

Agenda – Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Video Conference via Zoom	Marc Wyn Jones
Meeting date: 20 January 2022	Committee Clerk
Meeting time: 09.15	0300 200 6565
	SeneddClimate@senedd.wales

Private pre-meeting (09.00–09.15)

In accordance with Standing Order 34.19, the Chair has determined that the public are excluded from the Committee's meeting in order to protect public health. This meeting will be broadcast live on senedd.tv.

Public meeting (09.15–11.25)

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions, and declarations of interest

(09.15)

2 Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23 – session 1

(09.15–10.15)

(Pages 1 – 75)

Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Dean Medcraft, Director of Finance & Operations

Gian Marco Currado , Director Environment and Marine

John Howells , Director of Climate Change, Energy and Planning

Steve Vincent , Director Economic Infrastructure



Attached Documents:

Research brief – Welsh Government draft budget 2022–23

Paper – Welsh Government: draft budget proposals for 2022–23

Break (10.15–10.25)

3 Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23 – session 2

(10.25–11.25)

Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

Lee Waters MS, Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Dean Medcraft, Director of Finance & Operations

Gian Marco Currado, Director Environment and Marine

John Howells, Director of Climate Change, Energy and Planning

Steve Vincent, Director Economic Infrastructure

Lunch Break (11.25–12.20)

Private pre-meeting (12.20–12.30)

Public meeting (12.30–14.00)

4 Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales

(12.30–14.00)

(Pages 76 – 97)

Sir David Henshaw, Chair – Natural Resources Wales

Clare Pillman, Chief Executive – Natural Resources Wales

Ceri Davies, Executive Director for Evidence, Policy and Permitting – Natural Resources Wales

Attached Documents:

Research brief – Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales

Annual Report and Accounts 2020–21 – Natural Resources Wales

Paper – Natural Resources Wales

5 Papers to note

(14.00)

5.1 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23

(Pages 98 – 100)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Finance Committee, to the Chair, in relation to the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23

5.2 Future funding of Natural Resources Wales

(Pages 101 – 103)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Minister for Climate Change regarding future funding of Natural Resources Wales

Response from the Minister for Climate Change to the letter from the Chair in relation to future funding of Natural Resources Wales

5.3 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23 and annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales

(Pages 104 – 108)

Attached Documents:

Paper from RSPB Cymru regarding the Welsh Government draft budget 2022–23 and annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales

Paper from Ramblers Cymru regarding the Welsh Government draft budget 2022–23

5.4 Single use plastic items

(Pages 109 – 111)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Minister for Climate Change regarding an update on proposals to ban single use plastic items

Response from the Minister for Climate Change to the letter from the Chair regarding an update on proposals to ban single use plastic items

5.5 Marine environment management

(Pages 112 – 114)

Attached Documents:

Follow up information from Natural Resources Wales following their evidence session on marine environment management at the Committee's meeting on 9 Dec 2021

5.6 Sewage discharges

(Pages 115 – 116)

Attached Documents:

Response from the Chair, Natural Resources Wales to the Chair's letter of 22 November regarding unpermitted sewage discharges

5.7 Common Frameworks – Radioactive Substances

(Page 117)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Climate Change to the Chair regarding the Framework Outline Agreement and Concordat for the Radioactive Substances Common Framework

5.8 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement between Senedd Cymru and the Welsh Government

(Pages 118 – 119)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee in relation to the Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement between Senedd Cymru and the Welsh Government

5.9 Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs

(Pages 120 – 121)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd and the Minister for Climate Change regarding the Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment Food and Rural Affairs

5.10 Inter-Ministerial Group on Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change

(Page 122)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Climate Change to the Chair regarding the Inter-Ministerial Group on Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change

5.11 Future Wales: The National Plan 2040

(Pages 123 – 126)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Minister for Climate Change regarding Future Wales: the national plan 2040

Response from the Minister for Climate Change to the letter from the Chair in relation to Future Wales: the national plan

5.12 Pesticides (Revocation) (EU Exit) Regulations 2022

(Pages 127 – 128)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Climate Change to the Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding the Pesticides (Revocation) (EU Exit) Regulations 2022

5.13 Approved Country Lists (Animals and Animal Products) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

(Pages 129 – 130)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd to the Chair regarding the Approved Country Lists (Animals and Animal Products) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

**5.14 Official Controls (Extension of Transitional Periods) (Amendment) (No. 2)
Regulations 2021**

(Pages 131 – 132)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd to the Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding the Official Controls (Extension of Transitional Periods) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

5.15 The Morlais project

(Pages 133 – 136)

Attached Documents:

Paper from Natural Resources Wales regarding the Morlais tidal demonstration zone project

5.16 The use of the term BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic)

(Pages 137 – 138)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair, Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee to the Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd Commission regarding the use of the term BAME

5.17 Timetable for Senedd Committee Business

(Pages 139 – 146)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Llywydd to Senedd Committee Chairs regarding the timetable for Senedd Committee Business

**6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42 (vi) and (ix) to resolve to
exclude the public from the remainder of today's meeting**

(14.00)

Private meeting (14.00–15.00)

**7 Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022–23 –
consideration of evidence heard under items 2 and 3**

**8 Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales – consideration of
evidence heard under item 4**

9 Consideration of the Committee's forward work programme

(Pages 147 – 192)

Attached Documents:

Paper – Forward work programme

**10 Consideration of the letter from the Llywydd regarding the
timetable for Senedd Committee Business**

Document is Restricted

Memorandum on the Climate Change Draft Budget Proposals for 2022-23

Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee – 20 January 2022

1.0 Strategic Context

Strategies and Policy Considerations

Climate Change considerations are key for Welsh Government across all policy areas to respond to the climate emergency and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The First Minister has been clear that Climate Change is at the heart of the Government's agenda.

On 28 October, the Welsh Government launched its Net Zero Wales plan, which sets out the next stage in our pathway (2021 to 2025) to net zero by 2050. The plan contains more than 120 government policies and proposals, covering every area from peatland restoration to active travel, and from green skills to renewable energy.

The portfolio's mission is to deliver net zero and to manage climate risk for Wales. Our statutory advisors, the Climate Change Committee (CCC), suggest that the costs to Wales of transitioning to Net Zero will be substantial (in the order of £1.4bn in 2025) and that investment in low-carbon technologies needs to increase significantly over carbon budget 2, which coincides with this Government term.

Llwybr Newydd - Wales Transport Strategy sets out a long-term vision for an accessible and sustainable transport system. It contains four high-level cross-cutting 20-year ambitions that can deliver wider benefits to people and communities, to the environment, to the economy and places, and to culture and language. These ambitions will be delivered through a set of five year priorities, targeting ways to reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift.

It changes our approach to the way we make decisions and investments. The sustainable transport hierarchy gives priority to meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport ahead of private motor vehicles. The investment hierarchy's focus is on measures to manage demand, make better use of existing infrastructure (including joined up planning between transport and land use), and on widening and promoting sustainable travel choices.

Preventative Spend

Our interventions across the portfolio action primary intervention, building resilience and creating the conditions to prevent future problems.

A number of measures are being delivered across the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in relation to maintenance and safety considerations. These are more fully described within the Economic Infrastructure at section 3.

Flood and coastal risk management is focused on reducing risk to life. It does so by preventing incidents of flooding and erosion which would otherwise cause damage to homes and businesses. We have improved the way we prioritise alleviation schemes to help target funding towards projects in the highest risk areas which demonstrate the most effective preventative spend.

By investing into tackling fuel poverty, we make a contribution to tackling a range of negative impacts including cold related health conditions, excess winter deaths, educational attainment of children and time off school and work due to sickness. The findings of research shows the Warm Homes Nest scheme is having a clear positive impact on the health of recipients with a reduction in the use of the NHS by those receiving energy efficiency measures through the scheme.

Evidence-based policy making

Evidence from a wide range of sources underpins our financial decisions such as published research, engagement with stakeholders, previous policy evaluations and statistics.

The evidence and scope of the appraisal undertaken during policy and programme development are assessed on the basis of risk, size and scale, existing evidence base and other factors. Feasibility studies are undertaken prior to the commencement of key projects to assess suitability in delivering against our goals, whilst gateway reviews for large projects are completed to challenge all aspects of a business case including the essential value for money assessment. Whilst the reviews are project specific, they help to build up a useful source of information for considering other projects. Internal and external audit reports can be helpful in a similar way.

We also modelled the carbon value (£/tCO₂e) of a range of individual transport policies as part of the development of Net Zero Wales - Carbon Budget 2, as well as other wider benefits using a Cost Effectiveness Indicator.

We are developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the Wales Transport Strategy that will be used to track progress against achieving the priorities and ambitions and identify any areas where further interventions may be required to meet our targets.

Our approach to Climate Change continues to be led by evidence. We are led by the science through the work of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and we are advised by the Climate Change Committee (CCC). The ambition set in the Net Zero Wales Plan was informed by our own emissions calculator and we are improving our approaches to evaluating carbon impact in our policy development. The Net Zero Wales plan was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and the existing policies captured within the document have all been through rigorous engagement processes, alongside our comprehensive Integrated Impact Appraisals.

These combined approaches then enable us to better target our budgets, to not only reduce carbon emissions, but also deliver on the range of wellbeing goals. We must however continually improve our approaches.

A significant number of single use items, usually made of plastic, are provided to consumers at low, or no cost, with an accompanying purchase of food or drink. These items are very small and are of low individual value, both to the end consumer and the retailer. The cost and effort of separating, cleaning and processing them for recycling is often deemed not to be worthwhile. Consequently, a high volume of these products are discarded into general waste, either by the end consumer or the retailer, or are littered. In its Programme for Government Welsh Government commits to legislate to abolish more commonly littered single use plastic items. The intention is to influence consumers so they begin to adopt more sustainable behaviours (for example using reusable products) and to prevent the subsequent environmental impacts associated with single use items.

The Resource Efficiency & Circular Economy Division is updating key elements of its evidence base for the next 18 months including:

- New compositional analysis of household waste
- Performance & Efficiency Reviews of all Local Authority Waste & Recycling Operations
- Piloting DRS operations in a number of local authorities.

Consultation with stakeholders

The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) was developed through significant consultation and co-creation with a broad range of stakeholders, over 100 meetings were held during the development period and therefore the strategy itself strongly reflects their views. The draft budget will help us work towards delivering the policies and actions contained within. We will put people and climate change at the front and centre of our transport system and we will help Wales reach net zero, driving wider benefits across health, air quality, accessibility and the economy.

The environmental, economic and social impact of commonly littered single use plastic items has been assessed at both a European (via research undertaken by the European Commission) and national level (via Welsh Government commissioned research). We have also undertaken a full public consultation on the proposed regulatory approach and engaged with a range of stakeholders to supplement our evidence gathering process. The success of the legislation will be monitored through compliance and annual surveys of littering levels across Wales.

Well-being of Future Generations Act

My draft budget preparations shows how I have sought to reflect the framework of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act in setting our spending priorities. We reviewed current trends and future projections and their potential impacts in the short, medium and longer term. We did this to ensure, as far as possible, that short term responses do not have longer term detrimental impacts.

For example, our Warm Homes Programme makes significant contributions across many of Welsh Government's wellbeing objectives under our National Strategy

“prosperity for all” including promoting good health and wellbeing. This is achieved through the creation of jobs and business opportunities, long term improvement of the housing stock, reducing carbon emissions and tackling fuel poverty and its range of associated negative impacts on health, wellbeing and educational attainment.

The Welsh Government is committed to safeguarding our marine environment for future generations, through the sustainable management of our natural resources. A key tool in achieving this objective is our network of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) which cover 69% of Welsh inshore waters and 50% of all Welsh offshore waters.

The National Forest will take place over many decades, helping to tackle the climate emergency, enhancing nature recovery, providing wellbeing benefits and generating economic benefit for Wales. It will be a lasting legacy for future generations in line with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015).

LPfN funds Local Authorities and National Parks to create places for nature where people live, work and access public services. This contributes to goal for a Resilient Wales and a Healthier Wales. Action to halt and reverse the decline in nature contributes to a Globally Responsible Wales. Through its community led projects, LPfN intends to involve people and communities in the work to restore and enhance biodiversity. The Breaking Barriers fund looks to enable a more diverse range of communities to engage with nature.

The Wales Transport Strategy (WTS) is fundamentally based around the five ways of working set out in the Act and contributes to all of the goals, all objectives, projects and programmes to be delivered as a result of the strategy are therefore influenced by, and reflective of the Future Generations Act.

The Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy budget will be increased next year to support Wales' transition to a more circular economy that keeps resources in use and delivers the Beyond Recycling Strategy.

The Strategy was developed using the five ways of working and a separate Goals Assessment was published alongside the final document to demonstrate the contribution of this work to all of the seven goals.

The transition to a more circular economy is key to the delivery of key environmental outcomes – because it can significantly reduce our carbon emissions and our over-exploitation of natural resources, and help to reverse the decline in biodiversity. But crucially it can also improve economic and social outcomes. Economically, through taking a circular approach which shortens supply chains, it can improve efficiency, create employment and increase competitiveness. In terms of social benefits, shortening supply chains and reducing emissions will reduce the health impacts caused by pollution and help to more fairly distribute resources. This will also provide more opportunities for communities to come together to share resources and revitalise where we live.

Equality, Welsh language and children's rights assessment

The WTS was fully impact assessed through the integrated impact assessment process and representatives all of those groups who share protected characteristics were involved in the process both at drafting and consultation stage, this included children, older people and all of the commissioners, including the Welsh language commissioner. The WTS is therefore reflective of their views and involvement and the budget broadly delivers on the aims and objectives in the strategy.

After reviewing the key changes to budget allocations, a number of key programmes were subject to Integrated Impact Assessments covering equality, Welsh language and Children's Rights. Integrated impact assessments are mainstreamed into policy setting as well as budgetary decisions. Some examples are below;

The Warm Homes Programme will support improvements in wellbeing as better insulated homes improve educational outcomes for children, decrease mortality from respiratory illnesses, and give people a higher quality of life. By actively targeting the homes in greatest need the programme will help people from lower-socio-economic backgrounds and people with protected characteristics.

Wales is the first country in the UK, and one of only a few countries in the world, to enshrine the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into domestic law with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011.

The duties within the Measure are implemented in two stages and place duties on Welsh Ministers to:

- give balanced consideration to the rights in the UNCRC and its optional protocols when formulating or reviewing policy and legislation;
- give balanced consideration to the rights in the UNCRC when they use all their legal powers or duties.

Across my portfolio, each member of staff is required to consider how their work affects children's rights, and this process has informed the Integrated Impact Assessment. No significant impacts on children's rights have been identified in the setting of this budget.

Covid-19 Reconstruction: Challenges and Priorities

The Economic Infrastructure revenue budget has received an increase against the previous 'baseline' of circa £137m. The primary use of this funding will be to continue to support public transport services to offset the continued impact of Coronavirus on travel patterns and significant reductions in passenger fare-box. We continue to support these areas as part of our long term ambition to deliver modal shift and decarbonise the Transport sector.

The funding will be split into 3 key areas

Rail services (£72m) – This will support TfW Rail Limited in meeting its running costs whilst passenger journeys and farebox continue to be impacted by coronavirus.

Bus services BES (£28m) – As with rail this will be used to support the bus industry whilst its passenger numbers and services continue to be impacted by coronavirus.

Concessionary Fares (£37m) – This is to offset a reduction in funding available through capital budgets for supporting concessionary travel. This does not equate to an overall increase to the Concessionary Fares budget but ensures that the overall budget envelope (which is funded from both revenue and capital sources) remains consistent with previous years.

The Welsh Government's [COVID-19 Reconstruction: Challenges and Priorities](#) put the circular economy at the heart of our approach to reconstruction and this has also been reflected in our Programme for Government and more recently the Net Zero Wales Plan. Additional funding was allocated to the circular economy work within last year's budget and this funding has been retained along with an additional increase. The funding is already supporting action across Wales and going forward it will include the funding of the Programme for Government commitments to repair and re-use facilities and community recycling hubs.

Around 60 repair cafes have been set up in communities throughout Wales over the last three years and 11 Benthg Cymru sites – libraries of things – are now operational where people can borrow items we only tend to use occasionally for a nominal cost. Repair and re-use hubs have been supported in several town centres including the Repair and Reuse Centre in Buckley, The Hive in Llandrindod Wells and the recently opened Waste Not hub in Newtown. We have also been working with academic partners too including supporting the development of the Remakerspace at Cardiff University, which looks at innovative product design and materials use, to use the equipment funded by the Welsh Government to produce PPE for frontline workers. The Circular Economy Innovation Communities (CEIC) at Swansea University has also been supported to work with the public and third sectors in Wales to support them to introduce more circular practices into their work, like being more resource efficient.

The Circular Economy funding will also continue to support improved economic resilience through the shortening of supply chains, by for example taking advantage of our world class recycling and supporting businesses to use the recycled materials. The Circular Economy Fund for business has been expanded to £10million over the next three years to increase the support for these opportunities and is an example how circular economy action can deliver both economic benefit and skills opportunities in areas like resource efficiency, whilst also delivering environmental benefits crucial to tackling the climate and nature emergencies. Case studies from businesses already funded include businesses such as Capital Valley Plastics, who are producing damp proof membrane from plastic film, and Heathpak who are producing food packaging from recycled content and innovation including a partnership between Ecodek and Nextek in Wrexham to find new use for single use coffee cups which are being turned into waterproof building materials – finding value in materials which would otherwise be considered waste.

Legislation

Single use plastics

The Programme for Government commits to legislate to abolish more commonly littered single use plastic items. Specific funding has been designated to support legislative development and implementation. This includes funding for evidence gathering, communication, and awareness raising. Legislation will include banning or restricting the sale of a number of commonly littered single use plastic items and potential charges for unnecessary single use items of any material.

The Programme for Government commitment to introduce extended producer responsibility reforms will initially focus on measures to tackle packaging waste and a deposit return scheme for drink containers. This will include bringing forward legislation during 2022 using powers from the UK Environment Act 2021 to implement these measures.

Programme for Government

Economic Infrastructure directorate are directly responsible for the delivery of 36 Programme for Government commitments and contribute to a range of commitments across the Government. Core to our deliverables in transport is the implementation of the Wales Transport Strategy and the associated modal shift and Net Zero targets. The approach to the budget has been to prioritise action that maximise delivery against these two ambitions, while delivering against the Programme for Government.

The Environment Directorate is directly responsible for the delivery of 20 Programme for Government commitments and also contribute to a range of commitments across the Government. A core part of the Directorates objectives is to ensure we tackle both the Nature and Climate Emergencies and move towards a more Circular Economy. I have approached this budget to ensure I allocate budgets to prioritise these Programme for Government Commitments.

The Energy and Planning Directorate is directly responsible for the delivery of 4 Programme for Government commitments, however contribute to a range of commitments across the Government including Housing. A core part of the Directorate objectives is to reduce carbon emissions to meet the net zero commitment by 2050. I have approached this budget to ensure I allocate budgets to prioritise these Programme for Government Commitments and also our statutory duties and to maximise the economic and social value from renewable energy investment in Wales.

Biodiversity and green spaces

This investment will directly help address the Programme for Government ambition to tackle the nature and climate emergencies, enhance green spaces at all scales, whilst also ensuring we meet our existing and emerging international commitments for biodiversity.

Funding initiatives over the next three years such as the Nature Networks programme, Local Places for Nature, the National Peatlands Action programme and Natur am Byth will not only ensure that our most precious habitats and species are able to thrive, but

also help to deliver nature to wherever people live through engagement with local communities.

This funding will also help to build capacity within the sector to help deliver action on the ground benefitting not only our environment but also our health and well-being.

Responding to the climate and nature emergencies, and working with Cabinet colleagues

Climate change and the environment are at the heart of this government which is why the Climate Change Ministry has been created, bringing together the big policy areas to help Wales reach its legally binding target of reaching Net Zero by 2050.

The Transport chapter of Net Zero Wales sets out a range of policies that were developed in the context of the Wales Transport Strategy, as part of that work steps were taken to estimate the carbon impact of policies. This evidence has been used to shape spending in transport to align our expenditure to Net Zero targets.

The new 3 year Infrastructure Finance Plan includes a £1.8billion targeted investment in our response to the climate and nature crisis emergency including the national forest, biodiversity, active travel, decarbonising housing, the circular economy, renewable energy, and flooding.

Delivery of the Net Zero Wales Plan will be overseen by myself and other Ministers, including at Cabinet. Many aspects are captured as part of our Programme for Government. Delivery will be tracked by a Business Information Reporting Tool and monitored by a Cabinet sub-group.

Supporting these discussions, the senior official led Climate Change Portfolio Board provides strategic governance for the development and delivery of climate policy, taking an informed and joined up view. It is chaired by the SRO, Andrew Slade. The Board includes all areas of Welsh Government that can contribute to tackling, or are impacted by, climate change and offers opportunity to create synergies. This of course enables opportunities to ensure budgets cohere to drive the change we need, when we need it.

Decarbonisation

The majority of the costs in meeting our climate targets over the period of the second carbon budget (2021-25) will not fall directly to Government. However we do fully accept we focus our financial resources to stimulate investment from others.

Almost 40% of the total additional capital investment over this period is expected to be in the surface transport sector. This investment will predominantly be delivered by consumers, the private sector and UK Government. The Transport element of this document in section x below provides further details of Welsh Government investment.

Just under 30% of total additional investment is expected to be in buildings, with the majority of this investment going into improving energy efficiency via retrofitting and

installing low carbon heat in existing residential homes and non-residential buildings. We have a long-standing commitment to improve homes in Wales through our Welsh Housing Quality Standards and Warm Homes, Innovative Housing and Optimised Retrofit Programmes. This approach is being continued and strengthened. The Warm Homes Programme will receive £100m capital over 3 years. We will consult shortly improved targeting of this investment.

We are investing £108m per annum via the Welsh Housing Quality Standard to support social landlords to provide good quality warm social homes, to some of Wales' most vulnerable households. WHQS2 will include a focus on decarbonisation of social housing whilst WGs Optimised Retrofit programme will continue to facilitate test and learn to inform long term wider retrofit of all homes, across all tenures in Wales. On-going WHQS 2 investment from 2022 together with Optimised Retrofit Programme funding will continue to boost local prosperity through SME growth, and supply chain development.

The 1.4m homes in Wales are responsible for 27% of all energy consumed in Wales and 15% of all our demand-side Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. The retrofitting of these homes is a primary preventative measure as it seeks to improve the energy efficiency of homes to reduce their carbon emissions to help Welsh Ministers to meet legally binding carbon targets, as well as PFG commitment to decarbonise residential homes through retrofitting. Total cost of decarbonising the housing stock based on WSA estimates is circa £15bn, of which more than £10bn is for the social housing stock and for homes in fuel poverty.

Capital funding of £72m in 22-23 rising to £92m in 23-24 and 24-25 through the Residential Decarbonisation BEL will predominantly be used to support the social housing sector, through the Optimised Retrofit Programme, which will facilitate test and learn to inform long term wider retrofit of all homes, across all tenures in Wales including the development of a survey mapping on a home by home basis the optimum route to retrofit, and then undertaking the measures required to enable the decarbonisation of homes across Wales. Our ambition is to ensure that all social housing landlords participate in this scheme over the next three years so that they can integrate the decarbonisation agenda within their planned maintenance programmes.

Finally, approximately 20% of the total additional investment is expected to be in electricity supply, installing low-carbon generation, mostly in variable renewables such as wind and solar photovoltaics. We continue to invest through our Welsh Government Energy Service to stimulate community and publicly owned renewable projects. We will invest a further £65m of capital through the Welsh Government Energy Service. We are currently reviewing the service to ensure we target the funding in areas of greatest need.

The Net Zero Wales Plan puts the transition to a Circular Economy at its heart with actions for a more resource efficient Wales found across every part of the Plan from decarbonising the refuse vehicle fleet to supporting businesses to get advice on being more resource efficient. This recognises the critical link between unsustainable consumption and the climate and nature crises.

We have been undertaking more work to decarbonise the waste sector. In 2020-21, Wales achieved its highest ever recycling rate - 65.4% - avoiding over 400,000 tonnes

of CO2 emissions in that year. We have also been working with our delivery partners at Wrap Cymru to develop the evidence base highlighting the environmental and economic opportunities from a more resource efficient country.

The budget will support the continued delivery of the Beyond Recycling Strategy which will work to build on our foundational and globally leading success in recycling to transition to a more circular economy which keeps resources in use.

Higher interim emissions reduction targets for 2030 and 2040, and a net zero target for 2050 and budget allocations.

The Net Zero Wales Plan is focused on 2021-25, but looks ahead to how we will deliver longer term targets and our investment reflects that. We are targeting investment in areas where technology and supply chains exist today, such as through our public transport and active travel investments or where evidence is required to inform future investment, for example through our investment in Local Area Energy Planning and the Optimised Retrofit Programme.

Work undertaken to estimate the carbon impact of spending decisions and how this has influenced the approach to allocations

Through the budget-setting process, we sought to further understand both the whole-life direct emissions from construction, operation and decommissioning of our capital investment area, as well as anticipated indirect changes in carbon emissions from behaviour changes and supply chain impacts from the investment. These assessments are difficult and our capability is improving. However a single methodology for assessing is not established. We therefore assessed budgets against a range of methodologies, to ensure we were able to use the best data available, rather than slavishly following a single methodology:

1. We encouraged specific analysis of the carbon reductions associated with the proposed investment area, drawing on the available evidence from Wales, the rest of the UK and beyond.
2. Where available we took data from comparable projects where relevant data existed and scaled accordingly to give an indicative value for the investment area as a whole
3. Alternatively, where project-specific information was limited or of uncertain reliability, evidence assembled by the Climate Change Committee (CCC) on marginal abatement costs by type of intervention were used to help to provide indicative estimates of cost effectiveness and provide some assurance on orders of magnitude of carbon savings and costs.

Work to align the fiscal and carbon budgets

- Our investments continue to be guided by where evidence outlines the areas in which Welsh Government investment can have the greatest impact.

- Recognising it is the Net Zero Delivery Plan 2021-25 which contains the assessment of carbon impacts and actions we are taking utilising all levers at our disposal, with the role the budget to then consider funding of those actions where evidence supports the need to invest.
- We must also remain mindful that some of the biggest levers that will drive decarbonisation – for regulatory change for road vehicles – are not devolved to Wales, and remain the responsibility of the UK Government.
- We have built on the work we commissioned and published as part of the Chief Economist's Report in the 2021-22 Draft Budget package. Through the fundamental zero-based approach of general capital budgets to establish a new 10 year Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy, we focused on better understanding the impacts of our investments on Net Zero.
- Published in our new Infrastructure Finance Plan are a range of assessments undertaken in each capital assessment area. This is aligned with the Net Zero Delivery Plan which contains further analysis on the impact of the policies and actions of Welsh Government and our partners on greenhouse gas emissions.

2.0 Budget Structure

2.1 Summary of Budget Allocations and Changes

The 2022-23 Draft Budget provides a three year spending plan for both resource and capital. The tables below provide an overview of the changes in planned resource funding compared to the prior year baseline, and details of allocations of capital budgets following a zero-based approach to capital allocations in line with the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan. The resource budgets are compared to 2021-22 budgets as requested, with the specific Covid related allocations having been removed. Allocations for the financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25 also shown.

The Fiscal Resource budget for 2022-23 is £703.021m (not including Non-Fiscal and Annually Managed Expenditure (AME)). This represents an increase of £174m. The Non-Fiscal Resource budget remains at the level of the revised baseline of £239.121m. The AME budget has increased by £1.6m to £96.6m, providing cover for charges that are outside the control of the portfolio, such as impairments to the roads and rail networks.

An overview is provided in table 1 as follows:

TABLE 1: Overview of the Resource Budget						
	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	% Change	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Fiscal Resource (Revenue)						
Economic Infrastructure	339,011	476,011	137,000	40%	439,011	439,011
Environment, Energy & Planning	185,110	222,110	37,000	20%	240,610	256,110
Delivering the Digital Strategy	4,900	4,900	0	0%	4,900	4,900
Sub Total	529,021	703,021	174,000	33%	684,521	700,021
Non Fiscal Resource (Non Cash)						
Economic Infrastructure	191,000	229,000	38,000	20%	229,000	229,000
Environment, Energy & Planning	10,121	10,121	0	0%	10,121	10,121
Delivering the Digital Strategy	-	-	0		-	-
Sub Total	201,121	239,121	38,000	19%	239,121	239,121
TOTAL	730,142	942,142	212,000	29%	923,642	939,142
AME						
TOTAL AME	94,990	96,637	1,647	2%	121,636	2,000

In the draft Budget there some targeted investments in line with Programme for Government commitments and wider Welsh Government priorities. These are described in the respective Action tables.

The total capital budget for 2022-23 is £878.5m, as summarised in Table 2 below. Allocations for 2023-24 and 2024-25 are also shown:

TABLE 2: Overview of the Capital Budget				
	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Economic Infrastructure	737,827	683,000	557,500	494,000
Environment, Energy & Planning	183,286	195,500	239,550	237,500
TOTAL	921,113	878,500	797,050	731,500

The draft budget includes allocations for traditional capital only, and not Financial Transactions capital which is due to be allocated for the Final Budget.

Resource

The cumulative movements in the baselines for the Fiscal Resource budgets are set out in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3: Resource Budget - Additional Baseline Allocations (Cumulative)				
	2022-23 £'000	2023-24 £'000	2024- 25 £'000	Total £'000
<i>Environment & Energy</i>				
Flooding	8,000	8,000	8,000	24,000
National Forest and Welsh Timber	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
National Park	1,000			1,000
Coal Tips	3,000	1,000	500	4,500
Renewable Energy Development	5,000	2,000	1,000	8,000
Air and Water Quality	2,000	1,500	1,000	4,500
Behavioural Change	1,500	1,000	1,000	3,500
Biodiversity and green spaces	7,000	1,000		8,000
Legislate to abolish single use plastics	500			500
Waste recycling and reuse	5,000			5,000
<i>Sub-Total</i>	37,000	18,500	15,500	71,000
<i>Economic Infrastructure</i>				
Public Transport & Concessionary Fares	137,000	(37,000)		100,000
<i>Sub-Total</i>	137,000	(37,000)	0	100,000
Total Fiscal Resource	174,000	(18,500)	15,500	171,000

Capital

Capital budgets have been allocated for a period of three years against Investment Areas as set out in Table 4 below:

TABLE 4: Capital Budget Allocations						
			2022-23 £'000	2023-24 £'000	2024-25 £'000	Total £'000
Directorate	Sector	Investment Area	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Economic Infrastructure	Public Transport	Rail	400,000	150,000	35,000	585,000
Economic Infrastructure	Active & Sustainable Travel	Active Travel	60,000	80,000	80,000	220,000
Economic Infrastructure	Active & Sustainable Travel	EV Infrastructure	7,788	11,672	23,217	42,677
Economic Infrastructure	Roads	Roads	125,000	190,000	185,000	500,000
Economic Infrastructure	Roads	Road safety grants	16,500	4,000	4,000	24,500
Economic Infrastructure	Public Transport	Bus	25,000	80,000	80,000	185,000
Economic Infrastructure	Economic Development	Strategic Inf Dev	12,212	18,328	6,783	37,323
Economic Infrastructure	Economic Development	Digital/ Telecoms	15,000	-26,500	20,000	8,500
Economic Infrastructure	Active & Sustainable Travel	Local Transport Fund	17,500	40,000	50,000	107,500
Economic Infrastructure	Economic Development	Marine Energy	4,000	10,000	10,000	24,000
Economic Infrastructure		Total	683,000	557,500	494,000	1,734,500
Energy	Decarbonisation	Fuel Poverty	30,000	35,000	35,000	100,000
Energy	Decarbonisation	Welsh Government Energy Service	15,000	25,000	25,000	65,000
Environment	Circular Economy	Circular Economy	40,000	60,000	60,000	160,000
Environment	Flooding	Flood and Coastal Risk Mgt	34,000	34,000	34,000	102,000
Environment	Flooding	Coal Tip Safety	23,100	11,000	10,300	44,400
Environment	Flooding	Water Quality	10,000	15,000	15,000	40,000
Environment	Nature and Environment	National Forest	9,000	23,000	25,000	57,000
Environment	Nature and Environment	Landscapes & Outdoor Rec	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000

Environment	Nature and Environment	Environment Grants	2,000	2,000	500	4,500
Environment	Nature and Environment	Air Quality	5,000	2,150	300	7,450
Environment	Nature and Environment	Biodiversity	20,000	25,000	25,000	70,000
		NRW	2,400	2,400	2,400	7,200
Total Environment and Energy			195,500	239,550	237,500	672,550
Total			878,500	797,050	731,500	2,407,050

The BELs that provide a full breakdown of the portfolio's revenue and capital budgets are detailed by Action in sections 3, 4 and 5.

3.0 ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE – FUNDING OF ACTIONS

To support the ambitions for sustainable, modern and connected infrastructure total Economic Infrastructure funding is £1.39bn in 2022-23 (includes non-fiscal resource).

Compared to the 2021-22 final budget, there is an increase in the Fiscal Resource allocation of £137m to £476m, representing that additional £100m allocation to public transport and a further £37m to maintain the budget envelope for concessionary fares. This includes a specific additional allocation to public transport to support reduced fare boxes under the continuing Covid pandemic situation. This will provide a degree of certainty for the sector while restrictions are likely to continue and to help provide confidence to the sector.

The zero-based total capital allocations for 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 are £683m, £557m and £494m respectively. The capital allocations support continued delivery of the current National Transport Finance Plan as well as laying the ground for the successor delivery document which will be set in the context of the new Wales Transport Strategy. It is still necessary however to prioritise activity and manage budgets, to ensure that the delivery of schemes within the National Transport Finance Plan are both affordable and deliverable.

The Non Fiscal Resource budget has been increased by £38m to £229m, compared with 2021-22 Final Budget, to recognise an additional allocation for depreciation on Core Valley Lines rail infrastructure.

Economic Infrastructure	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Fiscal Resource	339,011	476,011	137,000	40%	439,011	439,011
Non Fiscal Resource	191,000	229,000	38,000	20%	229,000	229,000
Total Resource	530,011	705,011	175,000	33%	668,011	668,011

Economic Infrastructure	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital	737,827	683,000	557,500	494,000
TOTAL	737,827	683,000	557,500	494,000

The detailed breakdown of Actions by BEL activity is explained in the following sections.

Motorway & Trunk Road Operations

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Network Asset Management	5,686	4,481	(1,205)	-21%	4,481	4,481
Network Operations	65,298	66,023	725	1%	66,023	66,023
Sub Total	70,984	70,504	(480)	-1%	70,504	70,504
Non Fiscal Resource						
Network Operations Non Cash	188,691	188,691	0	0	188,691	188,691
Total Resource	259,675	259,195	(480)	0%	259,195	259,195

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Network Operations	106,497	125,000	190,000	185,000
TOTAL	106,497	125,000	190,000	185,000

Welsh Ministers have a statutory duty to provide a safe and reliable Motorway and Trunk Road Network against a £17 billion asset. A capital allocation of £125m has been allocated to cover capital maintenance and to service existing major projects under construction. Maintenance budgets will need to be continually monitored to ensure that we are responsive to reactive works and prioritise capital investment where it is most needed

A transfer has been made to the sustainable and active travel line reflecting an alignment of activity previously funded under the network management BEL where there is an offset.

Road, Rail, Air and Sea Services & Investment Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Aviation	2,763	5,732	2,969	107%	4,402	2,422
National Transport Infrastructure	650	0	(650)	-100%	0	0
Rail Ancillary	850	850	0	0%	850	850
Transport for Wales	185,400	254,531	69,131	37%	218,861	220,841
Sub Total	189,663	261,113	71,450	38%	224,113	224,113
Non Fiscal Resource						
Transport for Wales (non cash)	0	38,000	38,000	#DIV/0!	38,000	38,000
Total Resource	189,663	299,113	109,450	58%	262,113	262,113

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Aviation	2,000	7,212	13,328	1,783
National Transport Infrastructure	128,100	0	0	0
Transport for Wales	274,680	400,000	150,000	35,000
Marine Energy	0	4,000	10,000	10,000
TOTAL	404,780	411,212	173,328	46,783

The Aviation revenue budget of £5.732m includes provisional activities such as the Intra Wales Air Service and the rescue and recovery package for Cardiff International Airport

The Transport for Wales total budget of £654.531m delivers rail services and rail capital investment programmes.

The National Transport Infrastructure has been reduced to zero as all capital expenditure related to roads is now shown in Network Operations, which is reduced.

Strategic Infrastructure Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Public Sector Broadband Aggregation	11,500	11,500	0	0%	11,500	11,500
Strategic Infrastructure Development	990	950	(40)	-4%	950	950
ICT Infrastructure Operations	1,527	1,527	0	0%	1,527	1,527
Sub Total	14,017	13,977	(40)	0%	13,977	13,977
Non Fiscal Resource						
ICT Infrastructure Operations - Non Cash	2,309	2,309	0	0%	2,309	2,309
Total Resource	16,326	16,286	(40)	0%	16,286	16,286

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Strategic Infrastructure Development	0	5,000	5,000	5,000
ICT Infrastructure Operations	26,000	15,000	(26,500)	20,000
TOTAL	26,000	20,000	(21,500)	25,000

The current Programme for Government recognises the importance of digital infrastructure and the delivery of the Welsh Government's Digital Strategy, stating:

'Critical to the delivery of this whole strategy is the underlying infrastructure. This infrastructure is the foundation on which we build good quality digital connectivity to support everything we do digitally'

The ICT Infrastructure budget supports the delivery of this strategy by providing funding to connect premises and to install and upgrade backhaul networks needed to ensure sustainable, resilient connections fit for the future.

The main areas of funding supporting this are:

- **Next Generation Access Broadband Wales** – a project to connect 39,000 premises to enable access a future proofed fibre to the premises solution enabling gigabit broadband speeds to be achieved
- **Local Broadband Fund** – a grant scheme aimed at local authorities and social enterprises to help local communities get access to fast broadband.
- **Access Broadband Cymru** – a 'last resort' grant scheme helping properties get connected with is technology agnostic

- **Local Full Fibre Network Project on Trunk Roads** - upgrade and extension scheme to fibre optic communications backbone network on trunk roads in South Wales.

The Public Sector Broadband Aggregation budget of £11.5m provides funding for a shared services digital platform delivery network that provides connectivity and digital services to the public sector in Wales. The network serves over 120 public sector organisations with approximately 5,000 connections.

The strategic development infrastructure funding of £0.950m enables commercially-focussed, innovative mechanisms which facilitate access to finance from the private sector and other partners to deliver priority investment across the portfolio for economic and transport Infrastructure. Projects include the promotion of an Integrated Travel Hub in Cardiff, upgrading Wrexham General Station the future of bus service provision in the Cardiff City Region.

Sustainable Travel Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Bus Support	32,005	61,005	29,000	91%	61,005	61,005
Smartcards	1,466	0	(1,466)	-100%	0	0
Local Transport Priorities	0	0	0	#DIV/0!	0	0
Concessionary Fares	23,482	60,482	37,000	158%	60,482	60,482
Youth Discounted Travel Scheme	2,000	2,000	0	0%	2,000	2,000
Sustainable and Active Travel	630	1,930	1,300	206%	1,930	1,930
Total Resource	59,583	125,417	65,834	110%	125,417	125,417

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Bus Support	0	25,000	80,000	80,000
Smartcards	1,000	0	0	0
Local Transport Priorities	51,000	17,500	40,000	50,000
Concessionary Fares	37,000	0	0	0
Sustainable and Active Travel	104,650	67,788	91,672	103,217
TOTAL	193,650	110,288	211,672	233,217

Buses play a central role in connecting people and communities across Wales and provide access to key services. We have increased bus support to reflect the

continuing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition allocations have been made to the sustainable and active travel line reflecting an alignment of activity previously funded under the network management BEL where there is offset. The allocation to smartcards are now included in integrated ticketing as part of our wider support for the bus industry. The concessionary fares envelope of funding is unchanged, the revenue increase shown here is to offset a reduction in funding available through capital budgets for supporting concessionary travel. This does not equate to an overall increase to the Concessionary Fares budget but ensures that the overall budget envelope (which has been funded from both revenue and capital sources) remains consistent with previous years.

In 2021/22 active travel funding was £76.65m. There is a reduction in Active Travel funding in 22/23 to £60m. We will use the short term reduction in funding to work with Local Authorities and Transport for Wales to develop a high quality, high impact pipeline of schemes to maximise the benefit from record active travel funding 23/24 and 24/25 where funding will be £80m in both years. Also included in the sustainable and active travel BEL is funding for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) which will be invested in the delivery of our ULEV charging strategy and action plan.

Funding for the local transport scheme is reduced in the next financial year in part reflecting a focus on implementing a reduction of speed limits to 20MPH on residential roads, this is now reflected in the road safety BEL, the other element of the reduction reflects the end of short term funding for roads resilience, further resilience schemes will be considered as part of the LTF. As per the Programme for Government commitment we will review how we spend the Local Transport Fund in future years aligned to the priorities set out in the Wales Transport Strategy.

Improve Road Safety Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Road Safety	4,764	5,000	236	5%	5,000	5,000
Total Resource	4,764	5,000	236	5%	5,000	5,000

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Road Safety	6,900	16,500	4,000	4,000
TOTAL	6,900	16,500	4,000	4,000

The road safety budgets have been increased reflecting the delivery of the 20MPH speed limit on residential roads. The [Road Safety Framework for Wales](#) sets out our safety targets to 2020 and we are initiating the development of a new strategy for the years ahead based on vision zero. .

Revenue funding supports the engagement and funding of external partners in the public, private and third sectors achieve casualty reduction

3.1 Transport

How the draft budget supports the Welsh Government's transport priorities, particularly delivery of the new Wales Transport Strategy and the associated delivery plans and strategies, including how you have prioritised funding, the affordability of your priorities and any areas of concern.

In March 2021 we published Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy 2021. The Strategy sets a vision for an accessible, sustainable and efficient transport system that is supported by 20 year ambitions that are good for people and communities, good for the environment, good for the economy and places and supports a thriving Welsh language and culture. It focuses on three priorities:

- *The first priority is about how we manage travel demand and to bring services to people in order to reduce the need to travel.* This is not about preventing travel altogether, it is about planning ahead for better physical and digital connectivity to support access to more local services, more home and remote working. If more people can walk and cycle for everyday trips, we will reduce our dependency on cars.
- *Second priority is about more sustainable services and infrastructure.* The Strategy explains how we will allow people and goods to move easily from door-to-door by sustainable transport and how we will invest in reliable, efficient and affordable transport services that people want to use, can use and do use and in the transport infrastructure to support those services.
- *The third and final priority is about encouraging people to make the change to more sustainable transport.* Meeting our climate change targets will need people to travel differently. This means making it easier to do the right thing by making low carbon sustainable transport more attractive and more affordable, and by adopting innovations that make it easier to use.

The climate emergency is one of the biggest defining issues of our time. To meet our net zero emission target by 2050, we must act now. Not doing so will leave a greater problem to future generations. Responding to climate change requires a change in the way we travel. We need fewer cars on our roads, more people using public transport and more walking or cycling. We won't achieve that level of change unless we take people with us, listening to users and involving people in designing a transport system that works for everyone.

At the heart of the strategy was the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy, which provides a framework for meeting the demand for travel by walking, cycling and public transport

ahead of private motor vehicles, the principles of this hierarchy are fundamental to the allocation of our investment decisions.

We have announced a freeze on the development of all new road schemes as part of our efforts to reach our NetZero climate change targets. This isn't necessarily the end of road construction in Wales but it will certainly raise the bar in terms of what is justified as we plan for a future where we make better use of active travel and public transport. It can only be delivered if the limited financial resources available are used efficiently and effectively. Hence the need for this Review of both our current pipeline of roads projects and how we approach road construction decisions in future.

There is a reduction in Active Travel funding in 22/23, We will use the short term reduction in funding to work with Local Authorities and Transport for Wales to develop a high quality, high impact pipeline of schemes to maximise the benefit from record active travel funding 23/24 and 24/25. Funding will also be increased for road safety to support the roll out of a 20MPH speed limit on residential roads, this will also support the take up of active travel.

Alongside continued investment to support public transport in recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, we will continue to invest to complete the transformation of the Core Valleys Lines (CVL) and put place funding for the transition of the bus fleet to electric vehicles.

We will continue to support Cardiff Airport.

How the draft budget provides for:

The impact of, and recovery from, the Coronavirus pandemic, including support for transport providers.

The Economic Infrastructure revenue budget has received an increase against the previous 'baseline' of circa £137m. The primary use of this funding will be to continue to support public transport services to offset the continued impact of Coronavirus on travel patterns and significant reductions in passenger fare-box. We continue to support these areas as part of our long term ambition to deliver modal shift and decarbonise the Transport sector.

The funding will be split into 3 key areas:

Rail services (£72m) – This will support TfW Rail Limited in meeting its running costs whilst passenger journeys and farebox continue to be impacted by coronavirus.

Bus services BES (£28m) – As with rail this will be used to support the bus industry whilst its passenger numbers and services continue to be impacted by coronavirus.

Concessionary Fares (£37m) – This is to offset a reduction in funding available through capital budgets for supporting concessionary travel. This does not equate to an overall increase to the Concessionary Fares budget but ensures that the

overall budget envelope (which is funded from both revenue and capital sources) remains consistent with previous years

Specific allocations made in relation to Brexit to mitigate impact on transport services / sectors.

This draft budget makes no allocations specifically to mitigate the ongoing impacts of leaving the European Union. However, all our transport sectors continue to feel the consequences of the UK Government's withdrawal agreement, especially through their supply chains and workforce. This is the unfortunate new reality and operating environment we have been put into.

All of our budget allocations will have to accommodate the additional costs that transport services and infrastructure projects now face as a result of the combined disruption of Covid and border friction with the EU.

We will continue working with devolved transport services to mitigate the ongoing impact of the withdrawal agreement as far as we can, and with UK Government to press them to ensure that reserved transport sectors, especially freight, are able to keep operating as effectively as possible.

Delivery of the rail franchise.

The Wales and Borders Rail Service came into public control following the transfer of staff from KeolisAmey to TfW in February 2021 as a result of the impact of Covid 19, and the Core Valley Lines (north of Cardiff) transferring to Welsh Government ownership and control in 2020. This funding allows for the delivery of the Rail franchise by TfW on behalf of Welsh Ministers.

Delivery of the North East Wales, South West Wales and South East Wales Metros.

We will continue to invest in our metro programmes but in a way that is integrated with our core service delivery in bus, active travel and rail, therefore budgets are not separately identified. Short term focuses are completing the transformation of the CVL and investing in areas that maximised potential modal shift.

Delivery of the Welsh Government's rail infrastructure priorities.

The Core Valley Lines Transformation Programme commenced in Summer 2020 and will deliver the upgraded track, signalling and electrification work that will allow for increased and faster services to be provided improving access and connectivity to and from valley communities and Cardiff.

Welsh Government has committed £800m for new rolling stock that will provide new, faster, more comfortable trains, and allow for increased frequency of services and new routes to be established. We will complete the procurement and introduction into service of whole new fleets of trains by 2024. This will have a significant positive impact by not only encouraging a greater number of people to make a change by

use rail rather than car, but the new South Wales Metro fleet will improve the accessibility of rail by delivering level boarding across the network.

[The development of Transport for Wales – including a breakdown of TFW’s budget allocation, itemising its corporate budget alongside allocations for delivery of specific programmes.](#)

This budget makes no specific allocations to Transport for Wales outside the delivery of rail (identified above). Whilst there are programmes that we will ask Transport for Wales to deliver on our behalf, including the rail franchise and infrastructure improvements, officials are still in discussions with them about their business plan for next financial year.

That business planning process will, as usual, confirm the funding allocations available to Transport for Wales and the programmes they will deliver on our behalf. We will be looking for them to demonstrate that they are doing so as efficiently as possible and considering all opportunities for savings to maximise the impact our investment in transport services is able to have for the people of Wales.

[The recommendations of the South East Wales Transport Commission.](#)

We will continue to invest in the delivery of the South East Wales Transport Commission recommendations and the South East Wales Metro in a way that is integrated with our core service delivery in bus, active travel and rail.

[Investment in the trunk road and motorway network.](#)

There are a number of programmes being delivered across the Strategic Road Network (SRN) intended to be preventative. They include:

- Ash Dieback – Proactive measures to identify and remove diseased trees that could cause safety issues on the SRN.
- Surfacing preventative Treatments – Surface dressing treatments that extend the life of the wearing course of the carriageway, increasing maintenance intervention frequency, lowering cost and carbon.
- Community Safety Programme – proactive safety programme listening to and responding to communities’ needs to improve safety on the SRN.
- Street lighting renewal – changing lamps to LEDs to reduce costs and carbon.
- In order to future proof and prepare for the digitisation of the Strategic Road Network we are investing over £40m in delivering broadband fibre along 152km of the network.

In order to address an estimated £1bn backlog of capital maintenance across all asset types on the SRN officials have developed a Major Asset Renewal (MAR) programme which could be delivered over a 5 to 10 year period with time scales adjusted to match to availability of funding.

The programme would not only address the maintenance backlog but could also deliver many of the ambitions and priorities in the new Wales Transport Strategy particularly around road space reallocation for active travel and public transport and reducing carbon by carrying out maintenance in an efficient holistic manner, using materials with long service lives sourced locally.

This programme is currently unfunded.

Officials will continue programme development, which will be subject to independent review, whilst managing and operating a safe network. This will be achieved by focusing on prioritising essential maintenance and managing risks whilst delivering on the WTS objectives such as road space reallocation as budgets allow.

[Delivery of active travel policy – including a table detailing total and per capita allocations for active travel for 2022-23, compared with each of the preceding three years. Revenue and capital allocations should be clear and broken down by individual funding stream \(active travel fund, local transport fund, safe routes in communities etc\).](#)

The majority of the active travel budget is used for the Active Travel Fund. It has been established to enable local authorities to develop their local active travel networks which have been planned and are being revised as a result of the Active Travel Act. The aim is to achieve a mode shift from cars to active travel and enable shorter journeys to be made routinely by walking and cycling and longer trips in combination with public transport. These carbon emission free modes offer very significant health and wider societal benefits beyond their transport function.

Since the fund was introduced this has led to a growing pipeline of ambitious schemes that have now either reached or are approaching readiness for construction. Many of these have the ability to transform many people's travel choices and enable safe walking and cycling trips where these have not been possible before.

For 2021/22 the original £56.65m earmarked in the draft budget received an additional boost of £20m with the final budget, which allowed to accelerate scheme delivery and development and make more funding available for small scale improvements to ensure tangible change takes place in towns and cities across Wales.

The Active Travel Fund is complemented by the Safe Routes in Communities Grant, which focuses specifically on enabling active travel to schools, with a particular emphasis in the most recent years on the introduction of school streets, which remove traffic around schools in the morning and afternoon to encourage walking, scooting and cycling, and improve air quality and road safety.

Revenue funding is primarily used to maximise the benefits from our capital investments through supporting local authorities in planning and delivery of networks and schemes and through promoting active travel.

The allocations for the current, coming and previous three financial years are shown below. The 2021/22 budget reflects current intentions, but the final position will not be known until the end of the year.

Please note that these figures reflect specific funding identified for Active Travel activity. Other elements of active travel delivery form part of wider project costs that cannot be separately broken down, e.g. active travel provision within wider road, public transport and multi-modal schemes.

Active Travel allocations - all LA capital grants					
	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Active Travel Fund	£9,031,092	£29,127,943	£25,140,454	£56,003,830	£51,000,000
Local Transport Fund	£11,267,202	£7,303,259	£896,000		
Safe Routes in Communities	£5,048,314	£5,362,121	£4,141,501	6,554,231	£5,000,000
Additional funding (Covid)			£16,205,917	£1,030,000	
SEWTC AT projects				£517,000	
Total	£25,346,608	£41,793,323	£46,383,872	£64,105,061	£56,000,000
Population*	3,138,631	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311
Total per capita	£8.08	£13.26	£14.63	£20.19	£17.59

*mid year population estimate, June 2021 and June 2022 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS)' 2018-based national population projections.

Active Travel allocations - other capital funding					
	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
WG Trunk Road AT programme	£1,650,000	£1,650,000	£1,650,000	£3,650,000	£3,000,000
3rd party capital grants (incl. e-bike pilots, NCN enhancements)				510,000	262,000
Total	£1,650,000	£1,650,000	£1,650,000	£4,160,000	£3,262,000
Population*	3,138,631	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311

Total per capita	£0.53	£0.52	£0.52	£1.31	£1.02
* mid year population estimate, June 2021 and June 2022 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS)' 2018-based national population projections.					

	Active Travel allocations - revenue				
	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Active Journeys Programme	£237,000	£375,000	£375,000	£375,000	£375,000
Active Travel Fund and ATA implementation support (TfW & LAs)			£1,000,000	£1,549,000	£1,000,000
Active Travel Act implementation support (including engagement tools, mapping system, core grant, cycle training review)	£171,915	£224,446	£178,988	£135,280	£240,000
Total	£408,915	£599,446	£1,553,988	£2,059,280	£1,615,000
Population*	3,138,631	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311
Total per capita	£0.13	£0.19	£0.49	£0.65	£0.51

* mid year population estimate, June 2021 and June 2022 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS)' 2018-based national population projections.

	Active Travel -all				
	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Total	£27,405,523	£44,042,769	£49,587,860	£70,324,341	£60,877,000
Population*	3,138,631	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311
Total per capita	£8.73	£13.97	£15.64	£22.15	£19.12

* mid year population estimate, June 2021 and June 2022 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS)' 2018-based national population projections.

Support for bus and community transport services, including a table detailing total and per capita allocations for 2022-23 compared with each of the preceding three years. Revenue and capital allocations should be clear and the table should be broken down by individual funding stream (BSSG, BES2, Concessionary Fares etc).

Total per capita				
TABLE 5 - Bus Revenue support - 2019-20 to 2022-23				
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22 (indicative outturn)	2022-23
Mid-year population estimate Wales*	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311
Bus Users UK Cymru Grant	£243,368	£182,918	£289,457	£289,457
School Transport	£0	£0	£10,000	£10,000
BUS REVENUE SUPPORT	£1,325,425	£6,111,471	£1,061,818	£1,061,818
Community Transport Association - Core Funding	£164,298	£138,284	£285,482	£285,482
Bus Services Support Grant	£25,000,000	£25,000,000	£25,000,000	£25,000,000
Bus Revenue Support - Traws Cymru	£3,741,342	£4,018,818	£3,159,745	£3,159,745
Traveline Cymru	£998,612	£998,612	£998,616	£998,616
Concessionary fares	£26,375,441	£33,915,450	£62,595,259	£62,595,259
Youth Discounted Travel	£2,531,786	£1,906,536	£1,999,969	£1,999,969
Bus Emergency	£0	£70,620,830	£59,099,546	£28,000,000

Scheme COVID				
Total	£60,380,273	£142,892,919	£154,499,892	£123,400,346
Total per capita	£19.15	£45.16	£48.66	£38.75

Total per capita

TABLE 5 - Bus capital support - 2019-20 to 2022-23

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Mid-year population estimate Wales *	3,152,879	3,169,586	3,174,970	3,184,311
Concessionary Fares	£35,240,000			
Bus support		£1,000,000		
Bus Cymru - invest in bus services				£25,000,000
Total	£35,240,000	£1,000,000	£0	£25,000,000
Total per capita	£11.18	£0.32	£0.00	£7.85

- mid year population estimate, June 2021 and June 2022 are based on the Office for National Statistics (ONS)' 2018-based national population projections.

Support for local transport priorities.

The duty to prepare Local Transport Plans is transferring from Local Authorities to the four Corporate Joint Committees in 2022. The new Regional Transport Plans will set out how the Wales Transport Strategy – Llwybr Newydd, will be delivered in the regions.

CJCs will be required to develop RTPs - the transport planning duty transfers from Local Authorities to CJCs on 28th February 2022 for South East Wales and 30th June 2022 for North, Mid and South West Wales. The new RTPs will replace the existing

Local Transport Plans, which were approved in 2015. The duty to deliver the policies set out in the RTPs will remain with local authorities.

These plans will be developed in tandem with The National Transport Delivery Plan which is being developed by Transport for Wales. This will set out specific projects, schemes, initiatives or interventions that will identify expenditure, based on the Strategy's priorities, including the delivery of projects that are already underway. It will also support the implementation of Future Wales – the National Plan 2040, and the Wales Infrastructure Investment Strategy. The NTDP will replace the current National Transport Finance Plan, 2015 (and updated in 2017 and 2018). It is intended that this will be published for formal public consultation in May 2022.

The RTP will be split in to two parts. The Plan, which will set out the policies for implementation of the WTS in the region, and the Programme, which should list the planned interventions over a 5-year period (2023-24 to 2027-28).

These plans will be used to allocate funding to local and regional priorities. In the short term and while the plans are being developed funding will be focused on Active Travel, the roll out 20MPH.

3.2 ICT Infrastructure

[Details of the total Welsh Government contribution to the Superfast Cymru successor scheme, including relevant contract targets for BT/Openreach and performance towards these targets.](#)

Total value of Scheme - £59.03m–

Split of funding:

UK Government - £2m

EU Funding - £32.6m

Welsh Government - £24.43m

Contract Targets

Performance

Premises – 39,000

Premises passed to date – 24,515

Premises remaining – 14,485

[Details of the budgets allocated to other Welsh Government connectivity schemes \(including Access Broadband Cymru, the Local Broadband Fund and the Welsh Government top-up to the UK Government's Gigabit Broadband Voucher scheme\) and connectivity targets these schemes have.](#)

Access Broadband Cymru - £1.5m (capital)

This scheme is a demand led grant scheme for properties that cannot access high-speed broadband and does not have connectivity targets.

Local Broadband Fund - £3.0m (capital) £0.3m (revenue) Total overall value of scheme - £11.0m

This scheme is a demand led grant scheme and does not have connectivity targets. Applicants have to demonstrate evidence to support the following criteria

- The creation and enabling of broadband infrastructure including backhaul facilities
- Upgrading existing broadband infrastructure
- Deployment of digital infrastructure such as the laying down of passive infrastructure (e.g. civil engineering works such as ducts and other network elements such as dark fibre etc.), also in synergy with other infrastructures (energy, transport, water, sewerage networks etc.)
- The delivery of fast, reliable broadband to those part of Wales currently not served (ie. NGA “white”)

UK Government’s Gigabit Voucher Scheme – no allocation

[Details of any budget allocated to improving mobile connectivity.](#)

No allocation has been provided for 2022/23. A business case will be done in 2022/23 which will confirm whether there is a need for a project and the value. Should this provide a positive outcome it is expected that the procurement will take place in the second half of 2022/23 with work commencing in 2023/24.

4.0 ENVIRONMENT, ENERGY & PLANNING – FUNDING OF ACTIONS

Environment, Energy & Planning	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Fiscal Resource	185,110	222,110	37,000	20%	240,610	256,110
Non-Fiscal Resource	10,121	10,121	0	0%	10,121	10,121
Total Resource	195,231	232,231	37,000	19%	250,731	266,231

Environment, Energy & Planning	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital	183,286	195,500	239,550	237,500
TOTAL	183,286	195,500	239,550	237,500

Develop and deliver overarching policy and programmes on sustainable development and natural resource management Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Environment Legislation & Governance	181	181	0	0%	181	181
Total Resource	181	181	0	0%	181	181

This BEL provides budgetary cover for legislation and governance costs

Fuel Poverty Programme Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Fuel Poverty Programme	4,370	4,370	0	0%	4,370	4,370
Total Resource	4,370	4,370	0	0%	4,370	4,370

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Fuel Poverty Programme	27,000	30,000	35,000	35,000
TOTAL	27,000	30,000	35,000	35,000

Develop and implement climate change policy, energy efficiency, Green Growth and environmental protection Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Welsh Government Energy Service	3,970	3,970	0	0%	3,970	3,970
Radioactivity & Pollution Prevention	3,415	4,415	1,000	29%	5,165	5,615
Clean Energy	3,457	8,457	5,000	145%	10,457	11,457
Climate Change Action	1,986	3,486	1,500	76%	4,486	5,486
Total Resource	12,828	20,328	7,500	58%	24,078	26,528

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Green Infrastructure	1,402	0	0	0
Welsh Government Energy Service	13,000	15,000	25,000	25,000
Radioactivity and Pollution Prevention	17,095	5,000	2,150	300
TOTAL	31,497	20,000	27,150	25,300

The Welsh Government has statutory duties to reduce carbon emissions to meet the net zero commitment by 2050 together with a series of interim targets for total emissions and commitments associated with increasing generation of renewable energy. The work of the energy division is to support these statutory duties and to maximise the economic and social value from renewable energy investment in Wales.

BEL 2809 Welsh Government Energy Service - This investment is to support public bodies to undertake energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects, with the repayments of that investment made from the savings made or income derived from the projects. These repayments are then recycled into further investments.

BEL 2817 Radioactivity and Pollution Prevention - This BEL supports the policy and legislative work in respect of air quality, chemicals, environmental noise, industrial pollution and radioactivity/radioactive waste. This includes the implementation of associated legislation as necessary to deliver those policy measures. It also covers the management of infraction cases, including some legal costs, associated with industrial pollution and air quality.

BEL 3770 Clean Energy - This BEL supports the Clean Energy programme. The programme of work aims to develop evidence to establish a path for decarbonising Wales' energy system, involvement of stakeholders in developing and promoting the resulting policy outcomes, and delivering support services to enable its delivery including the Local Energy and the new Welsh Government Energy Service and Smart Living programmes.

BEL 3771 Climate Change Action - This BEL supports the Decarbonisation Programme to develop the next Low Carbon Delivery Plan. Work will be commissioned for research and evidence to support the plan along with a range of communication and engagement products. It also includes support for development of innovative and smart integrated solutions to place-based issues using multi-energy vector and multi sector infrastructure and technology, processes and systems approach. The BEL also covers the Emissions Trading Scheme which will implement the Welsh Government's obligations after the establishment of a UK linked ETS scheme, following EU Exit.

Develop and implement flood and coastal risk, water and sewage policy and legislation Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Flood Risk Management & Water Revenue	29,415	41,415	12,000	41%	51,165	60,215
Total Resource	29,415	41,415	12,000	41%	51,165	60,215

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Flood Risk Management & Water Revenue	45,500	67,100	60,000	59,300
TOTAL	45,500	67,100	60,000	59,300

This BEL largely funds Wales' Risk Management Authorities in undertaking activities such as asset maintenance, awareness raising work, flood investigation (Section 19 reports) mapping, warning and informing and staff costs, Coastal Risk Management Programme and Funding to LA's and NRW.

Deliver nature conservation and forestry policies and local environment improvement Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Local Environment Quality	449	949	500	111%	949	949
Community Involvement	60	0	(60)	-100%	0	0
Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme	1,500	1,500	0	0%	1,500	1,500
Enabling Natural Resources	4,274	4,274	0	0%	4,274	4,274
Biodiversity, Evidence and Plant Health	6,625	13,625	7,000	106%	14,625	14,625
Forestry	1,221	5,221	4,000	328%	9,221	13,221
Environment Act Implementation	731	791	60	8%	791	791
Sub Total	14,860	26,360	11,500	77%	31,360	35,360
Non Fiscal Resource						
Forestry Non Fiscal	83	83	0	0%	83	83
Total Resource	14,943	26,443	11,500	77%	31,443	35,443

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Enabling Natural Resources	6,423	2,000	2,000	500
Biodiversity, Evidence and Plant Health	21,000	20,000	25,000	25,000
Forestry	4,500	9,000	23,000	25,000
TOTAL	31,923	31,000	50,000	50,500

BEL 2191 Local Environment Quality - This BEL deliver's a programme of work which focuses on improving the local environment of communities, targeting issues such as single use plastics and littering reduction, fly-tipping, dog fouling and other forms of environmental anti-social behaviour. It also deals with issues that carry public health concerns, such as contaminated land.

BEL 2192 Community Involvement – This BEL is no longer required, the budget was previously funding for Cynefin, a scheme which is now closed. Previous Ma’s have requested to transfer this revenue funding to Environmental Act Implementation (BEL 2837), to help fund Eco Schools. Once the funding is transferred at Final Budget the BEL will be archived.

BEL 2195 Landfill Disposals Tax Communities Scheme – This BEL provides grants for community projects that support biodiversity, waste minimisation, the diversion of waste from landfill and wider environmental enhancements.

BEL 2832 Enabling Natural Resources - The BEL is designed to achieve a range of outcomes and multiple benefits that will support and contribute to key Welsh Government strategy and policy, specifically Prosperity for All, the Natural Resources Policy and A Healthier Wales. The specific activities and projects supported by the Grant will directly help to deliver a number of policies including A Fly-tipping Free Wales, the Nature Recovery Action Plan and the Action Plan for Pollinators.

BEL 2825 Biodiversity, Evidence and Plant Health– This BEL focusses on five core areas reflecting key priorities in our Nature Recovery Action Plan: Environmental Sector Capacity Building Fund, A Green Recovery Fund for the protected site network, Biodiversity Taskforce, Land Management Agreements, Pollinators

BEL 2827 Forestry – This BEL funds work on demonstrator projects, work on Welsh Government woodland estates, work on the National Forest Delivery Model and work on developing Forestry Policy.

BEL 2837 Environment Act Implementation - The purpose of this BEL is to support the Ministerial commitment to the implementation of the international Eco-Schools programme across Wales, the Ministerial commitment to the tree planting and climate change educational programme delivered by charity Size of Wales and the programme of work to help further the sustainable management of natural resource and the implementation of the Environment Act.

Sponsor and manage delivery bodies Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Natural Resources Wales	59,717	59,717	0	0%	59,717	59,717
Sub Total	59,717	59,717	0	0%	59,717	59,717
Non Fiscal Resource						
NRW Non Fiscal Resource	10,000	10,000	0	0%	10,000	10,000
Total Resource	69,717	69,717	0	0%	69,717	69,717

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Natural Resources Wales	966	2,400	2,400	2,400
TOTAL	966	2,400	2,400	2,400

This BEL provides Grant in Aid to Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Alongside a wide range of operational and regulatory responsibilities, NRW is the principal adviser to Welsh Government. NRW help to deliver a wide range of ministerial priorities and commitments such as mitigating and adapting for climate change. NRW's activities also support the wellbeing goals including enhancing the environment to maintain a resilient Wales, supporting enterprise and jobs to promote a prosperous Wales, improving the nation's health, supporting viable and vibrant places and delivering social justice.

Increase Resource Efficiency and Support Transition to a Circular Economy Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy	45,316	50,316	5,000	11%	50,316	50,316
Total Resource	45,316	50,316	5,000	11%	50,316	50,316

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy	37,500	40,000	60,000	60,000
TOTAL	37,500	40,000	60,000	60,000

The Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy division's budget directly supports the collecting and processing of waste and recycling as a key sector. It continuing to support the transition to a circular economy, which can support improvements in supply chain resilience as well as being a core part of the Welsh Government's wider approach to a Green Recovery. We are working closely with delivery bodies to prioritise and

ensure that the response in this area for the people of Wales is timely and has an impact that contributes in the longer term to improved outcomes. *Funding Programmes and Schemes include:*

Gate fees : The Welsh Government's Waste Infrastructure Procurement Programme;
Sustainable Waste Management Grant (SWMG);
Collaborative Change Programme;
Waste Improvement Programme

The Programme for Government contains a number of commitments to Resource Efficiency and the Circular Economy which build on the key actions within the Beyond Recycling circular economy strategy. These actions principally relate to supporting more reuse, repair and recycling in town centres; supporting culture change and a zero waste culture and taking forward extended producer responsibility. Next year's budget arrangements will be focussed on the delivery of these.

Promote and support protected landscapes, wider access to green space Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Landscape & Outdoor Recreation	11,416	12,416	1,000	9%	12,416	12,416
Total Resource	11,416	12,416	1,000	9%	12,416	12,416

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Traditional Capital				
Landscape & Outdoor Recreation	8,900	5,000	5,000	5,000
TOTAL	8,900	5,000	5,000	5,000

This BEL provides core funding to the 3 National Park Authorities. It provides the WG's contribution to the maintenance and promotion of the Wales Coast Path and provides the Sustainable Development Fund for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs). It also funds a number of programmes, services and interventions to deliver WG and First Minister priorities around access and recreation, green spaces and allotments.

Restore, Maintain and Improve Marine Environment Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Marine Policy, Evidence and Funding	1,911	1,911	0	0%	1,911	1,911
Total Resource	1,911	1,911	0	0%	1,911	1,911

This BEL is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP), as well as delivering some specific policies under the WNMP. The WNMP was published in 2019 and outlines the vision for inshore and offshore regions as being seas and coasts that are clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse.

Planning and Regulation Action

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Planning & Regulation Expenditure	5,096	5,096	0	0%	5,096	5,096
Total Resource	5,096	5,096	0	0%	5,096	5,096

4.1 Environment, Energy & Planning

Planning

Funding of Planning and Environment Decisions Wales and how this differs from how Planning Inspectorate Wales was funded

£2.99m per annum in programme funding previously paid to the Planning Inspectorate for providing handling appeals and related casework in Wales, has been transferred in full to Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (“PEDW”). This funding is anticipated to meet the funding overhead requirements of PEDW in full, for statutory functions delivered on behalf of the Welsh Ministers.

Certain case types determined by PEDW on behalf of the Welsh Ministers, including Developments of National Significance and examination of LDPs, attract a fee which recovers the cost of service provision, and renders those case types cost neutral to the Welsh Ministers.

Sufficient resourcing for local planning authorities to carry out their functions adequately

The Welsh Government raised planning fees above the rate of inflation less than 18 months ago to enable Local Planning Authorities to better fund and improve their development management functions.

The draft budget provides Local Authorities with sufficient funding to fund core activities. It is for local authorities to allocate their budgets between the services they are responsible for.

The Welsh Government commissioned research to provide a more sustainable fee structure, which is reflective and reactive to changing costs and challenges. The Welsh Government is currently considering how to best implement this research to ensure those services are supported and improved in the future.

Environment

Delivery of the Nature Recovery Action Plan, including management and monitoring of the National Sites Network

This investment will directly help address the Programme for Government ambition to tackle the nature and climate emergencies, whilst also ensuring we meet our existing and emerging international commitments for biodiversity. It will directly contribute to the delivery of key priorities and actions identified in our Nature Recovery Action Plan (NRAP - <https://gov.wales/nature-recovery-action-plan-2015>) relating to the protection of our habitats and species of principal importance and the creation of resilient ecological networks.

The National Sites Network will benefit from funding through the delivery of our Nature Networks Programme (NNP) over the next 3 years being key to improving the condition and connectivity of our terrestrial and marine protected sites, creating resilient ecological networks which will allow our most endangered habitats and species to thrive. It will also help to deliver nature to wherever people live through engagement with local communities building capacity within the sector to help deliver action on the ground benefitting not only our environment but also our health and well-being. Robust monitoring and evaluation will be an integral part of the Nature Networks Programme.

Following the design phase, mechanisms to deliver the Nature Networks Programme will be developed in early 2022 building on the success of current initiatives such as the Nature Networks Fund and delivery of Land Management Agreements by NRW.

Replacement for EU LIFE funding following the UK's departure from the EU

Match funding will be made available for 2 successful NRW led projects (Quaking bogs and Rivers4LIFE) from the final round of EU LIFE funding over the next 3 years further helping to restore our protected sites network and contributing to tackling the nature and climate emergencies.

The UK Government has not provided any EU LIFE replacement funding failing to honour its promise of Wales being 'not a penny' worse off after leaving the European Union. Discussions are ongoing with the UK Government and the devolved administrations on any potential replacement scheme that may operate at a UK level. It is not clear at this stage how any potential replacement scheme would be funded.

Development of the new National Park

The budget provides funding to help deliver the Programme for Government commitment to designate a new National Park to cover the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley.

Designating a National Park is a significant undertaking and this funding will enable Natural Resources Wales, our statutory advisors in this area, to undertake the necessary programme.

NRW has commenced work on the preparation of an updated and streamlined process for assessing the case for new landscape designations in Wales within the context of Welsh legislation.

Alongside this, NRW will develop the evidence base required to inform the assessment of the case for the new National Park.

NRW will also develop an engagement and consultation process to ensure all stakeholders have a voice.

Delivery of the Clean Air Plan

The aim of the Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales, is to improve air quality and reduce the impacts of air pollution on human health, biodiversity, the natural environment and our economy. The Plan sets out a 10-year pathway to achieving cleaner air, structured around four core themes:-

- People – protecting the health and well-being of current and future generations
- Environment – Taking action to support our natural environment, ecosystems and biodiversity
- Prosperity – Working with industry to reduce emissions, supporting a cleaner and more prosperous Wales
- Place – Creating sustainable places through better planning, infrastructure and transport

We are undertaking a wide range of work with Government departments and sectors, and the public, to drive forward the ambitious actions in the Plan.

Funding will support the delivery of key commitments, including the development of new air quality targets, the introduction of a new air quality monitoring and assessment service to support targeted action to improve air quality, and enhancements to the Local Air Quality Management regime.

Measures in the Plan will also help to achieve the UK's emission reduction commitments for all pollutants in 2020 and 2030, and will support our decarbonisation aims.

The additional funding will support the introduction of a Clean Air Act for Wales, consistent with World Health Organisation guidance, and will also enable the roll out of an enhanced air quality monitoring and assessment service. The commitments will enhance both national and local government's ability to tackle poor air quality. Measures to set legally binding targets and control emissions will drive improvements to the management of air quality, providing direct benefits for public health, habitats and biodiversity.

Implementation of the Woodlands for Wales Strategy, including the National Forest Strategy

On 12 March 2020 the First Minister officially launched the National Forest Programme. He described an ambition for a National Forest that extends the length and breadth of Wales; that can provide many opportunities by planting, growing and protecting trees: contributing to decarbonisation goals and the climate change emergency; halting the decline of biodiversity; improve health and wellbeing of our people; supporting commercial business activity.

In this budget we will be taking forwards the learning gained in the first 2 years of the programme, including through creating 30 new areas of National Forest. We will also offer every household in Wales a tree to plant or have planted and create 100 Tiny

Forests. This will add to the 14 exemplar sites that we already have. We will also offer every household in Wales a tree to plant or have planted on their behalf.

The National Forest is a whole country approach based on a set of 6 outcomes which are the guiding principles of the National Forest. Woodlands will need to meet the three essential and at least one highly desirable criteria to be in the National Forest Network. Its main aims to connect woodlands across Wales and enhance environmental, social and economic benefits for future generations a consultation will be launched in January 2022 to consult on the long term strategy of the National Forest

On 13 July 2021 the Deputy Minister for Climate Change issued a written statement outlining his findings from a deep-dive exercise into how to remove the barriers planting trees in Wales, and how we can use more Welsh timber in construction. Recommendations include ways to support individuals and communities to plant trees, a new funding scheme for woodland creation and an industrial strategy to coordinate the timber supply chain and construction sectors.

The additional funding will support the Programme for Government commitment to create a National Forest to extend from the north of Wales to the south. The National Forest will create areas of new woodland and help to restore and maintain some of Wales' irreplaceable ancient woodlands. In time it will form a connected network running throughout Wales, which will bring social, economic and environmental benefits.

It also provides the budget to deliver the commitment to create a timber based industrial strategy that can develop and sustain the high value production and processing of Welsh wood. As set out in Net Zero Wales, the Welsh Government wants to create 43,000 hectares of new woodland by 2030. The trees and timber deep dive run earlier this year identified actions to deliver this, including a new woodland creation offer to be launched in 2022. This will include working with the farming community to encourage woodland creation on less productive land and through agro-forestry, as set out in the Co-operation Agreement.

Implementation of the National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management, including the take up of the Coastal Risk Management Programme

The National Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management sets out how we will manage risk from flooding and coastal erosion over the next decade with the objectives to prioritise investment, improve our understanding of risk, build resilience, prevent more people becoming exposed to risk and respond to events.

The additional funding will help meet the objectives of this Strategy as well as contribute towards our Programme for Government commitments by investing through our Risk Management Authorities in new and improved defences, maintenance and minor works to existing assets, investigation of flood events, awareness raising activities, forecasting and warning and mapping and modelling of flood risk.

Additional funding in the Flood budget will also help deliver the schemes in the Coastal Risk Management Programme which when complete will reduce the risk from flooding and/or coastal erosion to over 17,400 homes and businesses. This will help deliver almost 40% of our Programme for Government commitment to fund additional flood protection for more than 45,000 homes

Additional revenue will allow for additional flood protection for more than 45,000 homes, to deliver nature based solutions in all major catchments in Wales and to establish a targeted scheme to support restoration of seagrass and saltmarsh habitats along our coastline.

Initiatives to reduce plastic pollution, including the development of a Deposit Return Scheme and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for plastic packaging

The Programme for Government commitment to introduce extended producer responsibility reforms will initially focus on measures to tackle packaging waste and a deposit return scheme for drink containers. The budget allocation for this activity includes funding for finalising policy development along with support to local authorities and Natural Resources Wales who will be required to adapt and, in the case of Natural Resources Wales, take on new duties as the principle regulator of these reforms.

Development of permanent environmental governance arrangements, and the work of the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor

We have been clear in our commitment to apply the environmental principles to policy and law making; establish an environmental oversight body for Wales; and introduce a statutory duty and targets to protect and restore biodiversity in Wales.

Budget will be allocated within the Environment, Legislation and Governance BEL for the development of permanent environmental governance measures. Costs incurred for the Interim Environmental Protection Assessor are met from the EU Exit BEL. These interim measures provide a route for people to raise concerns about the functioning of environmental law.

Delivery of the Marine Protected Area Network Management Plan

Budgetary allocations to support Marine Protected Area (MPA) management will be comparable to last year's budget with no reductions anticipated. Proposed actions continue to be invited annually and where appropriate can be considered for funding through the MPA Network Management Grant Scheme. Accepted actions will meet the criteria set out in the MPA Network Management Framework for Wales 2018-2023 and will deliver against wider Programme for Government commitments to improve and enhance resilience of the marine environment.

Natural Resources Wales (NRW)

The NRW budget for 2022/23 has limited changes when compared to the 2021-22 budget. There has been no change in core Grant In Aid (GIA) (£60m) for NRW in 2021-22 as NRW and Welsh Government officials are in the process of undertaking an exercise that examines the allocation of NRW resources against its statutory functions and PfG commitments. This exercise will inform how NRW allocates its funding to meet its statutory obligations whilst achieving Ministerial priorities for the coming year (2022-23) and the remainder of the current term of Government. I will work closely with NRW over the coming months on this matter to ensure the funding is sufficient to boost their efforts in tackling climate change and its impact in Wales. This is through more renewable energy generation on public sector land and more natural flood management.

NRW have been allocated an additional £1.5m Capital (£2.4m in total) next year to help support funding for Welsh reservoirs, a significant Capital increase.

One of the biggest challenges for the Welsh Government is tackling the effects of climate change. It is imperative NRW continues to respond to our climate emergency and the increased ambition of at least a 95% emission reduction. With NRW at the forefront, delivering actions across multiple sectors aims to ensure Wales' environment will be more resilient to climate change impacts.

We will consider the ask from NRW, along with their review of the 2020 floods which sets out the need for additional funding. This must be considered alongside the needs of our local authorities and wider flood and coastal risk management to support our communities.

We hope to be in a position to be able to provide additional revenue next year to support this vital work. We will be looking at more specific allocations over the coming months and hope to be able to provide a 3 year settlement, allowing our risk management authorities to plan ahead more effectively and help deliver on the ambitions set out in our National Strategy.

In addition to Grant in Aid (GiA) funding, NRW is in receipt of commercial income. NRW also receives several amounts of grant funding from various parts of WG, year on year, for projects which are outside their GIA, such as;

The National Peatland Action Programme (NPAP) is a 5 year programme (2020-2025) funded by Welsh Government and delivered by NRW. The budget allocation to NRW for delivery of Year 3 (2022/23) of the NPAP is: -

1. **£1,000,000** = Capital spend on peatland restoration activity on approximately 600-800ha
2. **£500,000** = Revenue funding for i) the dedicated NPAP delivery team of 6 in NRW; ii) peatland research and evidence projects so support delivery of the NPAP.

The NPAP aims to increase the ecosystem resilience of Welsh peatlands, and in doing so contribute to help address both the Climate and Nature Emergencies as well as contributing to achieving Net Zero.

£1.5m of match funding will be provided covering the 2 successful NRW led LIFE projects (**Quaking bogs and Rivers for LIFE**) and Natur am Byth project for the next 3 years. These projects will contribute to help address both the climate and Nature emergencies.

It is expected that NRW will receive an allocation to deliver a proportion of the **Nature Networks programme** (NNP) over the next 3 years. The amount TBC subject to outcomes of the design phase.

Designating a National Park is a significant undertaking and funding TO NRW will allow them to undertake the necessary programme.

Additional areas of Committee interest

Implementation of recommendations made by the Green Recovery Task Force

The Green Recovery Task and Finish Group was tasked with identifying actions for the Welsh Government's Recovery Plan to Covid-19 and developing a shared plan to stabilise the environment third sector, highlighting the need to strengthen financial resilience, governance and community engagement. In relation to the first objective above, the Group published the *Green Recovery: Priorities for Action Report* on the 3rd December 2020 and in 2020/2021 the Welsh Government financed a package of these priority projects to support biodiversity, totalling £1.030m capital and £105k revenue in total. The Welsh Government committed an additional £4m capital and £300k revenue to the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) on the 25th February 2021. This funding was for onward distribution to Local Authorities for projects that delivered against the *Priorities for Action* report's five priorities. Under the second objective, the Group published the *Green recovery: supporting the environmental sector in Wales* report. The Welsh Government subsequently worked in partnership with National Lottery Heritage Fund, launching a £920k Capacity Building scheme for the environmental sector in November 2020.

More recently, Sir David Henshaw met with the Deputy Minister for Climate Change in November 2021 to discuss the Group's next steps, which includes the development of a business case in relation to the National Nature Service. Within this year's budget we have expanded funding to relevant areas which are key to accelerating the delivery of the Green Recovery, such as our Circular Economy Fund, and taking forward the delivery of the Net Zero Wales Plan. We are also looking to provide further investment, building on the capacity building scheme helping Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (eNGOs) retain and develop capacity to effectively contribute to their ability to tackle the nature and climate emergencies.

Delivery of the Welsh Government's Warm Homes Programme, including priority actions for 2021-2023 set out in its Tackling Fuel Poverty Plan, 2020–2035

The Fuel Poverty Warm Homes budget directly addresses the PfG commitment to “Continue to improve existing homes, helping us tackle fuel poverty, create much needed jobs, training opportunities, and supply chains” and supports “decarbonise more homes through retrofit, delivering quality jobs, training and innovation using local supply chains.”

The funding supports the Warm Homes Programme (WHP) which has been the Welsh Government's main intervention in efforts to reduce fuel poverty since its launch in 2009/10. Welsh Ministers published its statutory plan to tackle fuel poverty in March 2021 whilst the current iteration of the WHP is due to end in May 2023.

The next iteration of the Warm Homes Programme will be subject to a public consultation which will open December 2021.

Delivery of renewable energy and public sector energy efficiency programmes, including funding for the Welsh Energy Service

The budget provides capital and revenue to support the operation of the Welsh Government Energy Service. This offers commercial, financial, and technical expertise to the public sector and local energy sector to develop energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes. The service also undertakes a strategic leadership role across the sectors, with a focus on increasing ambition, capacity and capability.

The commitment to Expand renewable energy generation by public bodies and community groups in Wales by over 100MW by 2026 is in addition to the target of 1 gigawatt of locally owned generation by 2030. Work will begin this year to set up a development function, Ynni Cymru, in order to expand community owned renewable energy generation. The programme's Benefit Realisation Strategy indicates the unit will deliver significant revenue and environmental benefits to Wales. The budget allocations will enable us to establish a small team to develop the concept of a Welsh public developer, as described in the Cooperation Agreement, and in parallel actively develop an initially small number of projects for Welsh Government, and in support of communities and public bodies where capacity is a challenge.

The Welsh Government Energy Service is engaged to support these projects and wider public sector and community based activity to increase the opportunities and scale of renewable energy in Wales. The Service provides support, advice and expertise to projects together with significant investment in projects which, without support, would not be financially viable.

The funding also supports the Wales Funding Programme which provides zero interest capital loans to the public sector, with commercial loans and development grants provided to the local energy sector.

The National Infrastructure Commission for Wales

The Deputy Minister recently appointed Dr David Clubb as Chair of NICW. The Deputy Minister will soon begin a public appointment process to refresh the membership of the commission.

The Co-operation Agreement between Labour and Plaid Cymru commits NICW to assessing how the nationwide likelihood of flooding of homes, businesses and infrastructure can be minimised by 2050.

Dr Clubb has written to the Deputy Minister with proposals for a 3 year work programme. In the near future, this will lead to a funded work programme agreed between the Deputy Minister and the Chair.

Project proposed by NICW include:

- the renewable energy challenge; to be tightly integrated with the outcomes from the Welsh Government 'Deep Dive' into renewable energy
- the long-term risks to infrastructure, focusing on coastal flooding and erosion, river flooding, and heat-related impacts; and for sectors that are hard to adapt (such as transport, energy and housing)
- the long-term skills needs to support a distributed energy, housing and transport system that will need to withstand or recover from significantly increased weather/climate impacts
- a regional or national conversation on climate-related risks to a range of (likely coastal) communities, citing Fairbourne and other highly vulnerable communities as an example.

5.0 DIGITAL DELIVERY – FUNDING OF ACTIONS

Delivering the Digital Strategy	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Fiscal Resource	4,900	4,900	0	0%	4,900	4,900
Non-Fiscal Resource	0	0	0		0	0
Total Resource	4,900	4,900	0	0%	4,900	4,900

BEL	2021-22 Final Budget £'000	2022-23 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	Change £'000	Change %	2023-24 New Plans Draft Budget £'000	2024-25 New Plans Draft Budget £'000
Centre for Digital Public Services	4,900	4,900	0	0%	4,900	4,900
Total Resource	4,900	4,900	0	0%	4,900	4,900

The Programme for Government commitment of building “a stronger, greener economy as we make maximum progress towards decarbonisation” contains an action to “deliver the [Digital Strategy for Wales](#)”. The strategy includes actions based around wide-ranging Missions including: designing services around users, inclusion, skills, the economy, connectivity and data. Taken together, the Missions will deliver digital transformation across Wales to deliver the vision set out in the strategy.

Responsibility for delivering the Digital Strategy for Wales and the accompanying Delivery Plan is a cross-portfolio issue. Much of the digital policy and delivery activity is delivered across Ministerial portfolios but, together, contribute to the overall objective of delivering and modernising services so that they are designed around user needs and are simple, secure and convenient. Welsh Government’s overall draft budget allocations will enable a wide suite of actions, set out in the Delivery Plan, to be taken forward across all Missions.

The Centre for Digital Public Services (CDPS) is key to achieving our vision by improving digital leadership and skills as well as driving forward transformation in public services. It is already making public services more joined up, effective and using common standards. Allocations in the draft budget within the Climate Change portfolio will enable the CDPS to deliver agreed outcomes and plan for longer term work based on identified priorities. Providing budget certainty enables the CDPS to continue to work at pace, driving momentum for collaboration and digital transformation across public services in Wales.

Agenda Item 4

By virtue of paragraph(s) vi of Standing Order 17.42

Document is Restricted

Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee meeting – [Thursday 20 January 2022](#).

Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales:

[Natural Resources Wales Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21](#)

Evidence Briefing

Climate Change, Environment & Infrastructure Committee Annual Scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales – January 2022

Update on briefing on key issues and progress made since December 2020.

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Renewal
3. Green Recovery
4. Baseline Exercise
5. COP 26 & COP Cymru
6. Winter preparedness
7. Trail Hunting
8. Water Quality
9. Board Recruitment

Introduction

We are pleased to have been invited to give evidence to the new Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee. To supplement the detail of our annual report, we have outlined below some areas of work in order to update committee members on more recent activity.

Covid Response and Renewal

Following the Welsh Government decision to move to Covid Alert Level 0 in August, we updated our recovery guidance to staff to allow some increased flexibility for inter-office travel and indoor meetings. We continue to update and follow our own Covid Functional Risk Assessment to minimise the ongoing and very real risk of infection. In line with Welsh Government's position, we continue to encourage all staff to work from home where they can.

Given the move to Level 0, we stood down the Strategic Incident Response, Recovery and Review Group, who oversaw our collective response to the pandemic from the outset. In doing so we reviewed any ongoing risks and issues that SIRRRG were managing and ensured they were transferred either to the relevant business as usual mechanisms or the Adfywio/Renewal programme which is considering our future new ways of working approach in light of Covid and to respond to the climate and nature emergencies. The Covid Tactical Response Group continues to meet regularly to ensure any new Covid-related issues are captured and addressed and we have also initiated an incident review, which will look at the effectiveness of our response over the duration of the pandemic and we are also assessing of the impact that Covid has had on the delivery of our functions over that time.

In October, we started the first of our hybrid working trials, focusing on Tŷ Cambria in Cardiff, Maes y Ffynnon in Bangor and our Crosshands offices. Following the initial trial, we will extend the trials to include more offices and staff and review our home / flexible working policies, with a view to formal changes later in 2022. The second phase of the hybrid trial has been delayed due to Welsh Government (WG) guidance issued in October which requires us to continue to work from home where possible and to delay any phased return to offices through the winter period. As a result, the hybrid trials and the planned move to 40% of occupancy has been delayed.

With the move to Alert Level 2 in December, NRW has taken a robust position in order to protect our staff and stakeholders to include the reinforcing of the Work From Home (WFH) message and we are doing all we can to support our staff to work in this way. We recognise that there may be situations where it is unsafe or unfeasible to work from home, and as a result of ongoing risk assessments we have implemented appropriate mitigations.

The Adfywio/Renewal Programme Board is progressing well and continues to take relevant decisions and undertake actions in place of the Strategic Incident Response, Recovery and Review Group. The Tactical Response Group continues to meet regularly to ensure any

new of Covid-related issues are captured and addressed. The Programme is developing strategies for the built and fleet estate as well as considering how we work with our staff and customers in the future.

We are preparing our baseline for Carbon and Financial costs in order to measure against targets to be determined on the publication of the space and travel strategies. Budget submissions are being prepared which will include the funding needed to progress the planning and prioritisation work and will also identify any potential invest to save requirements when considering disposal, acquisition or improvements of our built and fleet estate.

Green Recovery

At the request of the previous Minister, NRW Chair Sir David Henshaw convened an independent Green Recovery Task and Finish Group in May 2020 to identify priorities for action for a green recovery with social justice as a guiding principle. The Group were also tasked to develop a shared plan to stabilise the environment third sector and brought together a broad range of strategic multi-agency partners to develop and support the implementation of collective priorities, framed around the recovery from the pandemic.

Key achievements have included:

- A Priorities for Action Report identified a range practical actions based on a 'call for ideas' with a total of £5.3m allocated, primarily through the WLGA to local authorities and a selection of smaller projects. The WLGA and LAs believe that the use of the Green Recovery funding to deliver priority themes has been extremely successful.
- The 'Green Recovery: Supporting the environmental sector in Wales' report was published, which focuses on the recommendations of research to inform the development of a plan to stabilise the environment third sector. Based on findings from this report, the Group helped to secure £900K of funding through the National Heritage Lottery Fund to support Sector Sustainability in a variety of areas, including support for organisational development such as Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training.
- The proposal for a National Nature Service (NNS) has also arisen from the outputs of the group. The NNS will be a Wales-wide system that mobilises people in support of nature recovery, acting as a platform that links people of all ages with opportunities for nature-based training, apprenticeships, employment, enterprise and volunteering.

The Group have now agreed to continue their work, with a commitment to build on the energy, momentum and collective power gained from the past year. The Chair has met with the Deputy Minister for Climate Change and he is in support of the group continuing. A

review of the Green Recovery Group structure will further maximise collaboration, increase communication and accelerate action and delivery. The Group will continue to be convened by NRW and directed by the membership. A 'Green Recovery: Welsh Environment Sector Group' is being formed to take forward the recommendations from the report which will be co-convened by NRW and WG but directed by the sector. The NNS continues to develop with broad stakeholder collaboration.

Baseline Exercise

Following the election in May 2021, the new Welsh Government has been clear about its ambitions in terms of tackling the climate and nature emergencies and placing these at the heart of the Government's Programme for Government. These ambitions are set against a highly-challenging funding environment, with a decade-long austerity agenda placing significant pressures on the Welsh Government's budgets and those of the wider Welsh public sector.

We are undertaking a comprehensive baseline review of our activities and are continuing to work closely with the Minister and her officials to consider approaches to prioritisation in light of different budget scenarios. Recognising both the Government's ambitions as well as the ongoing budgetary pressures, NRW committed to documenting the services we provide, the outcomes supported, and the resources committed to delivery. Our purpose in undertaking this baseline exercise is to establish a common understanding of the current position which will ensure that:

- resources are aligned to defined priorities and outcomes
- resources are used in the most effective and efficient way, driving value for money.

Following this baseline work, we will receive a Term of Government letter from the Minister in which she will set out her priorities to allow NRW to plan to deliver key Welsh Government priorities.

COP 26 & COP Cymru

Our CEO Clare Pillman was invited to a number of sessions at COP26 and before travelling to Scotland, attended a TEDx event in Theatr Clwyd which showcased the thoughts and ideas of young people as to how to combat the climate crisis. This provided unique and valuable insight ahead of events at COP26, where she chaired a panel on Distributed Leadership which included the First Minister, Lord Deben, Dr Anna Bullen from the CAT Centre, and youth activist Poppy Sewell-Evans.

Key NRW staff also attended COP26 and led the delivery of the Inter-agency Climate Change Group exhibition stand which included stand design, case study development and website design. We also facilitated and participated in a BBC Network live broadcast from Pen Y Cymoedd wind farm during COP26 to highlight the Habitat Management Plan.

We also worked closely with Welsh Government on the planning for COP Cymru events, participating in the regional green zone roadshows in the run up to Wales Climate Week later in late November. Colleagues from across NRW took an active role in the delivery of thought-provoking sessions throughout the Week, each focussed on stimulating important discussions around how the people of Wales must all work together to shape a climate and nature positive future.

Following her visit to Glasgow, Clare Pillman joined Julie James MS, the Minister for Climate Change, Lord Deben, Chairman of the Climate Change Committee and Sophie Howe, Future Generations Commissioner at the opening session of the week to discuss the different levels of leadership required to tackle the climate emergency in Wales.

NRW also led a panel discussion on flood risk management and climate change mitigation, and another on the role nature has to play in climate resilience with a focus on Wales' National Peatland Action Plan. We also took part in a session on the impacts of climate change on the sea and its ecosystems.

Winter Preparedness

We are prepared for responding to winter storms but, as for all organisations involved, responding to the increasing frequency and severity of flooding is very challenging. We operate a 24/7/365 incident service, but the effectiveness of our response depends on the geographical extent, the severity and the duration of flooding or environmental incidents, plus the frequency (e.g. many storm events back-to-back has a cumulative impact as does the longevity or complexity of an environmental incident).

We will always do our best, and our experience is that our staff do step up when required enabling us to cope with many scenarios - but the reality is no organisation can truly cope with all scenarios, and not all flooding can be prevented every time. As needed, we will prioritise activities during significant events, focusing on issuing flood warnings, operating our critical assets and communicating with partners and the public on the priority tasks, alongside ensuring the well-being, health and safety of our staff.

We have skilled and dedicated staff, many with substantial experience, and established systems and processes in place to respond to flooding events, with emphasis on our key roles for issuing flood warnings, our operational activities and the multi-partner response. There are some challenges in recruiting staff to new or vacant posts due to the currently very competitive market and shortage of skills across the sector, resulting in capacity issues for us and so we launched a high profile recruitment campaign in November this year to focus on this activity.

We have made improvements to our incident management activities, with many linked to the Flood Review. However, many actions in the Flood Review are more complex with interdependencies, and we identified in the Flood Review that delivery for these will be over

the longer term. We are progressing these, within the resources available. Our capital programme delivery is also going well, with several key schemes on site, and projects for new flood schemes and improvements to existing defences under development.

Trail hunting on Welsh Government Woodland Estate (WGWE)

The trial of Mark Hankinson, a director of the Master of Foxhounds Association, MFHA, concluded at Westminster magistrates court with Mr Hankinson being found guilty of encouraging or assisting others to commit a crime under The Hunting Act (2004). Pending the outcome of the trial, we suspended all trail hunting and access permissions for trail hunts on the NRW estate, including the WGWE.

We had a Master Agreement for seeking permissions for trail hunting over the NRW estate with the Hunting Office's governing body, the Masters of Foxhounds Association (MFHA), which expired on 30th September 2021. Without an agreement with the MFHA there is no longer a framework for individual hunts to carry out trail hunting on the estate.

The issue was discussed by NRW's board on 18 November, who decided that the outcome of the court case against a senior leader of the MFHA has resulted in a loss of confidence in that organisation's ability to ensure its activities are carried out within the law and the terms of its agreement. As all trail hunting on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate was managed under this agreement, we have decided to end the activity on the estate with immediate effect.

To assure ourselves that trail hunting on our estate was not being used as a cover for illegal activity, we would have to invest in the skills and resources that we currently do not have in order to police it properly. Given what has historically been a minor use of the land we manage, it was decided that this does not represent good use of NRW's resources.

Water Quality

Our rivers are one of our most important natural resources – they provide water to drink, homes for wildlife and sustain livelihoods. But the pressures upon them are great. Climate change, declining biodiversity and the way we all live today are all real challenges to the health of our rivers. It is clear that we all have a role in improving the conditions of rivers across Wales. Improving the health of our rivers is the long-term aim and it is not an issue for one sector alone. Collectively, we need to develop long term, catchment-scale solutions to addressing the issues of nutrients in our rivers. This includes establishing practical nature-based solutions such as river restoration programmes that can both improve water quality and habitat but also reduce nutrient inputs.

In January 2021 we published a report in which we presented our compliance assessment for phosphorus in river SACs against revised targets. There are nine river SACs in Wales – the Cleddau, Eden, Gwyrfai, Teifi, Tywi, Glaslyn, Dee, Usk and Wye. The evidence review showed that over 60% of SAC water bodies were failing standards for phosphorus. The river with the highest level of phosphate failures was the Usk with 88% of its water bodies

failing their target. Over 60% of river sections on the Wye and Cleddau failed their targets. The lower Teifi and parts of the Dee also failed to reach the standards.

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) judgment on the 'Dutch Nitrogen' cases affects the assessment of plans and projects under the Habitats Regulations. As a result of the decision the scope for authorising new development that will lead to additional nutrient loading is likely to be limited where the conservation status of the SAC is unfavourable due to nutrient standards being exceeded. A recent Phosphate Impact Statement produced by the Local and National Park Authorities cited 9,763 housing units and an anticipated 1725 affordable units affected by the SAC phosphates issue.

In response, a project has been set up within NRW to establish new policy and positions, and deliver advice, tools, procedures to ensure our permitting and regulatory functions have no detriment to SAC Water Quality. It also aims to fully understand water quality compliance issues and targets across all nine riverine SACs, and establish longer term responsibilities for water quality evidence gathering in riverine SACs and cyclical compliance assessments.

Current priorities include developing guidance on nutrient neutrality and use of calculators, updating the planning advice for Local Planning Authorities and investigation of options for reviewing existing permits. We are also working on the assessment of the other water quality attributes, developing position statements on potential solutions and awaiting legal advice on any implications of the Dutch cases rulings for other SACs, e.g. marine sites. There is ongoing work on our future approach to permitting small discharges in the failing SAC catchments.

Welsh Government has established an oversight group which includes representatives from across the relevant policy departments as well as key external stakeholders to provide a focus for a multi sectoral response to the current situation on the SAC rivers, as well as the Planning sub-group. We will also be part of the Nutrient Management Boards (NMB) when set up for the failing rivers, with the River Wye NMB already established.

As you will have seen from Sir David's recent letter to the Committee on sewage discharges, we have been working with Dwr Cymru and Hafren Dyfrdwy for a number of years on a programme of investigations where sewage works have been deemed to be non-compliant against their permit. We take the issue of storm overflows and unpermitted assets very seriously and have issued enforcement notices where we feel action is not progressing as required. These challenges sit within the context of wider water quality matters and other pathways for nutrients and other materials to enter the water courses. As noted, we are working hard with other partners to prioritise and address these matters.

Board Recruitment

In September this year, the Minister for Climate Change made three appointments to the NRW board. We are delighted that Professor Calvin Jones, Mark McKenna and Paul

Griffiths have joined us, and they are already bringing a wealth of experience and expertise to our board committees and discussions. These appointments are for one year and, as we will have two further vacancies next autumn, we are currently working with Welsh Government to support the recruitment process for when these roles come to the end of their terms.

January 2022

Agenda Item 5.1

Senedd Cymru
Y Pwyllgor Cyllid

Welsh Parliament
Finance Committee

Chair, Children, Young People, and Education
Committee
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and
Infrastructure Committee
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee
Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

07 December 2021

Dear Committee Chairs

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022-23

On 16 July 2021, I wrote to you to share the Finance Committee's thinking in relation to our programme of engagement for the forthcoming Welsh Government's Draft Budget and our approach to scrutiny. I am now writing to provide an update on this work.



Engagement

Between 17 September and 26 November 2021, the Finance Committee undertook a consultation seeking information on the Draft Budget on behalf of all Committees. The consultation responses are available on the Finance Committee webpage.

In addition, a series of focus groups were held to gather the views and experiences of citizens of Wales who are service users within particular fields or impacted directly by draft budget decisions.





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A report summarising the key themes and issues from these focus groups will be available mid-December and the link will be circulated to your Committee clerks.

Budget focus

It is likely that the 2022-23 Draft Budget will continue to be impacted by the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, the Finance Committee has identified a number of areas which we would like to see the focus of scrutiny, these are:

- *how resources should be targeted to support economic recovery and what sectors in particular need to be prioritised;*
- *to what extent alleviating climate change should be prioritised in supporting economic recovery;*
- *how budget allocations support aspirations of the Net Zero Wales plan;*
- *Welsh Government policies to reduce poverty and gender inequality;*
- *approach to preventative spending and how is this represented in resource allocations (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;*
- *how evidence is driving Welsh Government priority setting and budget allocations;*
- *how the Welsh Government should use taxation powers and borrowing;*
- *support for businesses, economic growth and agriculture post-EU transition;*
- *what are the key opportunities for Government investment to support 'building back better' (i.e. supporting an economy and public services that better deliver against the well-being goals in the Well-being of Future Generations Act).*

We hope that the consultation and engagement work will complement and inform the work of policy Committees and I would encourage you to use some of the areas outlined above as the focus for your budget scrutiny.

If you have any questions about any aspect of the Draft Budget process, please feel free to contact me or the Clerk to the Finance Committee, Owain Roberts, 0300 200 6388, seneddfinance@senedd.wales.



Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peredur Owen Griffiths'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'P' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Chair of the Finance Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

**Climate Change, Environment,
and Infrastructure Committee**

Julie James MS, Minister for Climate Change

14 December 2021

Dear Julie,

Future funding for Natural Resources Wales

The Welsh Government is scheduled to publish its draft budget for 2022-23 next week. Ahead of publication, we would like to set out our expectation for an increase in Natural Resources Wales' ('NRW') budget from 2021-22.

Between its inception in 2013 and 2020, NRW's funding fell in real-terms by 35%. The impact of this on NRW's ability to carry out its role and responsibilities effectively was a matter of ongoing concern for our predecessor Committee. Our recent work on priorities for the Sixth Senedd provides a clear indication that stakeholders from across sectors share this concern.

We note that Natural England received a substantial uplift of £63 million in its budget for 2021-22 following the UK Government's Spending Review. The Sixth Senedd coincides with a critical period in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss. Natural Resources Wales will be expected to be at the forefront of action to respond to these challenges. It must be fully resourced to do this.

We believe the start of the Sixth Senedd provides an ideal opportunity for the Welsh Government to reverse the trend of NRW funding cuts. We hope to see this put into practice in the forthcoming draft budget.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg./ We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



13 January 2022

Dear Llyr Gruffydd MS

Thank you for your letter of 14 December 2021 concerning the Future Funding of Natural Resources Wales. You will have seen that the Draft Budget for 2022 to 2023 has now been published.

Fighting the climate and nature emergency is a priority of this government and is one we take seriously. Addressing the issues brought by these twin emergencies will require us to reassess what we do and embed good practices in all of our activities. Our Programme for Government and Co-Operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru sets out an ambitious programme of work with and our draft budget ensures that there is £1.8bn in targeted investment to respond to the climate and nature emergency in this Sixth Senedd.

This includes an additional £12m of revenue and a total capital investment of £57m in the National Forest and Welsh Timber Strategy up to 2024-25. This will support delivery of a National Forest extending from the north of Wales to the south and also support communities to create 30 new woodlands, connect habitats and protect ancient woodlands. Further, we are investing an additional £9m revenue and close to £90m capital up to 2024-25 to enhance green spaces at all scales. This includes a new National Park, the Nature Networks programme, Local Places for Nature, the National Peatlands Action programme, Natur am Byth and our Sustainable Landscapes, Sustainable Places capital programme to ensure that our most precious habitats and species are able to thrive.

You will have noted that Natural Resources Wales's (NRW) budget for 2022/23 is broadly similar to the 2021-22 budget. As it stands, NRW and Welsh Government officials are in the process of undertaking an exercise which examines the allocation of NRW resources against its statutory functions and Programme for Government commitments. This exercise will inform how NRW allocates its funding to meet its statutory obligations whilst achieving Ministerial priorities for the coming year (2022-23) and the remainder of the current term of Government. We will work closely with NRW over the coming months to ensure their funding is sufficient to discharge their responsibilities and support tackling climate change and its impact in Wales.

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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.

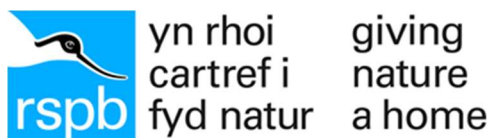
Back Page 102
We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

Agenda Item 5.3



RSPB paper for the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee session on 20 January:

Scrutiny of Welsh Government draft budget with the Minister and Deputy Minister for Climate Change

Annual scrutiny of Natural Resources Wales

This short paper is provided as a supplement to RSPB Cymru's response to the Finance Committee's pre-budget consultation (also provided). Having now had the opportunity to consider the Welsh Government's draft budget, we suggest a number of areas the Committee might wish to explore with the Minister, as well as with the Chair and CEO of NRW.

1. NRW's capacity to respond to the nature and climate emergency

During its recent inquiry into Biodiversity and Ecosystems, the Environmental Audit Committee requested evidence from Natural England in relation to its funding and particularly, details of the work that Natural England had curtailed or reduced investment in due to budget constraints. The [evidence](#) provided by the Chair of Natural England provided these details and stated that the current funding at the time was below the level required to deliver all of its statutory duties to a good standard. It also stated the risks resulting from this situation.

In light of NRW's funding [falling](#) in real terms by 35% from 2013-2020, the Committee may wish to ask whether NRW has made a similar assessment of the impact of budget constraints on its ability to deliver across the full range its statutory duties and responsibilities.

NRW's [baseline evaluation](#) of terrestrial protected sites (published in 2021) prompted [concerns](#) due to the clear paucity it showed in terms of available data and staff resource to assess the condition of the site features (species and habitats), as well as the overall results of the evaluation showing only 20% of features at these most important places for nature are in favourable condition. During the Committee's [evidence session](#) on 9th December 2021 on marine environmental management, NRW gave evidence on funding needs for an adequate programme of marine monitoring. This stated that NRW's funding for marine monitoring had decreased over the past nine years, and that the favoured option from working with JNCC and Welsh Government identified a need for a five-fold increase in funding to enable an adequate programme.

The Committee may wish to ask NRW what assessment it has made of the budget needed for an adequate programme of monitoring covering all protected sites – for terrestrial as well as marine sites, including SSSIs – and how this compares to the budget currently available for site monitoring.

During the Committee's 9th December session NRW referred to the need to revise conservation advice packages for marine SPAs and SACs, making them more detailed and prescriptive; [SoNaRR 2020](#) reported that only 5.47% of SSSIs are covered by management agreements between NRW and their owner/occupiers.

The Committee may wish to ask NRW, and the Minister, to what extent they consider funding allocated in the draft budget will plug the gap in terms of securing appropriate management for terrestrial and marine protected sites.

2. Nature conservation

The Committee may wish to explore more detail about how nature conservation funds may be spent on different programmes and priorities. For example:

What is the level of funding anticipated for protected sites and wider habitats under the Nature Networks Fund, and what funding will be available for species recovery projects?

While allocations in the draft budget are extremely welcome, a significant gap in finance for nature's recovery remains.

The Committee may wish to explore what steps the Welsh Government is taking to develop innovative funding approaches, enabling well-regulated private investment to play its part.

3. Nature based solutions

The Committee may wish to explore to what extent nature recovery may benefit from other budget lines within the Climate Change portfolio. For example:

Will the budget allocation on flood risk management be used to deliver nature-based solutions to flood risk, and in what proportion?

To what extent will the forestry allocation in the budget contribute to the management and creation of wildlife-rich habitats to contribute to resilient ecological networks?

Given the importance of peatlands in contributing to both mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, what level of investment does Welsh Government anticipate making in restoring degraded peat?

4. Marine renewable energy

The recent [deep dive on renewable energy](#) identified the need to invest in NRW's regulatory and advisory capacity as well as in addressing evidence gaps and improving spatial planning.

The Committee may wish to explore with the Ministers whether the budget line for marine renewables is to incorporate these wider costs of delivering marine energy ambitions.

5. National Nature Service

In our submission to the Finance Committee, we flagged the opportunity of a National Nature Service (NNS), in linking environmental needs with Welsh Government priorities around jobs and skills.

The Committee may wish to ask for an update from the Minister on whether the Welsh Government plans to take forward the development of an NNS in line with proposals submitted by the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission and the Future Generations Commissioner's Office.

For further information please contact Annie Smith – annie.smith@rspb.org.uk

Ramblers Cymru: Reflections on the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022-23

About Ramblers Cymru

Ramblers Cymru are Wales' leading walking charity, dedicated to creating a Wales where everyone can enjoy walking in the outdoors and the mental and physical benefits it brings. We are the guardians of the path network and help protect access to the places we all love to walk.

Why paths and access to green spaces matter

As a result of the COVID pandemic, many people are discovering a new appreciation of the paths and green spaces on their doorsteps, of the benefits walking brings to their health and wellbeing, and of the enjoyment to be had by being close to nature.

Our route to recovery as a nation must build healthier and happier communities. We must secure help people connect with the environment, be active on foot, and cherish our green spaces.

The Welsh Government has acknowledged the important environmental and recreational role of the public rights of way network and access to the green space, in strategies and policies such as the National development Framework, Future Wales: the National Plan 2040; Natural Resources Policy; Planning Policy Wales; and Healthy Weight: Healthy Wales.

Ramblers Cymru are calling on Welsh Government to back this recognition with fair funding.

Fair Funding for rights of way and access

The recently reinstated Access Improvement Grant from Welsh Government to Local Authorities and National Park Authorities, has provided £2m this year (£1.35m in 2019/20). While welcome, this equates to just 64p per person in Wales, and is not aligned with the benefits investment in quality access can bring. For example, in 2014 the economic value of coastal walking trips in Wales was estimated at £547m.

Local authority Rights of Way and Countryside teams have seen falling resource for many years, due to austerity and the wide-ranging pressure on local government budgets. This has been compounded by the absence of any dedicated Welsh Government improvement funding between 2017-2020, and further exacerbated by significantly increased footfall pressures brought by the pandemic.

One local authority in Wales have 1,800 unresolved issues on their path network – almost 10% of which have been outstanding for over 15 years. Another has just 38% of its paths in a satisfactory condition. Across Wales, Authorities are failing to fulfil their statutory duties to secure and maintain public access.

Paths, access and green space in the draft budget

The Climate Change Main Expenditure Group

Access to the countryside, coast, rights of way, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and National Parks all sit in the portfolio of the Minister for Climate Change.

Given the expressed recognition by Welsh Government of the role of outdoor access to a wide range of societal and economic impacts, and the declaration of nature and climate emergencies, it is of concern that the Climate Change MEG is projected to be the hardest hit both in real terms, and percentage terms at the end of this 3-year budget. In fact, it is the only MEG in a negative situation at the end of the period on percentage terms.

Budget Expenditure Lines

Because of the potential impact on paths, access, and the opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors on foot, Ramblers Cymru would welcome the Committee examining the following budget decisions through the scrutiny process:

'Promote and support protected landscapes, wider access to green space'

Within this Budget Expenditure line, *Landscape and Outdoor Recreation* will receive £17.4m. This is a reduction of 15% in real terms on the current budget.

The proposed capital budget element under this BEL is set at £5m per year over the 3-year period. This is a reduction from £8.9m in 2021/22.

It is not clear from the information provided if the Access Improvement Grant is part of this expenditure area, or if it is being maintained at its current level.

'Green Infrastructure'

There is no capital budget for green infrastructure (was £1.4m in 21/22)

'Sponsor and manage delivery bodies'

Natural Resources Wales' budget is rising by 1%.

NRW have a vital role to play in providing and promoting responsible access to the outdoors, and have faced significant budgetary challenges over recent years. It is a concern that rising demand from increased visitors, without a meaningful increase in budget, will adversely affect the management of NRW estate, and some of our key recreational assets, like the Wales Coast Path.



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'Sports & Physical Activity' (Economy MEG)

Sport Wales is allocated a reduced budget (-2%).

As Wales recovers from the pandemic, we need more opportunities for people to increase physical activity through organised sports and recreational activities. This is key to improving mental and physical health, and reducing health inequalities. The reduction of support under this budget line could inhibit those opportunities.

Conclusion

Ramblers Cymru encourage the committee to consider the implications of the issues raised above, and to explore recommendations for how this draft budget could be strengthened to help Wales realise the benefits of paths and outdoor access for current and future generations.

Agenda Item 5.4

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

**Climate Change, Environment,
and Infrastructure Committee**

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Julie James MS
Minister for Climate Change

09 December 2021

Dear Minister

Proposals to ban single use plastic items

Following on from our *Report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Environment Bill* (September 2021), we would welcome an update from you on progress made by the Welsh Government in taking forward proposals to ban single use plastic items.

In your response to our report, you told us that intergovernmental discussions were continuing in relation to the impact of the UK Internal Market Act 2020 on the scope of the proposed ban in Wales. You indicated your intention to publish details of the next steps towards a ban by the end October 2021. These have yet to be made available.

We note the Scottish Government has recently made the *Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Scotland) Regulations 2021*, which will come into force in June 2022. In addition, the UK Government is currently consulting on proposals for a ban on a range of single use plastics and other sources of plastic pollution in England, having already introduced a ban on plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds.

Given that progress towards a ban is being made in other UK nations, it is unclear why there appears to have been no further progress made in Wales. It would be helpful if you could address this issue in your response.

I should be grateful if you would provide an update as soon as possible, and by **Tuesday 4 January 2022**, at the latest.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Llyr', is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

4 January 2022

Dear Llyr Gruffydd MS

Thank you for your letter of the 9 December requesting an update on our plans to ban single use plastic items.

I am pleased to confirm the consultation summary report, which includes the next steps, will be published in January. The intergovernmental discussions in relation to Single Use Plastic are continuing into the New Year.

I remain committed to delivering on our ambition of abolishing the use of the most commonly littered single use plastics in Wales. I am keen to drive forward, in the first instance, the proposals set out as phase one in our consultation, to legislate to remove these single use plastics from the consumer chain in Wales. We intend to introduce legislation for the bans as quickly as possible within this Senedd term.

In addition to this, my officials are already preparing for future phases of the work, including reviewing evidence for over 60 additional items identified in the consultation as candidates for potential future action. During this second phase, we will consider items such as wet wipes and equivalent moist towel products. It is well known many of these products enter the sewerage system, often creating problems with blockages and potentially even causing flood risks.

Yours sincerely

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

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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.

Agenda Item 5.5



Follow up information to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee following Marine Environmental Management discussion on 9 Dec 2021

Summary statement from NRW

We value the opportunity to discuss marine environmental management with the Committee and recognise that there have been a number of areas of change since previous committees looked into this area.

It may help to start with a quick re-cap of NRW's role in this area. NRW's general purpose is to pursue the sustainable management of natural resources. This role extends to the marine environment which makes up almost half of the territory of Wales. NRW's role in relation to marine environmental management is wide ranging including, for example: advice, evidence, regulation including marine licensing, monitoring, coastal flood risk/erosion management, incident response, protected site management, cockle fisheries management (Dee and Bury inlet) and the Dee navigation authority.

We are now working in two government-declared emergencies, both a climate and nature emergency. Whilst some of the impacts and opportunities are well documented and publicised on land, they are perhaps less well publicised in relation to the sea, which has much to lose and much to offer. We recognise that the impact of climate change is significant at sea, but that also the sea provides opportunities to mitigate some of the impacts through, for example, absorption of carbon, climate amelioration, and provision of renewable energy. The nature emergency adds imperative to effectively managing the extensive network of marine protected areas which are a key tool to support a resilient marine ecosystem. In NRW we are seeking to bring these concerns together and address both the climate and nature emergency issues and opportunities in an integrated way.

Key programmes of work for us in this respect include: our Offshore Renewable Energy Programme; advice and evidence to support the development of a spatial approach to marine planning; renewing our MPA condition assessments and conservation advice; developing and delivering our restoration and blue carbon programmes; and also delivering monitoring and evidence to improve our understanding and inform planning and management. We hope to be able to discuss some of these areas with you today.

Despite the challenges we are fully committed in NRW to prioritising our efforts through our marine programme – be they advisory, regulatory, direct management etc – to focus on the areas where we can have greatest impact on the sustainable management of the marine environment.

Scale of the gap in funds for evidence and where others overcome the restrictions to access multi-year funding

NRW produces an annual list of high priority marine and coastal evidence needs. This list is prioritised from a 'long list' of recognised evidence needs, across NRW's marine and coastal work. Evidence to inform offshore renewables cases is one of the priority drivers. At present, there are 20 projects on the prioritised list. This reflects NRW's capacity to progress these projects. Some of these evidence gaps can be addressed within the financial year; others however are complex problems requiring multi-year experimental research to enable meaningful progression. NRW are unable to carry this out on our own, so we look to other organisations and funding streams. Our budget for marine and coastal evidence work (not including monitoring) is currently around £160,000 per year. We estimate that to substantially progress all 20 priority projects would cost in the region of £3.5 million per year.

NRW seeks to work with partners to address these evidence needs. For example, we are working with the Crown Estate led Offshore Wind Evidence for Change (OWEC) programme. This is a £25 million multi-year programme comprising a mix of studies, research projects and evidence-gathering to help better understand and overcome the cumulative environmental impacts of offshore wind, and its effects on users of the sea and onshore communities. We are also engaged with the Offshore Wind Enabling Actions Programme (OWEAP), which is a £4.3 million initiative run jointly by Defra and BEIS, funded by HM Treasury. These programmes can be valuable to jointly fill evidence gaps, where the Welsh evidence needs align with those across the UK. However, the focus of these programmes tends to be on existing offshore wind developments in the North Sea which means some impact pathways and receptors (habitats and species) are not always the priority in Wales.

Both the OWEC and OWEAP programmes have an offshore wind focus. In Wales, the energy mix is more diverse with the future development of floating offshore wind, tidal range, tidal stream and wave energy dependent on addressing key evidence gaps specific to those sectors. The Welsh Government and NRW are sponsors of ORJIP Ocean Energy, a UK-wide collaborative programme of environmental research with an annual budget of £55,900 and the aim of reducing consenting risks for wave, tidal stream and tidal range projects. The collection of survey data in the marine environment is extremely expensive and to comprehensively survey the entirety of Welsh waters would cost millions, or possibly billions of pounds.

NRW would welcome a change to the funding mechanism to allow funding allocation over multiple years, to enable the delivery of multi-year evidence projects.

Evidence relating to sandeels

The distribution and abundance of sandeels in Welsh waters is not well studied though RSPB are currently running a project, supported by an NRW grant, to assess the distribution of forage fish species in Welsh waters, including sandeels. The report will cover:

- Spawning and nursery grounds of forage fish in Welsh waters and surroundings.
Distribution of adult and juvenile forage fish species during autumn and winter

- Pressures on forage fish in Welsh Waters - A literature review of known and potential pressures on forage fish

When published in early 2022 this report will provide useful evidence for sandeel species.

NRW does have sandeel evidence projects in the long-list of evidence gaps identified in our marine and coastal evidence programme, however none are currently in the top priority list for taking forward with available resources.

Sandeels have specific habitat preferences, bury in the seabed at night and during winter, and lay benthic eggs, making them vulnerable to impacts from human activities interacting with the seabed. Sandeels form discrete populations that also making them vulnerable to losses from human activities. Welsh commercial and recreational fisheries for sandeels and Norway pout are limited, though sandeel habitat and populations are subject to other pressures in Welsh waters such as aggregate dredging.

The sandeel is currently a species listed under Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The Welsh Ministers must take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance the species included in the list published under Section 7 and encourage others to take such steps.

Sandeels are a source of food for kittiwakes. NRW is currently finalising a report into the current status of the black-legged kittiwake in Welsh waters. We will make this available to the committee as soon as this is published.

NRW's role in advising on and consenting marine renewable energy

Note of clarification: In later sessions on the 9th, the Committee heard that Marine Scotland utilise a "Deploy and Monitor" policy to facilitate deployment of marine renewable energy technologies. To clarify, the "Survey, Deploy and Monitor" policy facilitated development by reducing the environmental survey effort required to support applications to a minimum of 1 year of environmental survey, in areas considered to be low risk. This policy was based on the environmental sensitivity of the proposed location, the scale of development, and the technology type proposed. The extent of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in Wales means that relatively few locations in the inshore region would be identified as low environmental sensitivity, in the absence of large-scale strategic baseline assessment. Please note that this policy has been withdrawn in Scotland and is no longer available on the Marine Scotland web pages.



**Cyfoeth
Naturiol
Cymru
Natural
Resources
Wales**

Agenda Item 5.6

Ein cyf/Our ref: CH21-071

Eich cyf/Your ref: No ref

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Date: 20/12/2021

By Email - Llyr Gruffydd MS
Elizabeth.Wilkinson@senedd.wales

20 December 2021

Dear Llŷr,

Thank you for your letter of 22 November regarding unpermitted sewage discharges.

The recent announcement from Environment Agency and Ofwat to analyse and investigate relation to breaches of permit compliance from wastewater treatment works in England relates to information submitted by Water Companies to Environment Agency highlighting permit breaches.

NRW does not propose to undertake a similar investigation as already have a compliance response in place. Information has been shared by the companies since 2014 and we are working with both companies to identify causes, rectify those where possible, and set out plans to bring those sites back into compliance at the earliest opportunity. Currently 32 sites have been rectified and 37 more will be worked on in the current period of water company investment (2020-25). Where NRW feels action is not progressing as required, and as further data is collected by the company and shared with NRW, we will take the necessary action to ensure non-compliance with permit is dealt with appropriately.

NRW recognises the high public interest in relation to water and water quality over the last few years and has taken several steps across the sector to tackle concerns. With regard to Water Companies, we have been proactive in Wales since 2012 in tackling the impact of storm overflows, water company performance and impacts on our SAC rivers in recent times.

In 2012 NRW instructed Water Companies in Wales to install event duration monitors on all its storm overflows to gain a greater level of understanding of their impact and the status of the sewerage network, work in England has progressed at a slower rate due to a later start date. This work has led to greater scrutiny and public interest which NRW has responded to, on top of its current work programme.

I have instigated joint working with Welsh Government, Ofwat, and both Water Companies, with oversight from the Chairs of each organisation to agree an ambitious water company improvement programme for their storm overflows. An overflow taskforce is now in operation in Wales, firstly to develop recommendations aimed at tackling the impacts of Storm Discharges on Welsh rivers, then to instigate an action plan to drive the required work forward. We will maintain our effort on this alongside other priority work to tackle and maintain water company performance.

I will continue to oversee this Overflow 'Roadmap' alongside Ofwat with active management groups in place to drive the work forward. NRW would be happy to share this work with you as it approaches its final stages of agreement.

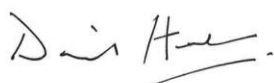
NRW has also invested in driving the overall performance of Water Companies environmental performance forward. 2020 saw Dwr Cymru achieve 4-star compliance (highest standard) across a range of permitted activities monitored by NRW. We annually hold Companies and their board to account via our Performance management meetings.

We are also ensuring that Dwr Cymru and Hafren are investigating and providing solutions relating to both overflows and sewage treatment works where discharges are impacting on the SAC phosphate issues on Welsh rivers.

May I assure you that we are monitoring closely the recently announced commitment by Environment Agency and Ofwat in England to analyse and investigate breaches of permit compliance from wastewater treatment works, and are working with the Environment Agency and Ofwat Wales to determine what action is proposed in light of their findings. Should this require a review to our approach as the investigations in England progress, we will take the required action.

I understand that NRW has been invited to give evidence on this issue to the Committee in February. In the meantime, should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best wishes,



Sir David Henshaw
Cadeirydd, Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Chair, Natural Resources Wales

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

Agenda Item 5.7



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref

17 December 2021

Dear Llyr,

I would like to share with the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure (CCEI) Committee links to the published Framework Outline Agreement and Concordat for the following common framework which falls within my portfolio:

- [Radioactive Substances](#)

The published documents will aid your Committee in its scrutiny of provisional frameworks. Should you wish to scrutinise them, my officials stand ready to assist.

I am copying this letter to Huw Irranca-Davies, Chair of the Senedd Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

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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.

Agenda Item 5.8

**Pwyllgor Deddfwriaeth,
Cyfiawnder a'r Cyfansoddiad**

**Legislation, Justice and
Constitution Committee**

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Chair, Children, Young People, and Education Committee
Chair, Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee
Chair, Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister
Chair, Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations
Committee
Chair, Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Chair, Equality and Social Justice Committee
Chair, Finance Committee
Chair, Health and Social Care Committee
Chair, Local Government and Housing Committee
Chair, Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee

21 December 2021

Dear Chair

Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement

Last week our report on the Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement between Senedd Cymru and the Welsh Government was noted by the Senedd.

I would like to draw your attention to this report, which includes the Agreement.

The Agreement represents the agreed position of the Senedd and the Welsh Government on the information that the Welsh Government will, where appropriate, provide to the Senedd with regard to its participation in formal, ministerial-level inter-governmental meetings, agreements, concordats, and memorandums of understanding.

The Agreement is intended to support the Senedd's capacity to scrutinise Welsh Government activity



and to hold the Welsh Ministers to account in the intergovernmental arena. It therefore may be of interest to you in any future scrutiny work that you undertake.

Yours sincerely

Huw Irranca-Davies

Huw Irranca-Davies

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Agenda Item 5.9

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r
Trefnydd Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and
Trefnydd

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

31 December 2021

Dear Huw,

We are writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to let you know that the Inter-Ministerial Group for Environment Food and Rural Affairs are expected to be held on the following dates throughout 2022:

- 31 January
- 21 March
- 16 May
- 27 June
- 12 September
- 24 October
- 5 December

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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.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

We will be representing the Welsh Government. Agendas are generally issues only a week before these meetings, however they will usually focus on areas where it is beneficial for the four nations to work together (particularly in areas of climate change and resilience of our sectors), and on areas of dispute (particularly in relation to the Common Frameworks), as well as on sectoral funding. We expect that issues relating to our borders and the Northern Ireland Protocol will continue to be discussed throughout the year.

A communique will be issues on the UK Government website after each meeting.

This letter will also be sent to the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee, and to the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

Regards,

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd
Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North
Wales, and Trefnydd

Julie James AS/MS
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Agenda Item 5.10

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

14 January 2022

Dear Chairs,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement to let you know that a virtual meeting of the Interministerial Group on Net Zero, Energy and Climate Change will take place on 17 January. I apologise for the short notice. The meeting was only confirmed this week.

I will be representing the Welsh Government. The meeting will focus on the content and timing of the forthcoming consultation on proposals to develop the UK Emissions Trading Scheme, and the Cost Containment Mechanism.

The Group will publish a joint communique after the meeting. I will also publish a Written Statement.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

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Back Page 122
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.

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

—
**Climate Change, Environment,
and Infrastructure Committee**

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Julie James MS

Minister for Climate Change

16 December 2021

Dear Julie

Future Wales: the National Plan 2040

In its meeting on 9 December, the Committee considered several items of correspondence in relation to Future Wales: the National Plan 2040.

The correspondence raised several issues and the Committee agreed that I should write to you to pursue them. I would be grateful therefore if you would provide the Committee with responses to the following questions.

- Can you explain why there has been a delay in publishing guidance in support of policies 17 and 18 in Future Wales and can you clarify when the guidance will be published?
- What mechanisms will be used to ascertain whether property values have changed as a result of developments arising from Future Wales? If property values decrease, are there mechanisms to compensate owners?
- What mechanisms are in place to assess the impact of the development process on home owners who are living near proposed substantial developments that might affect their livelihood or quality of life?

I would be grateful if you could provide a response **by 13 January** so that it can be considered in the Committee's next meeting.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Llyr', is centered within a light grey rectangular box.

Llyr Gruffydd MS,
Chair, Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

10 January 2022

Dear Llyr Gruffydd MS

Thank you for your letter of 16 December 2021 regarding Future Wales. In answer to your questions:-

1. There has been no delay in the preparation of guidance to support Future Wales policies 17 and 18. Future Wales states that:-

'Further guidance on the development of on-shore wind will be produced to assist in the development process'

and it remains my intention that this guidance will be prepared. My officials will be submitting advice to me on the preparation of this guidance in the New Year and following my consideration of this, I am confident that preparation will commence in 2022. I am aware that there have been preliminary discussions with NRW and the Design Commission for Wales to inform the advice to me. The advice will also consider the Co-operation Agreement and the Renewable Energy Deep Dive and whether the guidance to be prepared has a potential role in supporting these.

2. Proving impacts on property values is extremely difficult as they are influenced by a wide variety of factors such as counter urbanisation resulting from the pandemic, locally specific issues including supply of new properties and access to mortgage finance. Future Wales is a Development Plan and as with Local Development Plans, there are no mechanisms in place to monitor changes in property values and there are no mechanisms to compensate owners.
3. The detailed impacts of new development are considered when planning applications are determined. The planning system establishes policies and development plans; planning applications are considered against these; this consideration includes public consultation and engagement with stakeholders; advice is prepared for decision makers (i.e. local planning authorities and Welsh Ministers); and they determine the planning application in accordance with the adopted development plan unless material circumstances indicate otherwise.

In the case of Future Wales policies 17 and 18, these policies apply to Developments of National Significance (DNSs). DNSs are determined by Welsh Ministers following receipt of a report from Planning and Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW). The

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process for determining DNS applications is rigorous and clearly defined. [Guidance](#) on the process is available on the PEDW website. The evidence required to support DNS applications includes a range of impact assessments.

In relation to Future Wales and DNS proposals it is important to be clear that Future Wales both provides a presumption in favour of large-scale wind energy development in the Pre-Assessed Areas and sets out the criteria against which proposals will be assessed. The Pre-Assessed Areas do not provide an automatic consent and proposals require detailed assessment through the DNS process.

Yours sincerely



Julie James AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate

Agenda Item 5.12

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Huw Irranca-Davies MS Chair,
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru
SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

09 December 2021

Dear Huw,

I am writing to inform the Committee of the intention to consent to the UK Government making and laying the Pesticides (Revocation) (EU Exit) Regulations 2022 by 18 January.

I have received a letter from Victoria Prentis MP, Minister for State for Farming, Fisheries and Food asking for consent in respect of this legislation. This Regulation intersects with devolved policy and will apply to Wales. The provisions could be made by Welsh Ministers in exercise of our own powers. The Regulation will extend to England, Scotland and Wales and a similar request for consent has been sent to Scottish Ministers.

The Regulations will be made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 8(1) of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (c. 16) in order to address failures of retained EU law to operate effectively and other deficiencies (in particular under section 8(2)(a)) arising from the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union.

These Regulations revoke redundant retained direct EU legislation which forms part of the plant protection product ("PPP") and maximum residue level ("MRL") regulatory regimes, so that these regimes can continue to operate effectively following the end of the implementation period. The revocations concern direct EU legislation which came into force towards the end of the implementation period (and so was not addressed by the earlier EU Exit SIs) and which is given effect in Great Britain through transitional provisions in the earlier EU Exit SIs and the national statutory registers. As a result, the retained direct EU legislation to be revoked is no longer required.

Although the Welsh Government's general principle is that the law relating to devolved matters should be made and amended in Wales, on this occasion given the policy alignment between all three governments, and the clear advantages given the subject matter of the law relating to England, Scotland and Wales being accessible in a single instrument, I consider that legislating separately for Wales would be neither the most appropriate way to give effect to the necessary changes nor a prudent use of Welsh Government resources given other important priorities.

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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.

I am copying this letter to Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee, SeneddClimate@senedd.wales and Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee, SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales for their information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julie James". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Julie James AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Llyr Gruffydd MS
Chair
Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Llyr.Gruffydd@senedd.wales

17 December 2021

Dear Llyr,

The Approved Country Lists (Animals and Animal Products) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021 - DEFRA/AH/062

The above titled Statutory Instrument is required to allow the import into Great Britain of poultry and poultry products to resume from certain regions of Ukraine and the whole of Australia following the successful control of avian influenza outbreaks in those countries.

These Regulations are made by the Secretary of State in exercise of powers conferred by the Trade in Animals and Animal Products (Legislative Functions) and Veterinary Surgeons (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1225), in particular, regulation 7.

They amend Annex 1 to retained Commission Regulation (EC) No 798/2008, that lays down a list of third countries, territories, zones or compartments from which poultry and poultry products may be imported into and transit through Great Britain and the veterinary certification requirements applicable to export of those goods. The Regulations also amend certain 'closing' and 'opening' dates which specify the periods when exports from affected regions are either prohibited or permitted, reflecting the dynamic nature of diseases.

An impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no, or no significant, impact on the private, voluntary or public sector is foreseen. This instrument essentially allows trade to resume from areas temporarily affected by avian influenza, in line with current policy agreed between all governments of Great Britain.

I am writing to let you know that I give my consent to the Secretary of State to make this statutory instrument in relation to Wales. I have laid a Written Statement which can be found at: [Written Statement: The Approved Country Lists \(Animals and Animal Products\) \(Amendment\) \(No. 2\) Regulations 2021](#). It has not been possible in this instance to provide advance notice of my intention to consent, as per the recent commitment given by the First Minister, owing to the timescales involved in bringing this urgent SI forward.

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As there is a functioning Common UK Animal Health and Welfare Framework through which the policy has been agreed and because goods of this nature move freely within Great Britain, there is no reason for policy divergence between GB nations. Furthermore, these Regulations do not amend any Welsh Instrument made by Welsh Ministers.

I am copying this letter to the Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, and the Minister for Health and Social Services.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end of the name.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd



Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-LG-3951-21

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Chair

Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

20 December 2021

Dear Huw

The Official Controls (Extension of Transitional Periods) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2021

The Secretary of State proposes to make the above named Statutory Instrument (SI) ("the Instrument") under powers conferred by:

- article 144(6) of, and paragraph 2 of Annex 6 to, Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products; and
- paragraph 11A(1) of Schedule 2 to the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011.

Operability legislation made in late 2020 under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 set out a 'transitional staging period', to allow controls on EU SPS imports to be introduced over several months. The staging is intended to help trade sectors and related controls' infrastructure to be ready for the additional volume of biosecurity checks, which are one consequence of the decision to leave the European Union.

The Instrument amends, in relation to Wales, England and Scotland, the appointed end date of the transitional staging period insofar as it relates to documentary, identity and physical checks on products of animal origin and certain animal by-products. This instrument also waives the pre-notification requirement in relation to goods imported from the island of Ireland.

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The following legislation will be amended:

- Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and of the Council on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products;
- the Trade in Animals and Related Products Regulations 2011 (applies to England only);
- the Plant Health etc. (Fees) (England) Regulations 2018 (applies to England only);
- the Plant Health (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020;
- the Meat Preparations (Amendment and Transitory Modification) (England) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 (applies to England only); and
- the Official Controls (Extension of Transitional Periods) Regulations 2021.

Amendments will be made in Welsh legislation to mirror amendments to the England only legislation listed above.

The UK Government's last minute decision to waive pre-notification for goods from Northern Ireland *and* Ireland is not ideal as officials will not receive anticipated trade flow data flows between January and July to assist further planning and preparedness activity. It may also raise questions in relation to the WTO and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. However, I'm satisfied that these risks do not fall to Welsh Ministers.

Furthermore, without these amendments, from 1 January 2022, import and exports businesses in GB and EU respectively will be obliged to comply with the SPS control requirements as currently set out in legislation – including the need to enter Great Britain through a Border Control Post.

The extension will allow businesses in Wales affected by the pandemic to familiarise themselves with the new SPS compliance requirements and IT systems and ensure that necessary infrastructure and processes are in place at Border Control Points, further minimising the risk of any disruption.

I am therefore writing to let you know I give my consent to the Secretary of State to make the Instrument in relation to Wales. I understand the SI will be laid before the Houses of Parliament on 15 December and will be subject to the negative procedure. However, in order to ensure the requirements do not take effect from 1 January 2022, the Instrument will breach the 21 day convention.

I am copying this letter to the Minister for the Economy, Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, Minister for Climate Change, Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing and the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

Yours sincerely



Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Materion Gwledig a Gogledd Cymru, a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd

Briefing for Morlais tidal demonstration zone project approval

Contents

Key communications messages

Background

NRW regulatory decision

Risks and mitigations

Stakeholders' concerns

Scientific uncertainty and a phased approach and adaptive management

Key communications messages:

- Based on robust evidence and following the completion of several consultation processes, NRW has issued the Morlais marine licence application.
- NRW has carefully considered a wide range of views and particular challenges raised throughout this process. The decision we have made will allow this development to take place in a sustainable way that provides safeguards for people, wildlife and other users of the sea. We will continue to work with the developer to ensure compliance with those safeguards.
- All decisions for a marine licence are based on robust evidence and expert advice with extensive consultation.
- The project overlaps between two consenting regimes. A Transport for Works Act Order was submitted to the Welsh Ministers. Julie James, MS issued a 'minded to' letter on 22 October 2021; with a decision letter and the Order expected to follow in due course.

Background

The Morlais project will provide a consented tidal technology demonstration zone, specifically designed for the installation and commercial demonstration of multiple arrays of tidal energy devices up to installed capacity of 240 Megawatts (up to 620 tidal devices).

The offshore development area where proposed installation can be placed covers an area of 35km² to the west of Holy Island, Anglesey. There will also be an export cable corridor with an area of 4.75km² with landfall near Penthos Feliw, and associated onshore infrastructure contained within an onshore development area of 1km².

This area provides communal infrastructure for tidal technology developers which provides a shared route to a local grid connection via nine export cable tails, an onshore landfall substation, and an onshore electrical cable route to a grid connection via a grid connection substation.

The Marine project elements include construction of the following;

- Up to nine export cables;
- Up to nine export cable tails (shared with onshore components);
- Navigation and environmental monitoring equipment;
- Mooring and foundation structures; and
- Offshore electrical infrastructure, including submerged, floating or surface emergent hubs.
- Up to 620 tidal devices, each comprising:
 - Foundation or anchors on or within the seabed;
 - A supporting substructure or mooring;
 - One or more Tidal Energy Convertors (TEC); and
 - Cable connections.

The project has been assessed under a Project Design Envelope (PDE), also known as a 'Rochdale Envelope'. This approach looks to provide flexibility, acknowledges the rapidly evolving nature of tidal stream technologies, and allows for future tidal stream innovations to be deployed across the site. The assessment of environmental effects has therefore been undertaken on the 'worst-case' parameters within the PDE. The marine licence defines the PDE and ensures that any devices deployed are within these PDE parameters.

NRW regulatory decision

On the 14 December 2021, NRW Permitting Service has positively determined marine licence application ORML1938. Representations raised during consultation have been addressed by the applicant, many of which were resolved through mitigation and monitoring arrangements that are securable through the provision of appropriate conditions within the licence.

This project is using NRW's Adaptive Management and Phasing Guidance. This seeks to deal with uncertainty about the environmental effects of the project, specifically in relation to the lack of evidence surrounding the interaction of marine mammals and diving birds with tidal devices. Safeguards in the form of effective mitigation and monitoring are proposed to ensure there are no significant effects on the environment. Whilst this is considered appropriate to managing risks to the marine environment posed by the deployment of innovative marine renewables, it is important to recognise that there is still a risk of impact associated with the project, particularly in relation to marine mammals and diving seabirds fatalities that would be tolerated within the scope of the licence.

Risks and mitigations

Stakeholders' concerns

The application has been consulted with technical consultees and the public, on three separate occasions during our determination. Several significant concerns were raised during the consultation process by various consultees including NRW in its role as the SNCB for the Welsh inshore area.

Whilst the applicant has sought to resolve and address these key concerns, objections remain from the RSPB and Wildlife Trust Wales in relation to collision risks to birds and marine mammals, and the Royal Yacht Association relating to navigational risks to users of the sea.

Scientific uncertainty and a phased approach and adaptive management

Catalysed by the regulatory challenges posed by the application's proposal to use a phased approach and the expectation of similar proposals by other developers, NRW published its [Adaptive Management and Phasing Guidance](#) in March 2021. This was approved by the NRW Board on 15 September 2020.

Adaptive management is a systematic and iterative approach allowing management of a project to be adapted based on learning once the development has been installed or constructed. Such an approach can in principle enable a development to proceed, in phases or otherwise, by reducing the risks associated with scientific uncertainties. Scientific uncertainty exists in relation to tidal stream technology and its potential effects on certain ecological receptors (e.g. collision risks to diving birds, marine mammals and fish).

Adaptive management has been proposed by the applicant for this project, with the number and scale of each phase of deployment linked to the outcomes of monitoring identified within their **Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP)**. An outline EMMP was submitted by the applicant, in support of their application, to demonstrate how the potential effects of the project on specific ecological receptors can be mitigated and monitored. Key elements of the proposed EMMP include:

- That Phase 1 and any subsequent phase, will have to be agreed with NRW PS prior to deployment and can only proceed at a scale that ensures no significant impact is predicted, based on best available evidence.
- Appropriate and effective monitoring methods will be agreed with NRW PS prior to operation of tidal devices. Monitoring will provide essential information to inform the potential scaling up of the project to the next phase, but also to determine if and to what level additional mitigation is required during the current phase of operation.

- Appropriate and effective mitigation will be agreed with NRW PS post-consent to prevent a significant impact from occurring. Mitigation will include the stopping or removal of tidal devices where no other effective mitigation option is possible.
- The deployment of any future phases will be dependent on the outcome of monitoring carried out.

Note: NRW PS will consult with NRW Advisory and other technical advisors during the assessment and determination of these post-consent submissions.

Manon Antoniazzi
Chief Executive and Clerk
Senedd Commission

10 December 2021

Dear Manon

Use of the term BAME

During the Committee's consideration of its draft report, Scrutiny of Accounts: Senedd Commission 2020-21, there were a number of references to the acronym BAME. One Member asked that this not be used as citizens who represent this community, feel it is offensive. The Committee Members were in full agreement and where the term had been used in the narrative rather than a direct quote from a publication or the Record of Proceedings, it was amended to read 'ethnic minority communities'. I am sure you will have seen this phrase in our recently published report.

The Committee asked that I write to you requesting that the Senedd Commission stops using the term BAME. The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities produced an independent Report in April 2021 for the UK Government to investigate race and ethnic disparities in the UK. One of the areas considered, was the use of the terms BAME and BME, and in March 2021, the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities recommended that the UK government stop using the term BAME. The UK government is currently considering its response to the Commission's Report.

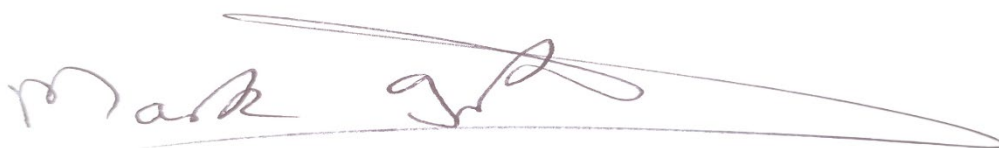
The Committee would welcome the Senedd Commission's views on this request once it has been fully considered.

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

I am copying this letter to all Committee chairs requesting that consideration be given to not using the term BAME in any committee correspondence and publications.

Thank you

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Isherwood', with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Mark Isherwood MS
Committee Chair



Agenda Item 5.17

Y Pwyllgor Busnes

7 January 2022
Business Committee

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To: Chairs of Senedd committees, via email

Review of the committee timetable and committee remits

You will recall that, on 16 December 2021, the Chairs' Forum considered, and endorsed, the Business Committee's suggested approach to conducting a review of the committee timetable and committee remits.

Chairs expressed a range of different views at the 21 December meeting, with some Chairs finding the current timetable challenging, whilst others expressed concerns about changing the current approach. There were no concerns raised about committee remits, although it is proposed that remits will continue to fall within the scope of this review.

To build on this, I invite you to discuss the review with your committees and to provide a written response to the review. The focus of this aspect of the review is to gather the agreed view of each committee.

In doing so, I would be grateful if you would consider the terms of reference for the review, and a number of specific questions. Whilst addressing the questions will be helpful, they are not intended to be prescriptive.

The terms of reference, and questions, are enclosed with this letter.

I also enclose a copy of the paper considered by the Business Committee and the Chairs' Forum.

Whilst you might wish to refer to feedback you have received from external stakeholders in your response, the Business Committee does not expect committees to consult with stakeholders in the time available for this review.

The timescale for this review is tight, as the Business Committee is aiming to implement any changes arising from the review at the start of the summer term 2022.

Consequently, as agreed at the Chairs' Forum meeting on 16 December 2021, the review will need to be completed in early March in order to provide committees with sufficient time to plan for any changes made.

To enable this, please submit your written response by 12pm on Friday 4 February 2022. This is a week later than the original deadline proposed in the suggested approach.

Alongside this consultation with committees, Business Managers will be discussing the review with their Groups, and individual committee members will be surveyed too.

Draft proposals, based on the evidence gathered, will be discussed at the Chairs' Forum meeting on 17 February 2022. The Business Committee will then make decisions about the future timetable and committee remits in the light of that discussion.

If you require any further information, please contact the Clerk to the Chairs' Forum, Alun Davidson, who is supporting the Business Committee with this review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elin Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Elin Jones MS

Llywydd

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Business Committee: Review of the committee timetable and committee remits

Terms of reference and consultation questions

Terms of reference

To review the current approach to the committee timetable, and committee remits, with a view to identifying any changes to the approach that could improve committee effectiveness, whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between the time committee members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities.

Consultation questions

Timetable – status quo

To what extent does the current approach to the committee timetable provide:

sufficient time for committees to undertake their work effectively?

sufficient flexibility to meet peaks in committee workloads and/or future business requirements for additional committee capacity?

an appropriate balance between the time Members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities?

Timetable – alternatives to the status quo

What changes could be made to the committee timetable to improve committee effectiveness, whilst maintaining flexibility to accommodate additional committee business, and an appropriate balance between the time Members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities?

If changes are to be made to the timetable, when should these changes be implemented?

Remits

Do you believe there is a need to adjust the remit of your committee? For example, to balance work across committees, and/or to improve lines of accountability.

Measuring the effectiveness of your committee

Has your committee established a means of assessing the effectiveness of its work?

This question is posed in order to determine whether any changes made as a consequence of this review can be monitored in this context.



[Enclosure 2 – Business Committee paper]

Review of the committee timetable, and committee remits: Draft approach

Purpose

1. To provide a draft approach to the review of the committee timetable, and committee remits, for consideration by the Business Committee.

Background

2. The Business Committee agreed a fortnightly committee timetable at the start of the Sixth Senedd, on the basis that it would provide:
 - sufficient meeting time for committees to perform their roles;
 - a fair balance between the time members are expected to spend on committee work and their wider responsibilities;
 - flexibility for committees to hold additional meetings when there is a need to complete time-limited work, and/or address peaks in workload; and
 - sufficient flexibility to accommodate an additional committee in the system, if needed (currently the Special Purpose Committee).
3. In addition to a fortnightly timetable, the Business Committee increased the amount of time available during the week within which committees could meet – this includes Monday mornings and the occasional use of Fridays for Stage 2 consideration of Bills.
4. Protected weeks were retained, to provide dedicated time for the Chairs’ Forum, Scrutiny of the First Minister Committee, and further additional meeting time for committees to request if needed.
5. A secondary objective, expressed at the time the timetable was agreed, was to encourage committees to make efficient use of their meeting time. For example, to hold one-off stakeholder roundtables to gather a range of evidence at once, rather than deploying the more traditional “panel after panel” approach to evidence gathering over a number of weeks.
6. The Business Committee previously agreed to review the committee timetable, and the remits of committees, at Easter 2022 i.e. after two terms of operation.

7. However, the volume of requests from committees for additional meetings, and the concerns expressed by some committees with the current timetable, have led to this review being brought forward.
8. The Llywydd has also indicated that the Chairs' Forum would be consulted on the review at its 17 February meeting.
9. Most concerns raised to date have been in relation to timetabling, rather than remits, though concerns have been raised about the breadth of the remit set for the Legislation, Justice, and Constitution Committee.
10. The proposals in this paper suggest reviewing both timetabling and remits at the same time, due to the possible interdependency between the two i.e. if a review of remits resulted in the creation of a new committee, the timetable would need to take account of this.
11. It would be possible to separate these reviews, should that be the Business Committee's preference, though a review of remits that took place at a later date might necessitate further changes to the timetable.

Draft terms of reference

12. Draft terms of reference are suggested in the box below:

Draft terms of reference

To review the current approach to the committee timetable, and committee remits, with a view to identifying any changes to the approach that could improve committee effectiveness, whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between the time committee members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities.

13. The review will consider the status quo and options for the future operation of the timetable.
14. Under the headings below are questions that expand on the terms of reference, and could be addressed during the course of the review:

Timetable – status quo

Does the current approach to the committee timetable provide:

- sufficient time for committees to undertake their work effectively?
- sufficient flexibility to meet peaks in committee workloads and/or future business requirements for additional committee capacity?



- an appropriate balance between the time Members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities?

Timetable – alternatives to the status quo

- What changes could be made to the committee timetable to improve committee effectiveness, whilst maintaining flexibility to accommodate additional committee business, and an appropriate balance between the time Members spend on committee work (in and outside committee meetings) and their wider responsibilities?
- If changes are to be made to the timetable, when should these changes be implemented?

Remits

- To consider whether committee remits should be adjusted. For example, to balance work across committees, and/or to improve lines of accountability.

Interdependencies

15. The review will need to consider:

- the resourcing and/or technological constraints on timetabling, and how this should be managed in the future e.g. the number (and type) of committee meetings that can be held concurrently; and
- the impact on Senedd Commission resources, including staffing, of any changes proposed as a consequence of this review (or maintaining the status quo, should that be the preferred option).

Committee effectiveness

16. The review could consider the extent to which Committees have established means of assessing the effectiveness of their work, so that any changes made as a consequence of this review can be monitored in this context.

17. This could be extended to capture any committee innovation that has arisen in response to a fortnightly (and more flexible) timetable e.g. alternative approaches to evidence gathering, work conducted outside meetings etc.

Evidence gathering

18. The following approach to evidence gathering is proposed:

- **Committees** – the Business Committee invites each committee to provide a written response to the questions posed by the review.
- **Committee members** – committee members will be invited to complete a survey to obtain their views on the time currently allocated for committee work, their view on what the correct balance should be between time spent on committee work and

their wider responsibilities, and the level of priority they are able to dedicate to committee work.

- **Chairs** – the Chairs’ Forum is consulted on any proposals for change that arise from the review, prior to proposals being finalised.
- **Party Groups** – Business Managers invite a view from their party groups.
- **Data** – data on the usage of allocated time, additional meeting time, and types of committee activity, can be provided.

Timescales

December 2021

- Consult the Chairs’ Forum on the terms of reference and approach to the review (16 December).

January 2022

- Three-week period of evidence gathering (10 – 28 January).

February 2022

- The Business Committee considers draft proposals, based on the evidence received (8 February)
- The Chairs’ Forum considers the draft proposals and the timing of the introduction of any changes to the timetable (17 February)).

March 2022

- The Business Committee confirms proposals (1 March).
The Business Committee publishes a report and tables any motions needed to give effect to remit changes (should there be a need for any) (to be made in Plenary on 9 March).

April 2022

- Timetable changes to be implemented at the start of the summer term.

Consulting the Chairs’ Forum

19. Whilst there is an appetite to resolve perceived issues with the timetable quickly, there is a tension between this and the lead-in time needed for committees to plan their work.

20. The Business Committee might wish to consult the Chairs’ Forum, at its meeting on 16 December, on the scope and timescale for the review before taking a final decision.

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