

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 28 February 2023

Meeting time: 09.00 – 10.04

Private

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones MS, Llywydd (Chair) Lesley Griffiths MS Darren Millar MS Siân Gwenllïan MS
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk)
Others in attendance	Jane Dodds MS David Rees MS, Deputy Presiding Officer Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk Siwan Davies, Director of Senedd Business Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber and Committee Service Julian Luke, Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Service, Helen Carey, Welsh Government

1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

The Llywydd welcomed members to the meeting



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed for publication

3 Organisation of Business

3.1 This week's business

Tuesday

The Trefnydd drew Business Managers' attention to the following changes:

- Statement by the Minister for Economy: The Innovation Strategy (30 mins)
- ~~Statement by the Minister for Health and Social Services: Dental Reform (30 mins)~~ *postponed until 14 March*
- Statement by the Minister for Health and Social Services: Escalation and further intervention to improve the quality of services in Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (60 mins)
- Voting Time will take place as the last item of business.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 6.55pm.

Wednesday

The Trefnydd requested that the opposition debates be re-ordered to enable the Minister for Education and Welsh Language to respond to the Conservative debate on the Welsh language. Subsequently, the following changes were made:

- Questions to the Senedd Commission (~~30~~ 15 mins)
- Plaid Cymru debate: Industrial relations (60 mins) *Re-ordered to item 6*
- Welsh Conservatives debate: The Welsh Language (60 mins) *Re-ordered to item 7*
- Voting Time will take place before the Short Debate

- Plenary is unlikely to run past 6.25pm.

3.2 Three week timetable of Government Business

Following a discussion concerning industrial action announced for 15 March, the following changes were agreed:

Tuesday 7 March 2023

- ~~The Non-Domestic Rating (Alteration of Lists and Appeals) (Wales) Regulations 2023 (15 mins)~~ *Postponed until 21 March*

Tuesday 14 March 2023

- Questions to the Minister for Climate Change (45 mins) *Moved from 15 March*
- Questions to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language (45 mins) *Moved from 15 March*
- Topical Questions (20 mins) *Moved from 15 March*
- ~~Statement by the Deputy Minister for Climate Change: Update on the default 20mph speed limits (30 mins)~~ *Withdrawn*
- Statement by the Minister for Health and Social Services: Dental Reform (45 mins)

3.3 Three week timetable of Senedd Business

Following a discussion concerning industrial action announced for 15 March, the following changes were agreed:

Tuesday 14 March 2023 –

- Topical Questions (20 mins) *Moved from 15 March*

Wednesday 15 March 2023 –

- ~~Topical Questions (20 mins)~~ *Moved to 14 March*

- ~~Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins) Postponed until 22 March~~
- ~~Time allocated to Plaid Cymru (60 mins) Postponed until 22 March~~
- ~~Short Debate: James Evans (Brecon and Radnorshire) (30 mins) Postponed until 22 March~~

Wednesday 22 March 2023 -

- Member Debate under Standing Order 11.21(iv) (60 mins)
- Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins) Moved from 15 March
- Time allocated to Plaid Cymru (60 mins) Moved from 15 March
- ~~Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins) Postponed until 29 March~~
- ~~Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins) Postponed until 29 March~~
- Short Debate: James Evans (Brecon and Radnorshire) (30 mins) Moved from 15 March
- ~~Short Debate: Carolyn Thomas (North Wales) (30 mins) Postponed until 24 May~~

3.4 Impact of proposed industrial action

Business Committee considered the impact of industrial action announced for 15 March and agreed:

- to reschedule meetings of the Children, Young People and Education Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language and International Relations Committee to the morning of Tuesday 14 March;
- to revise the timetables of Government and Senedd Business outlined above, with the effect that no Plenary meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday 15 March;
- to amend the deadlines for tabling Oral Questions and Topical Questions for answer on 14 March to Tuesday 7 March; and
- to amend the deadlines for tabling Oral Questions and motions for debate on 22 March to Tuesday 14 March.

4 Legislation

4.1 The Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill – timetable

Business Committee agreed that the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Bill be referred to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee for consideration of the general principles, and to defer a decision on the timetable for the Bill in order to consult the Committee before returning to the matter at a future meeting.

4.2 Response from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd regarding the Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill

Business Committee noted the response received from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd to its letter regarding the late laying of the LCM and the resulting impact upon the time available for scrutiny.

4.3 Correspondence from the Chair of the Local Government and Housing Committee regarding the Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum (No.5) for the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill

Business Committee noted the letter and the Committee's concerns about the implications of late amendments by the UK Government on the ability of committees to scrutinise Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandums.

4.4 Correspondence from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding their report on the Welsh Government's Legislative Consent Memoranda on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

Business Committee noted the recommendations 5 and 14 made by the Legislation Justice and Constitution Committee in its report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum. Business Committee agreed to return to both of the matters raised at the relevant time. It was noted in particular that the requirements of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill (in terms of committee and Plenary sitting time) would need to be considered when confirming dates for the autumn term and Christmas recess.

4.5 Correspondence from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding Standing Order 30A – consent in relation to statutory instruments made by UK Ministers

Business Committee noted that the Llywydd intended to write to the First Minister regarding her expectations on the matter of Senedd consent in relation to statutory instruments made by UK Ministers. It was recognised also that options for reviewing Standing Order 30A (alongside related Standing Orders) would be brought to the Business Committee in due course as part of its broader programme for procedural review.

4.6 Correspondence from the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee regarding Business Committee's review of the Member Bill procedure

Business Committee noted the letter and agreed to consider an update on its procedural work programme in the coming weeks, following the conclusion of the current work on proxy voting, in order to give further consideration to the prioritisation of other work relating to the review of a range of procedural matters.

4.7 Paper to note – Letter from the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd to the Chair of the Finance Committee regarding scrutiny of the financial implications of Bills

Business Committee noted the latest correspondence between the Welsh Government and the Finance Committee on this matter.

5 Review of proxy voting

5.1 Possible areas for extension: matters for consideration

Business Committee considered the responses to its consultation with Members and a range of matters relating to possible areas of extension of proxy voting as part of its review.

Business Managers agreed to consult further with their party groups on the basis of an emerging consensus around the extension of proxy voting provisions to cover long-term illness or injury of a Member, caring responsibilities for a dependent with a long-

term illness or injury and bereavement leave, and to return to a further discussion at its meeting on 14 March.

Darren Millar stated the opposition of the Conservative Group to retaining or extending proxy voting provisions.