

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Meeting Room 4B, Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 13 May 2025

Meeting time: 09.00 – 09.33

Private, Hybrid

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones MS, Llywydd (Chair) Paul Davies MS Heledd Fychan MS Jane Hutt MS
Committee Staff:	Graeme Francis (Clerk) Yan Thomas (Deputy Clerk)
Others in attendance	David Rees MS, Deputy Presiding Officer Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive and Clerk Matthew Richards, Interim Director of Senedd Business 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. No apologies were received.

Participation in Business Committee



The Llywydd informed Business Managers that it is her understanding that the three Members who are not part of political groups do not intend to form a grouping for the purpose of representation on Business Committee. The Llywydd indicated that she had issued an invitation under Standing Order 17.49 to Jane Dodds to participate in meetings of the Business Committee.

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 noted that last week's Stage 3 proceedings on the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Bill were the first to be undertaken in Welsh only and asked that this be acknowledged ahead of today's Stage 4 proceedings.

Given the anticipated short length of Stage 3 proceedings on the Legislation (Procedure, Publication and Repeals) (Wales) Bill, the Llywydd informed Business Managers that she does not propose a break between Voting Time and the start of Stage 3.

- Voting Time will take place before Stage 3 proceedings.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 7.30pm.

Wednesday

- Voting Time will take place before the Short Debate.
- Plenary is unlikely to run past 7.15pm.

3.2 Three week timetable of Government Business

The Trefnydd informed Business Managers of the following changes to the Three Week Timetable of Government Business:

Tuesday 20 May 2025

- Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Education: 21st Century Schools and Colleges Sustainable Communities for Learning (45 mins)

Tuesday 3 June 2025

- Statement by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Committee for Climate Change and Rural Affairs: The Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill (60 mins)
- ~~Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care: 2025–26 Delivery Actions for Better Health and Care (45 mins) - will be issued as a written statement~~

Heledd Fychan requested that the Government bring forward oral statements on the recent report regarding surgery at the University Hospital of Wales; and the state of the prison estate in Wales. The Trefnydd agreed to consider statements on both matters.

3.3 Three week timetable of Senedd Business

The following items were agreed to be scheduled on the Three Week Timetable of Senedd Business:

Wednesday 11 June 2025 -

- Debate on the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Green economy (60 minutes)
- Time allocated to the Welsh Conservatives (60 mins)
- Time allocated to Plaid Cymru (60 mins)
- Short Debate: Llyr Gruffydd MS (North Wales) (30 mins)

4 Legislation

4.1 Response from the Chair of the Local Government and Housing Committee regarding the timetable for the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Bill

Business Committee considered the response from the Committee and agreed the proposed timetable for the Homelessness and Social Housing Allocation (Wales) Bill.

4.2 Timetable for the Environment (Principles, Governance and Biodiversity Targets) (Wales) Bill

The Business Committee agreed to refer the Bill to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee for consideration of the general principles. The Committee also agreed to consult with the Committee on the proposed timetable for scrutiny and return to the matter at a future meeting.

The Trefnydd indicated that the Government is considering the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee's request for the Bill and associated materials to be made available to certain stakeholders on a confidential basis, prior to its formal introduction.

4.3 Update on LCMs

Business Committee agreed to:

- refer SLCM (no.3) on the Public Authorities (Fraud, Error and Recovery) Bill to the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee and the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee for scrutiny, with a reporting deadline of 20 June 2025.
- refer the SLCM (no.3) on the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill for scrutiny, to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee and the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, with a reporting deadline of 19 May 2025.

- refer the LCMs on the Employment Rights Bill to the Health and Social Care Committee also and extend the reporting deadline for all committees to 20 June 2025.

5 Committees

5.1 Wales COVID-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee: Chairing Arrangements

The Business Committee considered further the future of the Wales COVID-19 Inquiry Special Purpose Committee and scrutiny of decisions taken in Wales during the Covid pandemic.

The Trefnydd expressed the Labour group's position that it is not currently credible for the Committee to continue without political balance. Heledd Fychan stated the Plaid Cymru group's disappointment at the lack of a resolution to the current situation and the need for scrutiny to continue to be conducted in the Senedd, including in respect of the gaps that the Committee has identified to date. She indicated that Plaid Cymru would be willing to continue to participate in the Committee if its chairing and membership arrangements were reformed. Paul Davies confirmed that the Conservative group believes that there should be an independent Wales-only inquiry and indicated that they would only reconsider participation in the Committee if it were permitted to require witnesses to take an oath or affirmation.

The Llywydd emphasised the importance of continued Senedd scrutiny of decisions taken during the pandemic and requested that Business Managers bring forward potential solutions for consideration at next week's meeting. The Llywydd suggested that one or more committees could be invited to consider how their work programmes could be realigned to enable them to take on relevant elements of this work and requested that Business Managers discuss this with their respective committee chairs.

5.2 Letter from the Chair of the Future Senedd Committee regarding their report on parliamentary business in the Seventh Senedd

Business Committee discussed the report and noted the recommendations made by the Future Senedd Committee and agreed to consider those recommendations relevant to the Business Committee as part of its procedural work programme during the time remaining in the Sixth Senedd.

6 Any other business

Russell George committee place

The Llywydd proposed that the Business Committee returns to a discussion about offering Russell George a place on a committee at the following meeting.