobs, addressing the climate and nature

emergencies, supporting green growth and the rapid transition to net zero carbon. Planners and the planning system are vital to meeting ambitious targets to achieve net zero, address the housing crisis, grow the Welsh economy and protect our built and natural environment. Investing in planning now prevents social and financial costs later. Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning addressed attendees at the RTPI Cymru Wales Planning Conference in June 2025. In her keynote speech she recognised planners as “the backbone of our drive to create sustainable and thriving communities”.

However, resourcing is a key challenge for planning and its supporting sectors and services. There has been extensive discussion over the past decade in relation to planning resource in Wales. We know from this discussion, previous research such as the Wales Audit Office Report (2019), and RTPI Cymru’s own research (The Big Conversation and Building Capacity) that one of the biggest challenges affecting the delivery of planning services in Wales is resources: financial and people. The Wales Audit Office reported Local Planning Authority budgets had fallen between 2009 – 2019 by £22m (50%) in real terms. Meanwhile, planners work in an increasingly contested space with a growing remit and greater community expectations. This is not sustainable.

The RTPI has long called for the proper resourcing of planning services. It is essential that the strain planning and its supporting services and sectors, including the wider public sector is currently under is recognised in developing budget proposals, so that achieving ambitious policy and targets is realistic. Sufficient resourcing of public bodies and investment in key skills and specialisms for the longer term are all important aspects of meeting targets. This is wider than just Local Planning Authorities. It includes the adequate resourcing of Natural Resources Wales, Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) and the Welsh Government’s own Planning Directorate, as well as key planning consultees such as ecologists, drainage and highways experts to enable it to support Local Planning Authorities and ensure the policy aspirations of Welsh Government are realised.

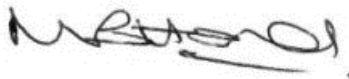
Until now we have lacked the hard evidence and complete overview of these resourcing issues needed to support the identification of the changes required to address this problem. RTPI Cymru has been commissioned by Welsh Government to investigate current capacity and resources within public sector planning services in Wales. This work will be published by the end of 2025.

RTPI Cymru's vision is to empower planners to deliver positive impact, creating healthy, well connected, inclusive and sustainable places and communities. To achieve this, we need a thriving and resilient Welsh planning system that is fully resourced, plan-led, responsive, effective and accessible.

Through our 2026 elections Planifesto (our manifesto for planning) we are making several asks for the next term of Senedd Cymru. These include supporting an ambitious and agile plan-led system that delivers, championing well-designed places with access to quality homes and infrastructure where communities thrive, and joined-up action to address the climate and nature emergencies. However, these asks must be underpinned by a commitment to invest in planning and planners.

If you require further assistance, please contact RTPI Cymru on 020 7929 8197 or e-mail Mark Hand at walespolicy@rtpi.org.uk

Yours faithfully,



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Director of Cymru