

A call for information – Welsh Government draft budget proposals for 2018–19

The Committees of the National Assembly are seeking information to inform their scrutiny of the Welsh Government's 2018–19 Draft Budget proposals. We are interested in exploring expectations of the 2018–19 budget, including financial readiness for the 2018–19 year and the impact of the 2017–18 budget.

We do not know as yet, what the draft budget proposals will look like, as they will not be published until October 2017.

The [Finance Committee](#) looks at the Welsh Government's budget from a strategic, overarching perspective. We also work with the other Assembly Committees to ensure that proposals for specific departments, or cabinet portfolios are considered in detail. Committees will each undertake their own focussed evidence sessions in order to examine the areas of the budget that fall within their respective remits. Further details on Assembly Committees and the budget process can be found at [Annex 1](#).

In this paper we have detailed specific questions at [Annex 2](#). You can answer any/all of these, or just let us know in general terms about your views in relation to the draft budget.

Disclosure of Information

The Assembly's policy on disclosure of information can be accessed [here](#), please ensure that you have considered these details carefully before submitting information to the Committee. Alternatively a hard copy of this policy can be requested by contacting the Clerk, Bethan Davies (0300 200 6372 seneddfinance@assembly.wales).

Providing information to the Committee

Interested parties are invited to submit written evidence to the Clerk of the Finance Committee to arrive by Wednesday 13 September. If you wish to contribute but are concerned that you won't be able to meet this deadline, please speak with the Clerk of the Committee on 0300 200 6372.

The National Assembly for Wales has two official languages, Welsh and English. In line with the Assembly's Official Languages Scheme, the Committee requests that documents or written responses to consultations intended for publication or use in National Assembly proceedings are submitted bilingually. When documents or written responses are not submitted bilingually, we will publish in the language submitted, stating that it has been received in that language only.

We expect other organisations to implement their own standards or schemes and to comply with their statutory obligations.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Simon Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Chair, Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex 1 – Background information

Who are we?

The Finance Committee is a cross party committee of the National Assembly for Wales, made up of Members from four political parties represented at the Assembly.

The Committee is not part of the Welsh Government. Rather, the Committee is responsible for reporting on proposals laid before the Assembly by Welsh Ministers relating to the use of resources.

Who are the other Committees involved in scrutinising the budget?

The other Committees involved in scrutinising the budget are:

- Children, Young People and Education Committee
- Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee
- Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
- Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee
- Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee
- External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee
- Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

What is the Welsh Government's draft budget?

The draft budget proposals must contain details of the amount of resources the Welsh Government proposes to use in the following financial year and indicative figures for the subsequent two financial years. More specifically it should set out:

- The use of resources and cash to be withdrawn from the Welsh Consolidated Fund by the Welsh Government, Assembly Commission, Auditor General and Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.
- How expenditure proposals will be financed, including taxation and borrowing plans.
- Income to be retained by those organisations (rather than being surrendered to the Welsh Consolidated Fund).

The Welsh Government will release an initial outline draft budget setting out high-level strategic spending and financing plans and a more detailed draft budget three weeks later.

The Welsh Government will also provide a narrative document which sets out allocations within departments, how proposals align with priorities and desired outcomes. The Welsh Government will also provide forecasts of taxation, borrowing and debt.

Why are we not doing this consultation after the Welsh Government's draft budget proposals have been published?

Responding to this consultation will not preclude stakeholders from also providing information, evidence, concerns and suggested areas for scrutiny to National Assembly for Wales Committees **after** the publication of the Welsh Government's outline draft budget proposals on 3 October 2017, or the detailed budget proposals on 24 October 2017.

The Committees of the National Assembly for Wales are required to report on the draft budget by 28 November 2017.

This means that there is a very limited time for stakeholders to suggest areas of concern to Committees after the detail of the draft budget has been published. By doing this consultation now, we hope stakeholders will have more time to consider the potential impact of the budget.

Annex 2

Consultation questions

1. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the Welsh Government's 2017–18 budget?
2. What expectations do you have of the 2018–19 draft budget proposals? How financially prepared is your organisation for the 2017–18 financial year, and how robust is your ability to plan for future years?
3. The Committee would like to focus on a number of specific areas in the scrutiny of the budget, do you have any specific comments on the areas identified below?
 - *Financing of local health boards and health and social care services*
 - *Approach to preventative spending and how is this represented in resource allocation (Preventative spending = spending which focuses on preventing problems and eases future demand on services by intervening early)*
 - *Sustainability of public services, innovation and service transformation*
 - *Welsh Government policies to reduce poverty and mitigate welfare reform*
 - *The Welsh Government's planning and preparedness for Brexit*
 - *How the Welsh Government should use new taxation and borrowing powers*
 - *How evidence is driving Welsh Government priority setting and budget allocations*
 - *How the Future Generations Act is influencing policy making.*