

Agenda – Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Meeting Venue:

Committee Room 3, Senedd

Meeting date: 17 September 2025

Meeting time: 09.30

For further information contact:

Manon George

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Private pre-meeting

09:15–09:30

Public meeting

09.30 – 11.00

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions and declarations of interest

09:30

2 General ministerial scrutiny

09:30–11:00

(Pages 1 – 31)

Jack Sargeant MS, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Joedi Langley, Head of Creative Industries Sector Team, Welsh Government

Elin Burns, Director of Culture, Heritage, Sport and Welsh Language, Welsh Government

Paul Kindred, Deputy Director, Culture, Welsh Government

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Welsh Government evidence paper

3 Papers to note

11:00



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

3.1 Inter-institutional Relations Agreement

(Pages 32 – 35)

Attached Documents:

Copy letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs to the Chair of the Legislation and Justice Committee: Providing summary of discussions at the most recent meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee – 14 July 2025

Copy letter from the First Minister to the Chair of the Legislation and Justice Committee: Notifying the First Minister’s attendance at the 43rd British-Irish Council Summit – 22 July 2025

Copy letter from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership to the Chair of the Legislation, Justice, and Constitution Committee: Reporting on the latest meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group – 13 August 2025

3.2 Charging for exhibitions

(Pages 36 – 42)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response to the Committee’s report on Charging for exhibitions – 16 July 2025

3.3 Welsh Government international relations

(Pages 43 – 64)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the First Minister: Providing a quarterly update on progress against the International Delivery Plan – 21 July 2025

Letter from the First Minister: Providing written evidence following annual scrutiny on 18 July – 21 July 2025

Ministerial Inward-Outward Visits – July 2025 – 12 August 2025

3.4 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026–27

(Pages 65 – 77)

Attached Documents:

Copy letter from the Chair of the Children, Young People and Education Committee to the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Minister for Further and Higher Education: Requesting information to support scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27 – 23 July 2025

3.5 Census 2021

(Page 78)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language: Providing an update on Census 2031 preparations – 4 August 2025

3.6 Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26

(Pages 79 – 80)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership: Providing a response to recommendation 5 of the Committee's report on the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26 – 29 August 2025

3.7 Cymraeg for all

(Pages 81 – 95)

Attached Documents:

Letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language: Requesting further information following oral evidence on 16 July 2025 – 28 July 2025

Written evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language – 15 August 2025

Written evidence from Aberystwyth University Centre for Welsh Politics and Society – 25 August 2025

3.8 Forward work programme

(Pages 96 – 97)

Attached Documents:

Letter from Cricket Wales: Raising concerns about the risks posed by cricket balls leaving grounds – 30 July 2025

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting.

11:00

Private meeting

11.00 – 12.00

5 General ministerial scrutiny: Consideration of the evidence received

11:00–11:15

6 International relations monitoring report

11:15–11:30

(Pages 98 – 114)

Attached Documents:

International Relations Monitoring Report – September 2025

7 Forward work programme

11.30 – 11.35

(Pages 115 – 175)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Llywydd: Outlining arrangements for the Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill – 21 August 2025

Letter to the Deputy First Minister: Committee's approach to consideration of the Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill – 21 August 2025

Letter from the Deputy First Minister: Committee's approach to consideration of the Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill – 11 September 2025

Prohibition of Greyhound Racing (Wales) Bill: Explanatory Memorandum and Regulatory Impact Assessment (English only)

8 Chairs Forum Consultation: Reviewing Committee Effectiveness in the Sixth Senedd

11:35–11:50

(Page 176)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chairs' Forum: Reviewing Committee Effectiveness in the Six
Senedd - 8 July 2025

9 Forward work programme

11.50 – 12.00

(Pages 177 – 182)

Attached Documents:

Arfor inquiry scoping paper

Document is Restricted



The Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Welsh Government's evidence paper

17 September 2025

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Overview

1. My aim as Minister has been that every person in Wales should have the right to access, create, participate in, and see themselves reflected in the cultural and sporting activity of our nation. I am particularly interested in supporting access to culture for the under-privileged and the working class. During my previous appearances before the Committee, I have outlined my priorities as Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership and how my portfolio aims to deliver against the First Minister's priorities including the focus on education, the economy, tackling poverty and climate change.
2. This paper sets out an update on several issues requested by the Committee:

Priorities for Culture - Culture & Heritage

Funding

3. A £15m investment package has been allocated to support the implementation of the Priorities for Culture in 2025-26. This is a ring-fenced allocation within the Welsh Government's BEL6170 Support for Local Culture and Sport budget line.

Year one priorities

4. On launching the Priorities for Culture, I outlined the following areas of focus for year one:
 - Culture being inclusive, accessible and diverse
 - A focus on improving opportunities for children and young people
 - The workforce
 - Supporting the sector to address the climate and nature emergencies
 - Support for intangible cultural heritage and digital improvements.

Implementation

5. Implementation across all five ambitions has been spearheaded by three major funding schemes, two capital and one revenue. In terms of capital funding, the Arts Council for Wales is investing £8m in arts organisations across Wales and the Priorities for Culture Capital Grant scheme will invest more than £3.3m in projects across local museums, libraries and archives, and over £1m in projects at our national bodies. This is on top of over £11m in additional capital funding allocated to our national bodies in 2025-26, which also delivers against the Priorities for Culture.
6. In addition to the Culture Capital Grant Scheme, supporting local museums, archives and libraries, we also recently launched the Enhanced Local Sector support scheme which is expected to see over £2m revenue invested in local areas in its first year, which allows communities to focus on the ambitions most relevant to them. It encourages local authorities and cultural trusts to work collaboratively on partnership bids that make a bigger difference and have a lasting impact locally.

7. Examples of specific initiatives to deliver **ambition 1** (Inclusive, accessible, diverse) include:

- The launch of Cadw's [£1 Universal Credit tickets](#) available to all those in receipt of qualifying Universal Credit and other named benefits.
- Awarding additional funding to expand the House of Memories Cymru project to include content specifically representing Wales' Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

8. Activities related to delivering **ambition 4** focused on children and young people include:

- Working with the Arts Council of Wales to expand the oversubscribed ['Have a Go'](#) and ['Go and See'](#) programmes. A £150,000 proposal has been developed to improve access for children with additional learning needs and schools in areas of high deprivation, with the award letter scheduled to be issued in September 2025.
- Allocating £100,000 to the [Stars on the Shelf scheme](#) to increase access to reading and creative opportunities for young people in libraries, including author engagement to inspire participation.
- Expanding and developing Cadw's [Young Custodians Scheme](#) - engaging more schools, supporting the delivery of projects and events and enhancing participants' experience and enabling Cadw to support school transport costs, enabling more pupils, particularly those from underrepresented groups such as Ethnic Minorities & Youth Support Team Wales (EYST) to access heritage sites during the autumn term.

In addition to the earmarked Priorities for Culture funding, I have also allocated £55,000 to the Group for Education in Museums ([GEM](#)) to launch a [Museum Visits Bursary Scheme](#), covering up to 100% of visit costs for state-maintained schools and colleges to non-National museums across the country.

9. Implementation relating to **ambition 15**, which recognises the need for a resilient, futureproof cultural and heritage workforce focuses on the workforce, has included:

- Commissioning research to explore the experiences and needs of employed staff, volunteers, and freelancers across the culture and heritage sectors. This evidence will inform actions to support skill development and qualifications, helping shape roles that are sustainable and impactful in a thriving sector.
- Addressing the shortage of heritage craft skills by providing funding to Cadw to strengthen the heritage skills pipeline, including an apprentice carpenter and three stonemasonry trainees.

10. Implementation relating to **ambition 16**, supporting the sector to address the climate and nature emergencies includes :

- The delivery of carbon literacy training and new guidance.
- Cadw trialling the use of climate adaptation pathways to manage the risks from the impact of climate change to the properties in its care.
- The National Library of Wales will host a climate and nature emergencies Programme Manager role, which will support delivery of strategic projects across the culture sector.

11. Implementation relating to **ambition 11**, Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), includes:

- Preparing a launch of the call out for items of ICH practice for inclusion on a Wales and then a UK ICH inventory. A celebration of ICH in Wales is being arranged for November, working alongside Amgueddfa Cymru.

12. Implementation relating to **ambition 13**, digital, has included:

- Progressing plans to establish a new training programme which will build digital capacity across the culture sector, including targeted support on digital innovation and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Monitoring

13. We are working with our Arm's Length Bodies to reflect the Priorities for Culture in their operational plans. They will provide updates to Welsh Government as part of our quarterly meetings and monitoring of progress and impact will become part of our regular engagement. Organisations who receive Priorities for Culture funding and those receiving other Welsh Government funding administered by the Culture Division, Cadw and the Arts Council of Wales, must demonstrate how the funding will be used to support the Priorities for Culture.

Broadcasting

14. Creative Wales continues to work closely with stakeholders including the UK Government Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Ofcom and public service broadcasters on broadcasting policy. Recent discussions have covered the Future of TV Distribution project and BBC Charter Renewal. Earlier this year, a joint event was held with Ofcom to support Welsh input into Ofcom's review of Public Service Media, and discussions are underway to identify other opportunities to work with the regulator in this way on other topics. Discussions are also underway to support work to explore in more detail the five pathways to devolution set out in the Broadcasting Expert Panel's report. On content, productions recently supported by Creative Wales include Dope Girls, Mr Burton, Havoc, Out There, Cleddau/The One That Got Away and Young Sherlock.

Public interest journalism

15. The Wales Public Interest Journalism Working Group continues to meet to provide advice to us on the actions to support the long-term sustainability of Welsh and English language public interest journalism in Wales. This was supported by a refreshed terms of reference agreed at the May 2025 meeting of the Group. The Creative Wales Public Interest Journalism Fund was launched in July 2025. It is anticipated approved projects will be announced in September 2025.

Euro 2028 readiness

16. Work is progressing well on EURO 2028. We are working closely with UK & Ireland Ltd (the company established for operational delivery) UEFA and governments across the five nations and local partners to ensure the successful delivery of the tournament. Our £10m capital investment through Sport Wales in 2025-26 continues to support new facilities and improvements to existing facilities in many communities across Wales.

Welsh Government response to charging for exhibitions report

17. I set out my response to the Committee's report on 16 July after carefully considering the five recommendations, and I am grateful to the Committee for its work.
18. Thanks to our funding, visitors can continue to enter all seven of Amgueddfa Cymru's sites for free. The Committee's report highlights the positive impact our free entry policy has had, with visitor numbers doubling and the proportion of lower socio-economic groups visiting expanded to around 30 per cent, as set out in the Thurley Report. In my response I set out my committed to retaining free access to our national collection and that our Final Budget for 2025-26 includes an 8.5% increase for Amgueddfa Cymru compared to the previous year's revenue budget.
19. I also set out the variety of ways we help organisations host temporary exhibitions, including through our capital investment in Wales' cultural and heritage assets, which is now more than three times that of a decade ago. Through the Government Indemnity Scheme, which is available to both national and non-national museums, we provide an alternative to commercial insurance, enabling art and cultural objects to be borrowed from private lenders or non-national institutions for display or research purposes.
20. I set out how I am supportive of Amgueddfa Cymru seeking to increase its financial sustainability through appropriate income generation in addition to its grant-in-aid. As is the case at other national museums in the UK, Amgueddfa Cymru can choose to charge for the tour at Big Pit National Coal Museum as a premium experience. In line with the arm's length principle, we will provide Amgueddfa Cymru with the time it needs to gather further data so it can take

an evidenced-based decision on how it's charging proposals can best contribute to financial sustainability whilst protecting equality of access.

Celf - National Contemporary Art Gallery

21. Our capital investment in the galleries that comprise Celf, the National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales, was completed as planned in March 2025. A celebratory event to mark the completion of the work was held at the Pierhead Building on 16 July. The event was well attended and demonstrated the work delivered and the achievements of Celf so far with positive feedback received from those involved.
22. Many of the galleries participating in the network have already held exhibitions drawing on contemporary works from the national collection. I am pleased that I have been able to visit and view a number of these and look forward to doing so in the future. There are further exhibitions currently ongoing or planned in the coming months that will have a positive impact and ensure that contemporary art reaches many more people across Wales than was previously possible.
23. Due to the tight timescale for the delivery of the capital works, meaning that not all tasks associated with the completion of a capital project were undertaken, funding for a transition period for the project has been provided. At the same time, a funding contribution towards the operational costs of Celf has been provided in response to a request received from the partners for its first year, with agreement in principle also being provided for a second year of funding while plans to access wider sources of funding are developed and delivered.

Funding of Culture and Sport

24. The final budget for 2025-26 included an additional £9.6m revenue funding for arts, culture, creative industries, heritage and sport in Wales. Our additional revenue investment returns our stakeholders to their revenue budget positions in 2023-24 prior to the reduction that was implemented as part of the 2024-25 budget.
25. Additionally, there has been an £18.4m uplift in the capital allocation compared to 2024-25. This is three times what it was a decade ago. This includes supporting projects like the redevelopment of Caerphilly Castle, the extensive refurbishment of Theatr Clwyd and the Football Museum for Wales in Wrexham Museum and grants towards conservation of historic buildings and monuments across Wales.
26. This increase also allows us to continue our investment plans revitalising many of the building and assets of our Arm's Length Bodies, completing projects as set out within our Programme for Government but also new investments in local cultural asset, in line with the priorities and ambitions set out in our Priorities for Culture. The additional capital budget to Sport Wales

has a focus on investing in sporting facilities, an important intervention to support the preventative health and wellbeing agenda.

27. Our budget allocation to Sport Wales is only part of the overall picture of how the whole Welsh Government spends money on the preventative benefits of sport and physical activity.
28. Specific funding streams in other departmental budgets also are aimed at prevention, including funding through our Healthy Weight Healthy Wales strategy, the Sustainable Communities for Learning and the Community Facilities programmes.
29. This Government has consistently demonstrated its commitment and support for culture, defined in its broadest sense, across a range of policy areas.
30. It is important to remember that as well as the funding that is channelled from my portfolio, there is considerable investment in culture across the Welsh Government. For example, £1.5m to support Amgueddfa Cymru's transition to sustainable energy through the Energy Service this year. We also support showcasing and celebrating Welsh culture through Event Wales – over £5m in this financial year and we invest in programmes such as the National Music Service and Creative Learning as well as the funding that is specifically allocated to support and promote the Welsh language.

Review of the relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales

31. Following the Cadw Governance Review in December 2023, a recommendation was made to reassess the relationship between Cadw and the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historic Monuments of Wales (the Royal Commission). A Working Group was established in September 2024 to consider options, including enhanced collaboration and a potential merger. After external and staff consultations, the Working Group, consisting of senior representatives from Welsh Government, the Royal Commission, Trade Unions and an independent heritage expert, submitted its report in September 2025. The report evaluated three options: maintaining the current structure, pursuing strategic collaboration, or merging the Royal Commission and Cadw.
32. The report of the working group determined that both merger and closer collaboration may have advantages for the future provision of national historic environment services. The emerging preference was for a merger and there was a belief that this would deliver greater benefits. However, it was also felt that further detailed scoping would be required, particularly regarding the means to provide assurance for the future protection of the National Monuments Record for Wales. Legislation was identified as the preferred approach to achieve this protection.
33. I am currently considering the report's findings and recommendations and acknowledge the desire for legislation to protect the National Monuments

Record. As this cannot be achieved within the current Senedd term, I have asked officials to identify and deliver improved collaboration between the two organisations. While there is already effective cooperation in many areas, such as historic place names and record management, there may be further potential to strengthen this partnership and explore additional areas of joint working.

Agenda Item 3.1

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref – PO/HIDCC/0347/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

14 July 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, and further to my letter of 24 June, to draw to your attention a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) summarising discussions at the most recent meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee ('IMSC').

I have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Finance Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.



Ein cyf/Our ref: PO/FM/0337/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

22 July 2025

Dear Mike,

I am writing in accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, to notify you that I attended the 43rd British-Irish Council Summit, hosted by the Northern Ireland Executive in County Down, which took place on 12 and 13 of June.

I would like to draw your attention to my [Written Statement](#) and to the BIC [communiqué](#) summarising the outcomes of the Summit.

The Summit theme was '*The Role of AI in Reform and Transformation*'. I shared the Welsh Government's experience and commitment to harnessing AI technologies for public sector reform and transformation in Wales, including highlighting guidance developed by Wales' Workforce Partnership Council.

Whilst at the Summit, I also had the opportunity to hold bilateral meetings with a number of leaders from the Council's other member administrations.

I have copied this letter to the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee, the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,

Eluned Morgan

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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.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol
Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref DC/JS/00471/25

Mike Hedges MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Welsh Parliament
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SeneddLJC@senedd.wales

12 August 2025

Dear Mike,

In accordance with the inter-institutional relations agreement, I am writing to report on the latest meeting of the Culture and Creative Industries Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) held on 16 July 2025.

The meeting was chaired by the UK Government Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP. Gordon Lyons MLA, Minister for Communities and Dr Caoimhe Archibald, Minister for the Economy attended for the Northern Ireland Executive and Angus Robertson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, attended for the Scottish Government. I represented the Welsh Government at this virtual meeting.

The discussion covered the need for more regular engagement at official level, Creative Industries Sector Plan, the impact of AI on the creative industries, the BBC Charter Review and international activity including Creative Europe. During the meeting I stressed the importance of engagement with the nations on cross-UK activity, raised concerns regarding the use of the Internal Market Act to spend in areas of devolved competence in Wales, the need to support our sectors to embrace the benefits of AI whilst also providing adequate protections and highlighted the need for reasonable timescales in which to review the BBC Charter Renewal draft Terms of Reference.

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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.

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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 have copied this letter to the Chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JACK SARGEANT". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol



Charging for exhibitions

Response to the CCWLSIR Committee report

16/07/2025

In June 2025, the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee published its report on the potential for charging to contribute meaningfully to the income of museums and galleries. This is the Welsh Government's response to that report.

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1. Foreword

In 2001, free entry to the national museums in Wales was introduced. The aim of this policy, which was introduced ahead of the rest of the UK, is to make sure the national collections are accessible for everyone and to encourage a diverse range of visitors. Thanks to our funding, visitors can continue to enter all seven of Amgueddfa Cymru's sites for free. The incredible experiences the museums offer continues to be recognised, mostly recently with the National Waterfront Museum being shortlisted for a Kids in Museums Family Friendly Museum award.

Our continued commitment to the free entry policy is reflected in the Priorities for Culture, which includes the ambition that 'Culture is inclusive, accessible and diverse'. Whilst admission is free, national museums across the UK can and do charge for the curated experiences, including some temporary exhibitions and special events. As an arm's length body, it is for Amgueddfa Cymru to make decisions on whether to ask for a donation or charge for curated experiences. As a recent example, Amgueddfa Cymru asked visitors to pay a small fee to see the world-famous Van Gogh self-portrait as part of the Art of the Selfie exhibition at National Museum Cardiff.

Amgueddfa Cymru continues to explore and pilot different charging approaches to help it raise additional income which it can re-invest into its sites and collections. Amgueddfa Cymru, led by its Board of Trustees, is responsible for assessing its charging trials. We will continue to work in partnership with Amgueddfa Cymru to ensure that equality of access is protected when generating income from premium experiences.

Many local museums also host exhibitions providing opportunities for communities to celebrate culture and new ways to engage with it. We will continue to work with the local museum sector and Amgueddfa Cymru to enable them to host exhibitions.

I thank the members of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee for the report on charging for exhibitions. I have set out my response to the report's individual recommendations below.

Jack Sargeant, Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

2. Response

In this chapter I have set out my response to the recommendations in the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee's (CCWLSIR) report. I have carefully considered the five recommendations and have responded to each, setting out whether they have been accepted, accepted in principle or rejected. For each response, I have also set out if there are any financial implications.

Recommendation 1

Recommendation: We recommend that the Welsh Government's policy of free entry to the national museums is retained. The Welsh Government should provide adequate funding to Amgueddfa Cymru to facilitate this

Response: Accept

Visitors can enter each of Amgueddfa Cymru's seven sites for free and I remain committed to retaining free access to our national collection. The Committee's report highlights the positive impact our free entry policy has had, with visitor numbers doubling and the proportion of lower socio-economic groups visiting expanded to around 30 per cent, as set out in the Thurley Report¹.

Amgueddfa Cymru is the jewel in the crown of Welsh culture and there is much to celebrate in its work. This is why it I am really pleased that our Final Budget for 2025 to 2026 includes an 8.5% increase for Amgueddfa Cymru compared to the previous year's revenue budget. I am under no illusions about the challenges faced by Amgueddfa Cymru and its revenue budget for 2025 to 2026 is a significant step forward, providing a real opportunity to move towards a more secure, sustainable footing.

Our capital spending to help protect and future-proof Wales' cultural and heritage assets is now more than three times that of a decade ago. In 2025 to 2026, Amgueddfa Cymru is continuing to receive £5m capital grant-in-aid and we are also providing an additional £9.2m capital to support priority improvements across its estate. We are also working with Amgueddfa Cymru to explore what capital support we can offer to help it deliver work it has identified that could further deliver against the Priorities for Culture.

Financial implications: This is accommodated within existing budgets. Amgueddfa Cymru's updated grant-in-aid revenue budget for 2025-26 is £27,789,000.

Recommendation 2

Recommendation: We recommend that any income from exhibitions should not replace the need for the Welsh Government to fund Amgueddfa Cymru adequately.

Response: Accept

I am supportive of Amgueddfa Cymru seeking to increase its financial sustainability through appropriate income generation in addition to its grant-in-aid. This is one of the

¹ www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/review-of-amgueddfa-cymru.pdf

key deliverables set out in its term of government remit letter². Charging is often used for limited-run, larger-scale exhibitions, due to their ability to generate income. There are numerous other benefits to Amgueddfa Cymru of holding exhibitions. Exhibitions create opportunities across the year to celebrate culture in all its variety, creating new opportunities for people to participate and engage with culture as well as benefit from Amgueddfa Cymru's expertise and enthusiasm. Importantly, they also provide opportunities for communities to decide what counts as culture and involve them in decision-making. In line with the arm's-length principle, it is for Amgueddfa Cymru to take a curatorial decision on the amount and types of exhibitions it holds at its sites and through its partnerships.

Financial implications: This is accommodated within existing budgets. Amgueddfa Cymru's updated grant-in-aid revenue budget for 2025-26 is £27,789,000.

Recommendation 3

Recommendation: We recommend that the Welsh Government should make it clear that the principle of free entry to the national museum sites extends to the underground tour at Big Pit.

Response: Reject

It is important we provide Amgueddfa Cymru with the time it needs to gather further data so it can take an evidenced-based decision on how its charging proposals can best contribute to financial sustainability whilst protecting equality of access.

As is the case at other national museums in the UK, Amgueddfa Cymru can choose to charge for the tour as a premium experience. There is no power in the Royal Charter for Welsh Ministers to direct Amgueddfa Cymru on its policy in this regard.

The need for Amgueddfa Cymru to become more financially sustainable was highlighted in the final report of the tailored review panel³. Charging for underground tours, which require an additional investment of time, resources and expertise, allows Amgueddfa Cymru to reinvest the income generated back into the museum sites, to further improve the wider visitor experience.

During the extended trial at Big Pit, Amgueddfa Cymru will continue to offer free tickets to Hynt members, Amgueddfa Cymru members and school groups as well as open concessions for individuals and families. Amgueddfa Cymru is also developing free days and events for the local community.

Financial implications: None

² www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2022-01/national-museum-wales-remit-letter-2021-to-2026.pdf

³ www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2023-07/national-museum-wales-tailored-review.pdf

Recommendation 4

Recommendation: We recommend that the Welsh Government should explore how it can help organisations host temporary exhibitions

Response: Accept

Through Celf (the dispersed National Contemporary Art Gallery for Wales) we are helping make the national collection of contemporary art at Amgueddfa Cymru and the National Library of Wales more accessible than ever before. The development of Celf has been a key priority within our Programme for Government, receiving nearly £7.5m investment during this Senedd term. Through an extensive loans programme, people in Wales will be able to explore the collections locally, within the nine venues that are members of the network of galleries. With the support of the project, the galleries can expand their exhibition programme, offering a wider variety of contemporary art for their visitors, as well as bringing fresh and diverse pieces to share with their audiences.

Our ongoing investment in the redevelopment of the National Slate Museum will help create increased exhibition spaces, allowing Amgueddfa Cymru to tell the internationally significant story of the UNESCO slate landscape. We are also investing in our local museum sector through our Capital Transformation Grant. During the last four years, we have invested nearly £7m in local museums, archives and libraries. Part of this funding has supported local museums to improve their exhibition spaces as well as to support them to implement wider upgrades of their facilities. Eligible costs for the new Priorities for Culture Capital Grants scheme for local museums, libraries and archives also include improvements to interpretation, access and exhibition spaces.

Through the Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS) we provide an alternative to commercial insurance, enabling art and cultural objects to be borrowed from private lenders or non-national institutions for display or research purposes. This scheme is available to both national and non-national museums, enabling loans of objects for exhibitions that might not otherwise have been possible due to prohibitive insurance costs.

In our role as sector development agency, we work with Amgueddfa Cymru and the local museums sector to share good practice, skills development, access to the national collection for exhibitions and to Amgueddfa Cymru's expertise. We will continue to work with the local museums sector and Amgueddfa Cymru to explore what further support for exhibitions it and the local sector may need.

Financial implications: This is accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 5

Recommendation: We recommend that the Welsh Government should clarify how the terms of the Government Indemnity Scheme relate to national institutions borrowing items for temporary exhibitions

Response: Accept

The GIS enables art and cultural objects to be borrowed from private lenders and non-national institutions for display and/or research purposes. It is an alternative to commercial insurance and provides cost-free indemnity cover for loss or damage when

items are on loan. To clarify, any publicly accessible institution (including Amgueddfa Cymru) is eligible to apply for indemnity cover.

The Culture Division administers the GIS in Wales and is in regular contact with Amgueddfa Cymru in terms of arranging cover for their eligible loans.

Financial implications: This is accommodated within existing budgets.

Ein cyf/Our ref: PO/FM/0361/25

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

21 July 2025

Dear Delyth,

Following my appearance at the Annual Scrutiny session on 18 June, I am pleased to enclose the first of our quarterly updates on progress against the International Delivery Plan (IDP).

As this is the first update, I would welcome feedback on the report's format and content to ensure that it is fit for purpose. However, I would like to reiterate the points that I made during the session about having limited resources within the International Relations team, so I would like you to ensure that any refinements are reasonable and do not detract from the core delivery of the IDP.

You will note that there are varying levels of information against each of the 15 deliverables, this is due to a focus on the economy during this quarter. You will also note that, due to commercial restrictions and security considerations, we are unable to provide an update on the Wales Investment Summit at this time. However, please accept my assurances that my officials are working hard on the Summit's delivery, securing the right level of delegates and speakers, and we are already receiving interest from companies who have been approached about attending later this year.

Similarly, external restrictions placed on the Welsh and UK governments by the Office for National Statistics prevent us from reporting detailed information around Wales's foreign direct investment figures and an update on these will be provided in line with the ONS timetable.

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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.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eluned Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eluned Morgan

International Delivery Plan – Committee Update – Quarter 1

In April, the International Delivery Plan was published, marking the beginning of a significant year for Wales on the global stage. The plan outlines 15 key focus areas for delivery across the next 12 months. This first quarterly report highlights early activities and achievements.

Economic Growth

Driving economic growth remains central to our international efforts. Welsh Government teams in Wales and overseas delivered eight trade missions, enabling 67 delegates to access key markets, strengthen ties, and forge new commercial relationships; alongside supporting over 150 export projects. We participated in numerous national and international events to promote collaboration and attract investment in Wales's priority sectors, laying the foundations for the Wales Investment Summit.

At the political level, our North America team - in close partnership with industry - hosted a dedicated briefing in the U.S. Congress to showcase Wales's world-leading compound semiconductor sector and its exceptional skills and capabilities. This was reinforced by articles in the Wall Street Journal broadening awareness of Welsh strengths among a wider and influential American audience increasing visibility of the investment opportunities that exist in Wales for U.S. companies in this sector.

Wales and Japan 2025

The Wales and Japan 2025 launch went viral reaching millions globally with the initial focus on deepening economic ties. In preparation for, the Wales Investment Summit later this year, we held a Wales Investor Showcase in Tokyo in April, hosted by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, bringing together over 150 leading Japanese entrepreneurs and businesses to explore opportunities for long-term collaboration in areas where Wales excels - such as renewable energy and digital transformation. We hosted our first "Wales Day" at Expo 2025 in Osaka with over 1000 visitors experiencing Welsh culture, food and drink. In June, we hosted a Wales Health Tech Day to showcase Wales's health tech sector to over 100 guests, led by the Chief Medical Officer. Delivered in partnership with the UK Government's Department for Business and Trade, the event highlighted Welsh innovation and promoted international trade, investment, and collaboration.

Additionally, 20 companies participated in both Expo and the Japan Health Exhibition. Participants engaged with leading research and innovation institutions across Japan strengthening existing partnerships and creating new opportunities for collaborations across research, development and investment.

To mark the halfway point of the Wales and Japan Year, the First Minister and Japan's Ambassador to the UK co-hosted a business event at the Japanese Embassy in London, bringing together existing Wales-based Japanese companies to advocate for Wales to prospective new investors. Work is underway to strengthen and build on these relationships, ensuring long-term benefits for Wales including further activity involving the Japanese Ambassador.

Health Outcomes

In Wales, there has been a focus on improving health outcomes. The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care hosted a two-day policy dialogue in Cardiff, as part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the World Health Organisation. This attracted high-level attendees including Ministers and senior officials from the governments of Iceland, Finland and Scotland. The event supported our commitment to improving health outcomes at home and overseas by sharing best practice, strengthening collaboration, and promoting whole-government approaches to health and well-being.

In May, Cardiff hosted the EUREGHA General Assembly, enhancing Wales's visibility and fostering European collaboration on health priorities. This also provided an opportunity to demonstrate unique Welsh approaches to an international audience, such as how the Well-being of Future Generations Act requires sustainability and long-term thinking to be embedded in health policy decision-making.

Climate and Environment

This quarter, we prioritised our international climate and environmental ambitions. Following last year's successful Circular Economy Hotspot in Wales, the Deputy First Minister visited Latvia to learn about its successful deposit return scheme, identifying areas of best practice for a similar system to be introduced in Wales. The Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning hosted a delegation, led by the Lieutenant Governor of Utah, keen to learn from Wales approach to renewable energy as part of their aim to diversify their energy mix. The visit was a direct outcome of our North America team's engagement with Utah following the installation of a statue of America's first female senator - Llandudno-born Martha Hughes Cannon - in Statuary Hall, Washington D.C.

At Marine Energy Wales, a £2 million investment in tidal energy firm Inyanga Marine Energy Group was announced, supporting the First Minister's Green Growth agenda. At Global Offshore Wind in London, Wales's offshore wind strategy and our supply chain companies were featured. At Wind Europe in Copenhagen, the First Minister joined a panel on grid infrastructure, met companies aligned to national investment priorities, and promoted supply chain capabilities to over 15,000 industry professionals.

The Deputy First Minister represented Wales at the Under2 Coalition European Ministerial meeting in Brussels - the world's largest network of subnational governments committed to achieving net zero by 2050. The meeting focused on the role of regions in shaping international climate policy ahead of COP30, demonstrating Wales's leadership in shaping global climate policy.

The Welsh Government teams in Brussels and Wales hosted a 30-strong international delegation from Portugal, Spain, France, Ireland, and Canada on a visit to North Wales as part of the TRANSATLANTIC project, advancing international collaboration around green corridor initiatives and the decarbonisation of ports and maritime transport, whilst promoting innovation in the circular blue economy through sustainable and resource-efficient practices.

The Deputy First Minister delivered a speech at the 3rd UN Ocean Conference, highlighting Wales's pioneering work in developing national ocean literacy strategies supported by the Well-being of Future Generations Act. The event showcased the transformative impact of this approach, attracting international attention, with several countries looking to learn from Wales's leadership in these areas.

Education Partnerships

The International Delivery Plan commits to enhancing education partnerships and outcomes. Wales secured the hosting two major international events in this period: the International Congress on School Effectiveness and Improvement and a peer learning event with the OECD. These events enabled educators to present to international audiences with immediate outcomes including the exchange of insights and best practices, and longer-term impacts expected through collaborative projects. Delegations from Ireland and Denmark joined Welsh stakeholders to explore international learning. A debrief from the OECD will inform future policy development.

The Welsh Government's team in India has been supporting Wales's further and higher education sectors by partnering with Global Wales to deliver events and visits that promote Welsh universities. Recent collaborations between the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and universities in Bengal explored opportunities for student mobility and research partnerships with Welsh institutions. Meanwhile, the Welsh Government Office in Canada recently hosted a visit by Colegau Cymru to Montreal, supporting their international engagement efforts

Sports Diplomacy

Following the announcement that the Tour de France will come to Wales for the first time in 2027, attention has turned to the Women's European Football Championships in Switzerland. 16 projects were awarded funding through a £1m Partner Support Fund which has seen partners across Wales come together through our Tîm Cymru model of diplomacy to raise our profile, identity and culture across Wales and beyond. Highlights that have attracted global attention have included a Cardiff mural dedicated to Welsh football's Jess Fishlock - the first pitch-sized mural to a female football player in Europe - and AmdaniHi! an S4C led event that celebrates the role women have played in shaping our nation. This activity has been supported by *Perthyn* an internationally focused digital media campaign which tells stories of those with Welsh connections to an international audience. There has also been a focus on impacts within Wales. One supported project saw the British Council Wales produce a classroom pack for young people Ewro25 to explore Europe, gender equality and languages as well as celebrating the tournament.

Global Responsibility

Wales reaffirmed its international commitment to peace and solidarity by supporting Academi Heddwch in hosting the 'Gwireddu' Peace Petition Conference in Aberystwyth, bringing together volunteers from Wales and the United States to mark the centenary of the Women's Peace Petition and explore how its legacy can inspire future generations. At the conference, the First Minister announced additional funding for Academi Heddwch, enabling it to advance peace education and research initiatives. This support will deepen engagement with schools, communities, and international partners, further strengthening Wales's role in global peacebuilding and facilitating new academic and diplomatic collaborations.

Officials in Paris also secured UNESCO UK's patronage of the Urdd's Message of Peace and Goodwill, which recognises the message's alignment with the global values of UNESCO. Additionally, our Middle East offices facilitated dialogue on a potential partnership between Academi Heddwch and Georgetown University in Qatar, laying the groundwork for future academic collaboration and peace-focused initiatives.

Wales continued its international development efforts with two successful International Learning Opportunities placements in Eastern Uganda, focusing on waste management and healthcare improvement in a rural hospital. A new round of small grants was launched to support organisations within the International Development and Solidarity sector to improve lives internationally and here in Wales.

Case Study - Wales and Ireland

Wales and Ireland share a strong relationship built on economic, cultural, linguistic, and policy ties. In 2021, the first Ireland-Wales Shared Statement was launched to maintain close cooperation post-Brexit. Building on that foundation, the First Minister and the Tánaiste launched the updated Ireland–Wales Shared Statement 2030 in July, reflecting evolving priorities and a renewed commitment to collaboration.

The revised agreement broadens its scope, expanding the Climate and Sustainability priority to include Energy and Environment, and enhancing Education and Research by including Innovation. These updates reflect both the progress made and the opportunities ahead. The new statement outlines the significance of priority areas, sets shared objectives, and our approach to delivery. It is action-oriented and is underpinned by a governance model designed to ensure that Wales–Ireland relations deliver tangible benefits for people in both nations. The annual Ministerial Forum will provide a platform to assess progress and agree strategic priorities for the year ahead.

At the 2025 Wales Ireland Forum, where the new statement was launched, Aerospace Wales demonstrated how Agile Cymru funding enables Welsh SMEs to build new partnerships in Ireland, resulting in reciprocal visits and sustained collaboration at major global aerospace events.

The forum also heard an update from the CEO and Director of Maresconnect an energy infrastructure company deploying a subsea electric interconnector between Wales and Ireland. The £1b project will create 250 full time roles during the three-year construction and will support energy security and put downward pressure on consumer pricing. The project is a tangible example of the collaboration between Ireland and Wales to deliver a low carbon future.

Recent joint activities have continued to strengthen cultural and economic ties. Welsh writers participated in the Cúirt International Literature Festival in Galway, while representatives from Cardiff Capital Region and Tramshed Tech visited Dublin to inform digital cluster planning. No Sleep Dance Theatre delivered a workshop and performance in Wexford, and a cultural event in London - co-hosted with the Irish Embassy - celebrated shared creativity and heritage.

Annex A – Summary Progress Table, aligning activity to the International Delivery Plan’s Goals.

Deliverable	Activity
Wales Investment Summit	Commercial and security sensitivities prevent reporting at this time.
Inward Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officials have participated in national and international events, including Money2020, BIO USA and the Paris Airshow, to promote investment and encourage collaboration across Wales’s priority sectors. - The Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, Energy and Planning hosted an investor showcase at Expo 2025 in Osaka, highlighting opportunities priority Welsh sectors. - The First Minister and Japanese Ambassador co-hosted an event focused on engaging existing and potential Japanese investors and showcasing Wales’s investment landscape.
Supporting Welsh business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eight trade missions have been delivered enabling 67 delegates to access key markets - 150 export projects have been supported.
Wales and Japan Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Wales Investor Showcase was hosted in Tokyo. - The first “Wales Day” was held at Expo 2025 in Osaka, attracting over 1,000 visitors showcasing the Welsh culture. - Welsh innovation in health tech was promoted at a major event in June, led by the Chief Medical Officer. 20 Welsh companies were enabled to engage directly with Japanese markets through participation in Expo and the Japan Health Exhibition.
Climate and environmental ambitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Deputy First Minister visited Latvia to explore best practice for a deposit return scheme and participation in the Under2 Coalition meeting in Brussels to shape global climate policy. - Wales’s renewable energy leadership was promoted through hosting a Utah delegation. - A £2 million tidal energy investment was announced at Marine Energy Wales. - Offshore wind capabilities were showcased at major international events in London and Copenhagen. - Global partnerships in the Blue Economy were strengthened by supporting an EU TRANSATLANTIC visit to North Wales. - Welsh ocean literacy innovation profiled at UN Ocean Conference.
Sports diplomacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welsh identity and culture was promoted through events in both Wales and Switzerland, including a mural in Cardiff honouring Jess Fishlock - the first pitch-sized mural dedicated to a female footballer in Europe. - The role of women in Welsh society was celebrated through the S4C-led AmdaniHi! The First Minister met with a prospective investor during her visit to Switzerland in support of the Welsh Women’s football team.

Perthyn	- The Perthyn Campaign is ongoing. As part of the Euro2025 tournament, a video sharing the story of Wales Head Coach Rhian Wilkinson was shared across social media.
Team Cymru	- The Tîm Cymru/Team Wales model has been used during the Women's European Football Championships in Switzerland.
Collaboration with the UK government	- A high-profile event for the Welsh health tech sector was hosted at Expo 2025 in Osaka in partnership with the Department for Business and Trade. - We have been actively contributing to the design of the UK Government's Soft Power strategy. We have participated in the FCDO led Ambassador Roadshow, hosting UK Ambassadors to France, Belgium and Oman in Wales to showcase Wales and areas of Welsh excellence.
European engagement	- Wales hosted the EUREGHA General Assembly. - The Deputy First Minister attended Under2 Coalition in meeting in Brussels. We have hosted two UK Government Ambassadors to European countries as part of the FCDO's Ambassadorial Roadshow.
Awareness of Wales	- North America offices worked with industry partners to host a dedicated briefing in the U.S. Congress to spotlight Wales's world-leading compound semiconductor sector. - Hosted Wales Day at Expo Osaka. - Participated in the FCDO-led Ambassador Roadshow, hosting UK Ambassadors to France, Belgium and Oman in Wales to showcase Wales and areas of Welsh excellence.
Multilateral engagement	- WG France team worked with UNESCO UK to achieve a first-ever patronage of the Urdd's Message of Peace and Goodwill.
Improving outcomes at home	- 'Gwireddu' Peace Petition Conference supported in Aberystwyth. - Laid groundwork for future academic collaboration between Academi Heddwch and Qatar's Georgetown University.
Health outcomes	- A health focussed trade mission took 20 companies Japan to participate in both Expo and the Japan Health Exhibition. The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care hosted a two-day policy dialogue in Cardiff, as part of the Memorandum of Understanding with the World Health Organisation.
Education	- Student delegations from North America have visited to learn about our international approach. - A peer learning event with the OECD was hosted in Cardiff, focused on national leadership in education welcoming delegations from Ireland and Denmark. - Wales sponsored and participated in the International Congress on School Effectiveness and Improvement. - WG teams in the US, Canada and India have supported further and higher education sectors to establish and deepen partnerships. These collaborations are enhancing institutional links, facilitating academic exchange, and strengthening the quality and reach of Wales's education offering.



Ein cyf/Our ref: PO/FM/0362/25

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
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Welsh Parliament
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21 July 2025

Dear Delyth,

Following my recent appearance at Committee, I am pleased to provide responses to the actions that were raised during the session and further questions not reached within the allotted time. These are attached at Annex A.

The first quarterly report on the International Delivery Plan has now been sent to you and this sets out the activity undertaken over the first quarter to action the 15 deliverables.

Since my appearance at Committee, Members will be aware that the Welsh and Irish Governments have signed a new Shared Statement and I am pleased that my officials were able to provide the Committee with a technical briefing on this. This follows a previous briefing on the International Delivery Plan. I am very happy to facilitate these oral briefings which provide additional detail and insight to support your understanding and work. I have previously offered that my officials who head our regions across the globe have a session with you to explain the role and activities undertaken across our Overseas Network.

Yours sincerely,

Eluned Morgan

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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.

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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.

Annex A

Actions

- a) *The First Minister agreed to write to the Committee outlining the Welsh Government's plans for the Euros.***

A [Written Statement](#) was published on 4 July 2025 which sets out how we are using the Women's European Championships to promote Wales and Welsh culture in Switzerland.

- b) *The First Minister agreed to share a list of visits/meeting with EU institutions that have been undertaken by members of the Government.***

A list of visits and meetings with EU institutions is shown at Annex B.

- c) *The First Minister agreed to write to the Committee explaining how an international relations concordat can be developed.***

There is already the [Concordat](#) in place which sets out how the United Kingdom Government and the Welsh Ministers will cooperate with respect to international relations. This recognises that international relations, and relations with the European Union, remain the responsibility of the UK Government and the UK Parliament. However, the UK Government recognises that the Devolved Governments will have an interest in international and European policy making in relation to devolved matters, notably where they may be required to implement actions.

This Concordat was published in 2013, and officials from across the UK and Devolved Governments are considering a potential timing of an update to the Concordat. The issue of the Concordat, and the framework for engagement with the Devolved Governments on international matters, is expected to be considered as an agenda item for a future Interministerial Standing Committee (IMSC).

- c) *The witnesses agreed to write to the Committee setting out what impact the Committee's 'Culture Shock' report has had on the Welsh Government.***

We welcome the Committee's 'Culture Shock' report and its ongoing commitment to supporting the role of culture in Welsh international relations. I have included, alongside this letter, an update on our implementation of the report's recommendations (Annex C). Since the Committee published its report, we have invited Wales Arts International to sit on the Trade Policy Advisory Group to provide specialist sectoral advice, published our Priorities for Culture which recognises the role culture plays in our international relationships, and agreed an Ireland-Wales Shared Statement 2030, which includes culture as a key theme.

Questions Not Reached

Delivery

- 1. *During the evidence session, the First Minister reiterated a commitment made on 9 June in correspondence to review the International Strategy's 270 actions over the summer and provide analysis to the Committee in the autumn. Could you provide more specific timings for when the Committee can expect to receive the final report?***

This is an important task, not just in terms of reporting to Committee, but as part of understanding the impact of the International Strategy. To that end, we plan to write to Committee with an analysis of the actions by the end of 2025. This allows time for focus on delivery on key activity such as the International Delivery plan and the Investment Summit, whilst also ensuring it is analysed to an appropriate level.

International Delivery Plan

2. During our inquiry, we found low levels of awareness and engagement in the development of the International Delivery Plan (IDP). Could you explain on what basis its 15 aims were selected and how they were developed?

The International Delivery Plan extends the overarching International Strategy with its core aims to raise the profile of Wales, grow the economy and establish Wales as a globally responsible nation.

As such, there was no direct consultation on the International Delivery Plan. However, our Team Cymru model of diplomacy means that we regularly engage and involve our partners in our work. The Plan was developed out of this regular genuine engagement and meaningful involvement, and I was pleased to hear some of this reflected in the evidence provided to Committee.

3. The First Minister has offered to provide quarterly reports to this Committee on the delivery of the IDP, starting this month. Could you confirm if the reports will be structured around each of the IDP's 15 aims and the Strategy's three objectives?

The quarterly report will outline delivery against the 15 aims and provide an analysis of the impact during the quarter. I am keen that we find the most suitable way to report to you and welcome your feedback. Much of the delivery over the first quarter will relate to more than one of the deliverables and this is important as we look to maximise impact. The quarterly report has been issued under separate cover.

Budget

4. The Welsh Government has allocated almost £49m to international relations and international development during the Sixth Senedd. As the Strategy comes to an end, how are you assessing whether this has been value for money?

As we discussed in Committee, nations, regions and cities across the world try to respond to the challenge of measuring the impact of international relations activity, however it is activity that is widely undertaken.

Where we can measure, we can clearly understand impact. During the Strategy's lifetime there have been 215 investments made by foreign-owned companies which have created and safeguarded more than 20,000 jobs, whilst businesses in Wales have secured more than £370m of new export business as a direct result of Welsh Government export support.

We have also placed significant emphasis on building good relations to create the right environment to collaborate across a range of issues. This is difficult to measure but I would argue that our extensive work in Japan to build good relations with a range of stakeholders across business, tourism, culture, sport and language facilitated the right conditions for a highly impactful Wales and Japan Year.

During the 2022 Qatar World Cup, activities took place across our overseas network to raise Wales' profile. Events were held across the USA, including a business event in Washington DC, to mark the Wales vs. USA group match. Following an initial meeting at the Games Developers Conference earlier in the year, a gaming company was invited to attend the DC event where it was able to hear more about Wales' skills in gaming and tech and continue conversations started in San Francisco. Through continued sustained engagement with our US team and Creative Wales, the company announced its intention to base its European Headquarters in Cardiff, having not previously considered Wales prior to their engagement with Welsh Government's Overseas Network. This investment led to 50 high quality jobs in the gaming industry and demonstrates how sports diplomacy can lead to tangible outcomes; however, the outcomes are not always this easily measurable.

Furthermore, technology company Vishay, invested £51m in a compound semiconductor facility in Newport. This project was identified by our Washington DC team, who worked hard to build the relationship with the company's headquarters, The DC overseas network team saw the potential and pursued the project, maintaining the relationship with the company throughout to ensure an effective route into government which eventually resulted in a multi-million pound investment and many hundreds of jobs.

The funding for international activity has been used to support our ambition to be a globally responsible nation. We have focussed on demonstrating global leadership in a number of areas to share our learning but to also improve outcomes at home. In the field of sustainable development, the 10-year anniversary of the Well-being of Future Generations has seen Wales inspire a historic commitment by the United Nations. Last year, global leaders signed the Declaration on Future Generations in New York to safeguard the well-being and needs of future generations. Closer to home, our successful bid to host the Circular Economy Hotspot, saw around 400 delegates come from across the world to learn from our transformational success in areas such as recycling. Following this, the Deputy First Minister has subsequently visited Latvia to learn from their approach to a Deposit Return Scheme and how this could work in Wales.

Much of our international work has been focussed on facilitating exchanges to make a difference. The Taith Programme has already awarded funding to allow over 15,000 people to learn, study and volunteer all over the world. Last year, the Wales in India Year, saw an agreement reached with the Chief Minister of Kerala that has seen 300 health professionals recruited to the Welsh NHS. As part of our Wales and Japan focus this year and the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages, we have been developing links with the indigenous Ainu community to share our work. This has seen engagement from Welsh Government officials and strategic partners to share our work on Cymraeg 2050 and other initiatives.

Spending in Wales is relatively modest when compared to other areas. The Scottish Government International Relations and European Affairs budget was £26.7m in the last financial year alone and this does not cover the totality of its international work.

5. The Welsh Government provided breakdowns of the current budget allocations for international relations activity on 9 June, six months after the Committee's budget scrutiny window. Are you content that there is now sufficient time available to ensure that money is spent strategically in this financial year?

I am pleased to report that last year, we achieved a near full spend. This is a significant step forward as we move away from the underspends that marked the Covid years and the recovery from the pandemic. There are some fluctuations that we cannot control which do impact on our spends such as invoicing from the FCDO in relation to Overseas Network

costs and staffing changes. However, I am confident that with this approach to budget management and a strong Team Cymru approach to our activity we will be able to report a full, or near full, spend again this year.

6. *The allocations follow the structure of previous budgets. Could you explain how they align to the IDP?*

The International Delivery Plan provides focus for our activity. It also sees the continuation of the International Strategy to the end of this Senedd Term. This is continuity rather than a change to our approach. This effectively means that the existing budgetary set up is aligned to our Delivery Plan. Some of the Delivery Plan actions are directly accounted for, such as the Wales and Japan Year, and other budget lines, such as the funding for Strategic Partners will support other areas of focus including the Team Cymru approach.

Annex B

Minister	Who they met	Date	
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	Minister for Economy, Energy and Innovation Eddy van Hijum, East Netherlands (Vanguard)	December 2021 – Meeting was online	Reactive
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	Jeannette Baljeu, Regional Minister of the Province of South-Holland (Vanguard)	December 2021 – Meeting was online	Reactive
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	Cristina Uriarte, Commissioner for Science, Technology and Innovation, The Basque Government Marian Elorza, Secretary General for Foreign Affairs, The Basque Government (Vanguard)	December 2021- Meeting was online	Reactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Evelyn Regner MEP, VP of the European Parliament	March 2022	Proactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Bernd Lange MEP, Chair of INTA Committee	March 2022	Proactive
Minister for Education & Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles	EP CULT Committee – Information Session on Taith	October 2022	Proactive
MEWL Jeremy Miles	Sean Kelly MEP	October 2022	Proactive
MEWL Jeremy Miles	Jens Geier MEP	October 2022	Proactive
MEWL Jeremy Miles	Viktor Negrescu MEP	October 2022	Proactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Younous Omarjee MEP, Chair of REGI Committee	March 2023	Proactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Katarina Barley MEP, VP of the European Parliament	March 2023	Proactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Jan Jambon, Minister-President of Flanders	March 2023	Proactive
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	Jan Olbrycht MEP	April 2023	Proactive
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	Younous Omarjee MEP, Chair of REGI Committee	April 2023	Proactive

Minister	Who they met	Date	
Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething	REGI Committee, European Parliament - <i>Exchange of views with the Minister for Economy of Wales, Mr Vaughan Gethin, on the Brexit and the cooperation of Wales with the EU</i>	April 2023	Proactive
Deputy Minister Social Partnerships, Hannah Blythyn	Agnes Jongerius MEP	October 2023	Proactive
Deputy Minister Social Partnerships, Hannah Blythyn	EESC President	October 2023	Proactive
First Minister Mark Drakeford	Jan Jambon, Minister President of Flanders	February 2024	Proactive
Deputy First Minister, Huw Irranca-Davies	Under2 Coalition meeting	June 2025	Reactive
DFM Huw Irranca-Davies	Séamus Boland, Incoming EESC President	June 2025	Proactive

Annex C

Update on implementation of recommendations from the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee's 'Culture Shock' report, July 2025

Recommendation 1

We call on the Welsh Government to support the recommendation made by the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly in December 2023 (see paragraphs 58 and 59 of this report), and to use all available levers to encourage the UK and EU to progress its actions.

Response: Accepted

Update: We continue to use all available levers to encourage the UK Government and the EU to ease the difficulties faced by creative sector workers. We welcome the recent re-set in relations between the UK and EU and the announcement of the UK-EU Common Understanding Agreement. We particularly welcome the announcement made by the UK and EU governments at the summit on 19 May to establish a mutual commitment to negotiating a youth experience scheme. Such a proposal will ensure that young people can enjoy the social, cultural and educational benefits gained from living, working and/or studying in each other's countries.

Recommendation 2

We call on the Welsh Government to set out what guidance and support it provides to creative workers on cross-border working post-Brexit. The response should include detail on what information is available on its website, the role of its export support and overseas offices, and any funding provided to third parties for advice services.

Response: Accepted

Update: We set out the guidance and support provided by the Welsh Government in our response to the Committee's recommendations in December 2024.

Recommendation 3

We call on the Welsh Government to provide its assessment of Brexit's impact on the culture sector in Wales.

Response: Rejected

Update: No further update.

Recommendation 4

We call on the Welsh Government to set out what steps it has taken to mitigate the effect of Brexit on the sector, including the financial implications, and what steps it will take in future, in response to this report.

Response: Accepted

Update: We set out the steps taken by the Welsh Government in our response to the Committee's recommendations in December 2024.

Recommendation 5

We urge the UK and EU to prioritise new arrangements for creative workers in the upcoming implementation review of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement with a view to progressing the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly's recommendation on touring artists.
Response: Accepted

Update: We welcome the recent re-set in relations between the UK and EU and particularly welcome the announcement of a mutual commitment to negotiating a youth experience scheme. We believe such a scheme could potentially benefit young artists, as it is generally younger, less-established artists who face the greatest challenges when touring with increased costs, time limits, and bureaucracy resulting from EU exit. However, we recognise that further discussions are needed about supporting touring artists and we will continue to raise this matter with the UK Government.

Recommendation 6

We call on the Welsh Government to include cross-border creative work as a priority in a clear, coherent strategy setting out its ambition for UK-EU and Wales-EU relations.

Response: Rejected

Update: No further update.

Recommendation 7

We call on the Welsh Government to provide its current views on how Wales is represented in UK-EU governance structures in response to this report.

Response: Accepted

Update: We provided the views of the Welsh Government in our response to the Committee's recommendations in December 2024.

Recommendation 8

We call on the Welsh Government to champion these issues at intergovernmental meetings. It should take practical steps, such as suggesting the following as standing agenda items until the situation improves:

- *improving post-Brexit arrangements for creative workers, including via the upcoming TCA implementation review; and*
- *UK association to Erasmus+ and Creative Europe.*

The Welsh Government should report to this Committee at least once a term on relevant intergovernmental discussions on these specific matters for the remainder of the Sixth Senedd

Response: Accepted in part.

Update: The Welsh Government has continued to champion the issues highlighted in this report at intergovernmental meetings, most recently at the Inter-Ministerial Group for Trade on 2 June.

We welcome the announcement in the UK-EU Common Understanding Agreement to work towards association to the Erasmus+ programme on much better financial terms for the UK.

Recommendation 9

We call on the Welsh Government to confirm what data and evidence it is using to inform decisions in this area, including to include touring artists as a priority for the implementation review of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

Response: Accepted

Update: We confirmed what data and evidence the Welsh Government uses to inform decisions in this area in our response to the Committee's recommendations in December 2024.

Recommendation 10

We call on the Welsh Government to provide its assessment of how its priorities for the implementation review of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement will address all of the elements that need to work together to facilitate cross-border creative work.

Response: Rejected

Update: No further update.

Recommendation 11

We support the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee's call for the establishment of a new Welsh Government advisory group on UK-EU relations. This should include representative bodies from the culture sector.

Response: Rejected

Update: The Welsh Government has reviewed the membership of its Trade Policy Advisory Group (TPAG), and we have invited Wales Arts International to be a member of the group to provide specialist sectoral advice.

Recommendation 12

We call on the Welsh Government to set out how it has engaged with stakeholders on the matters covered by this inquiry since January 2021, including key findings and steps taken in response.

Response: Accepted

Update: We set out how the Welsh Government has engaged with stakeholders in this area in our response to the Committee's recommendations in December 2024. The Welsh Government has invited Wales Arts International to be a member of the Trade Policy Advisory Group (TPAG) to provide specialist sectoral advice.

Recommendation 13

We call on the Welsh Government to incorporate the Committee's findings into its future culture and international relations strategies.

Response: Accepted

Update: In May 2025, we published our Priorities for Culture which recognises the integral role culture plays in how Wales establishes and develops formal and informal international relationships with other regions and countries. The Welsh Government expressed its goal for culture to be represented and embedded in how we promote Wales to the world. Priorities for Culture set out the ambitions that:

- Culture has a high profile in how our nation is marketed to visitors and in how we establish and develop international relationships.

- The profile of culture is raised by celebrating and promoting culture at a local, national and international level.

Recommendation 14

We call on the Welsh Government to maintain a dialogue with the Irish Government on this issue as part of their ongoing and future cooperation, and to scope, where possible, what additional support could be jointly provided while awaiting a UK-EU-led solution.

Response: Accepted

Update: In July 2025, the First Minister and Tánaiste of Ireland launched the new Ireland-Wales Shared Statement 2030¹. Culture is a key theme within the Statement and, within this area, there is an ambition for a strong working relationship between Wales Arts International and Culture Ireland. We will build on collaboration with the arts councils of Ireland and Wales, including through the *All In* cultural access scheme, the Northern European mobility programme, and the Beyond Border programme.

¹ [Ireland-Wales shared statement 2030](#)

MINISTERIAL INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

July 2025

INWARD VISITS	
03 July	Visit to Wales by Irish Tánaiste for the Ireland-Wales Ministerial Forum The Tánaiste travelled to Swansea for the fifth annual Ireland-Wales Ministerial Forum. The Tánaiste was accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Minister for Defence. In their discussions, the First Minister and the Tánaiste focussed on their shared ambitions for the Ireland-Wales bilateral relationship, deepening cooperation over the next 5 years and beyond.
04 July	Visit to Wales by Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands The Dutch Ambassador came to Wales on a two day visit. On the second day he met with the First Minister to explore cooperation between Netherlands and Wales, particularly relating to key economic sectors.
08 July	Visit to Wales by Ambassador of Uzbekistan Cabinet Secretary for Education met with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan to discuss education in Wales. The meeting focussed on teaching and leadership models.
OUTWARD VISITS	
04 July	First Minister visit to Switzerland The First Minister visited Switzerland, travelling to Geneva and Lucerne. In Geneva the First Minister visited CERN, the European Organization for Nuclear Research, for a tour and a series of discussions. The First Minister then travelled on to Lucerne for Wales' opening game in the UEFA Women's European Football Championship. This included a speaking engagement at an S4C showcase event.
11 July	Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership visit to Switzerland The Minister for CSSP travelled to St. Gallen, Switzerland, to support the Wales Women's football team in its group match against England. In addition to attending the game, the Minister held meetings with Partner Support Fund Euro 2025 Resident Poet, and the Cymru Team Manager.

Lynne Neagle MS
Cabinet Secretary for Education

Vikki Howells MS
Minister for Further and Higher Education

23 July 2025

Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Dear Lynne and Vikki,

As in previous years, we would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026-27. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than two weeks prior to your appearance before Committee, the date of which will be arranged in due course.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Buffy Williams MS
Chair

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

Annex A: Request to the Cabinet Secretary for Education, and Minister for Further and Higher Education regarding the CYPE Committee's Draft Budget scrutiny 2026-27

Cross-cutting areas

Transparency of budget presentation

As in previous years, we request a clear, transparent explanation of changes to the overall Education and MEG in 2026-27, from 2025-26, including both a comparison with the actual budget in addition to any revised baseline which is used. We would also appreciate a summary of the key changes between 2025-26 and 2026-27.

If a revised baseline is used, we request a breakdown of amounts which have been removed from or added to the 2025-26 budget and an explanation in each case of why it is deemed appropriate to use the revised baseline rather than the actual budget set in 2025-26 for comparisons.

For significant changes to budget lines, we request an explanation of whether money is being taken from/returned to central reserves or allocated from/to other budget lines either within or outside the MEG.

Detail of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) allocations and explanation of changes

We request a breakdown of the 2026-27 Education MEG by Action, and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), with Final Budget 2025-26 allocations, First Supplementary Budget 2025-26 allocations, forecast 2025-26 outturns, and 2024-25 final outturns all included. If indicative budgets are being set beyond 2026-27, we request details of those as well. In the past, we have requested commentary on each of the Actions within the Education MEG. Prior to last year, this was provided in an annex. We note that last year a separate commentary was not provided and the information was provided in the main body of the paper, along with a budget table at Annex A and a list of changes at Annex B. We found that approach to be satisfactory and would be content with the same this year. However, if there are any Actions that are not covered by the issues requested, we would appreciate an explanation of what those Actions fund.

To confirm, we would still like an analysis and explanation of significant changes to Actions and BELs since the First Supplementary Budget 2025-26 (June 2025).

If the Welsh Government uses a revised baseline budget for comparative purposes, we request that the actual 2025-26 First Supplementary Budget allocations are also presented alongside 2026-27

draft budget allocations as well as an explanation of the reasons for the re-calculation of the baseline (as mentioned earlier).

Education priorities and other strategic priorities

Information on how the Education MEG aligns with, and is prioritised according to, the Welsh Government's relevant priorities and key objectives, including:

- An updated assessment from the Cabinet Secretary on the extent to which she believes the Education MEG contains the resources necessary to deliver Welsh Government priorities and key objectives.
- Information on any ongoing negotiations with the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language to maximise the level of resources available for education, including funding for schools' core budgets through the Local Government Settlement.
- Details of how allocations to and within the Education MEG align with the Programme for Government.
- In light of the [Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language's announcement on 1 July](#) that the 2026-27 budget will simply increase departmental budgets by inflation, rather than reflecting new policies and priorities, how the Cabinet Secretary for Education has been able to take account of emerging and escalating issues since the 2025-26 budget was set.
- Whether, and if so how, the Cabinet Secretary intends to target resources at addressing any cross-cutting themes or priorities across the MEG as a whole.

Children's rights and other cross-cutting considerations

In line with assessing whether 'due regard' has been given to article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Welsh Government's duties under the Rights of the Child and Young Persons (Wales) Measure, we request:

- The overall Children's Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) for this draft Education MEG for 2026-27, which sets out how children's rights are put into effect in these budget allocations, with reference to specific articles in the UNCRC as relevant.
- If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this.
- A copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment as well as assurances that this assessment demonstrates that the duty of "due regard" to the UNCRC has been exercised.

- Details and/or examples of any changes made to initial allocations within the Education MEG following considerations of children’s rights, equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, or the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a result of impact assessments, or where these assessments have had a direct influence on the setting of budgets.

Costs of legislation

- Details of allocations within the 2026-27 budget intended for the implementation of primary legislation passed in the past two Senedd terms, including the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025, the Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022, the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021, and the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018.
- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation, for example the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill.
- Financial implications in 2026-27 of any relevant subordinate legislation.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Information on any remaining provision in the Education MEG in 2025-26 and 2026-27 for dealing with and recovering from the impact of the pandemic, for example the status of the former “Recruit, Recover, Raise Standards (RRRS)” funding that was amalgamated into the Local Authority Education Grant from 2024-25..

Impact of cost of living pressures on delivery of education services

- An update on the implications of cost of living pressures and energy prices on the operational delivery of education institutions – across early years, schools, colleges, universities and training providers.

Budget monitoring and the current financial context

- Information on the processes in place for monitoring budgets within the Education MEG throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls.
- Details of any changes to the 2025-26 Education MEG that are already anticipated in the Second Supplementary Budget.

Specific areas

Funding for school budgets

- An explanation of whether and how the Welsh Government has prioritised funding for schools in the 2026-27 Draft Budget (in both the Housing and Local Government MEG and the Education MEG).
- How the review of the school funding formula (published February 2025) and proposed School Funding, Budget Statements and Outturn Statements (Wales) Regulations 2026 have been taken into account in the Welsh Government's approach to providing funding intended for schools in 2026-27.
- The Cabinet Secretary's perspective on the level of school budget reserves, in the context of the 31 March 2025 data due to be published in late October 2025.

Funding for school improvement and raising standards

- An explanation of how the Draft Budget 2026-27 supports school improvement and raising standards of education, and how it reflects changes taking place under the School Improvement Partnership Programme.
- Details of the Local Authority Education Grant (LAEG) in 2026-27, including a breakdown of its four strands.
- Details of how much LAEG was paid to each local authority in 2025-26, including a breakdown by the four strands.
- An updated assessment undertaken on the impact of the amalgamation of individual grants into the LAEG in 2024-25 and how the Welsh Government is assuring itself that there has not been any dilution of previously ring-fenced activities and interventions.
- Information on budget allocations to support efforts to improve standards of literacy and numeracy and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.
- Funding for the Curriculum for Wales grant support programme and details of numbers and values of grants awarded.
- Any other funding to support the implementation of the Curriculum for Wales.

The cost of living and reducing the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes

- Information on how resources within the Education MEG are being used to meet the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation on

educational outcomes – including from the “Tackling barriers to attainment” BEL or from the LAEG.

- Information on budget provision for the School Essentials Grant and expenditure in 2025-26, including the number of pupils supported, and projected in 2026-27.
- Information on how resources within the Education MEG are being used to support learners in post-16 education with the impact of cost of living pressures, and to address the impact of deprivation on outcomes (including, for example, through additional hardship funding for providers, or through existing student support funding such as the Education Maintenance Allowance).
- Any remaining budget provision for the roll out of universal free school meals in primary schools in 2025-26 and whether any budget is needed for this in 2026-27. Whether any further consideration has been given to extending eligibility in secondary schools, especially given the decision in England to extend free school meals to all pupils in households receiving universal credit. If not, how the Welsh Government plans to use any Barnett consequential arising from the decision in England.
- A breakdown of any grant funding provided to local authorities in 2025-26 for the universal provision of free school meals in primary schools.
- Any other funding within the Education MEG for initiatives to tackle the cost of living and the deprivation/attainment negative correlation, for example school holiday enrichment/summer of fun/food and fun projects, including an updated explanation of how these projects and funding streams relate to each other

Education workforce

- Details of budget allocations to finance Initial Teacher Education (ITE), including funding and initiatives targeted at addressing shortages in particular subjects or areas, and any assessment that has been made of their efficacy and value for money.
- Details of budget allocations to support professional learning for current teachers, including in light of the ongoing implementation of education reforms.
- Information on funding provided by the Welsh Government to the Education Workforce Council.
- Information on funding to establish and fund the new national professional learning and leadership body. How this compares to the funding for the National Academy for Educational Leadership and whether funding for the new body directly replaces this.

- Details of any budget provision for meeting the costs of the teachers' pay award for academic year 2025/26 including a breakdown between the 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years and the respective mechanisms used (whether direct grant or incorporated into the local government settlement).
- Information on any funding to support policy regarding the supply teaching workforce.

Emotional and mental health of children and young people

- Budget provision from the Education MEG in 2026-27 for the whole-school/system approach to emotional and mental health.
- Details of funding from the Health and Social Care MEG to complement work in schools on this area.
- Information on any budget provision to support the emotional and mental health of young people in post-16 education.
- Budget provision for the action plan and wider response to tackle peer on peer sexual harassment among learners.

Behaviour and violence

- Budget provision from the Education MEG for addressing problems arising from behaviour and violence in schools and colleges (including for example actions arising from the round table on violence and safety and the national behaviour summit – both held in May).

Pupil absence

- Information on any specific budget provision to address rates of pupil absence or an identification of which budget lines support such work more generally (including for example Family Engagement Officers and Community Focused Schools).

Sport and physical activity

- Information on how the Education MEG supports the provision of sport and physical activity for children and young people, whether inside or outside school, and how this relates to any initiatives or funding in the Health and Social Care MEG such as for Healthy Weight, Healthy Wales.
- How capital funding through the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme is supporting sport and physical activity among children and young people.

- Details of funding to support the education of Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners in 2026-27 and how this is being distributed as part of the LAEG.

Additional Learning Needs (ALN)

- An updated summary of the position of funding for supporting learners with their ALN, both from the ALN BEL and the Reform strand of the LAEG.
- The implications of the review that has been carried out and what this has shown about the required levels of ALN funding.
- An updated assessment of whether the ALN reforms are proving to be cost-neutral.
- Information on how funding for ALN provision featured in the review of the school funding formula and how it is being considered as part of the proposed School Funding, Budget Statements and Outturn Statements (Wales) Regulations 2026.
- The latest position on funding for the training of educational psychologists in Wales and any grant funding arrangement with higher education institutions, for example Cardiff University.

Estyn

- Details of Estyn's core budget allocation for 2026-27 and which MEG/BEL this is located in.
- The outcome of work undertaken with Estyn to manage the impact of not being able to provide any additional funding this time last year (other than inflationary uplifts) to support the new inspection cycle (mentioned in last year's paper).

Qualifications

- Details of funding allocated to Qualifications Wales in 2026-27 and an updated assessment of whether it has enough funding to fulfil its remit and any reform work expected of it.

Welsh in education

- Details of allocations in the Education MEG to support the Welsh Government's policies for Welsh in education, and the education sector's role in meeting the Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers.

- How allocations in the Education MEG relate to other budgets supporting the Welsh language, for example the Welsh Language Action in the Central Services and Administration MEG.
- Where funding for implementing the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025 is located in the Welsh Government's budget and how much is allocated..
- Information on funding allocated for enhancing the Welsh in education workforce.

Seren programme

- Details of budget provision to support the Seren programme and the Widening Participation Project.

Early years education and childcare

- Whether the funding in the LAEG to support alignment of funding rates in nursery education in non-maintained settings, and childcare within the Childcare Offer, is continuing in 2026-27. Narrative on any impact on aims to 'align' rates on the decision from April 2025 to increase the hourly rate for childcare providers from delivering the Childcare Offer from £5.00 to £6.40 an hour from the Health and Social Care MEG (and Welsh Government's commitment to review this rate annually from now on.)
- Details of any other funding from the Education MEG to support the non-maintained sector's delivery of early childhood / nursery education and the Curriculum for Wales, and how this relates to funding for the responsibilities of the Minister for Children and Social Care in relation to early years and childcare.

Youth work

- Details of how the 2026-27 Education MEG supports statutory and voluntary youth services and budget provision for meeting the Programme for Government commitments in respect of strengthening youth services.
- How this Draft Budget 2026-27 reflects the findings and work of the [Youth work funding review](#).
- Details of how the 2026-27 Education MEG supports the Youth Work Strategy for Wales, the work of the Implementation Board and work to establish a national body for youth work in Wales as set out in the [Written Statement: A national body and statutory framework for youth work \(27 June 2025\)](#).

Offender learning

- Information on budget provision in 2026-27 and any changes to how this will be spent compared to previous years.

Funding for Medr

- Total funding for Medr in 2026-27 and the Welsh Government's expectations on how Medr will allocate this (more detailed points listed below)

Further education, sixth forms and adult community learning

- How much of Medr's total allocation in 2026-27 is intended for sixth forms and further education colleges, and any specific uses of this funding.
- Details of 2025-26 funding allocated to Medr for individual sixth forms (or local authorities) and colleges, and what this funding is to support.
- Details of any hypothecated funding to further education institutions or sixth forms beyond their usual core grants.
- The allocation for Adult Community Learning.
- The complete 2024-25 and 2025-26 programme values used in the calculation of FE and sixth form funding.
- Details on how financial support increases have impacted the draft budget (specifically the increase of the Welsh Government Learning Grant (FE) and the increased thresholds for eligibility for EMA)

Higher education, and post-16 student financial support

- How much of Medr's total allocation in 2026-27 is intended for higher education, and any specific uses of this funding.
- Details on how the draft budget supports and reflects the financial positions of Welsh higher education institutions
- Details on how increases to student support for eligible part-time and full-time undergraduate students in Wales, as well as support for postgraduate masters and postgraduate doctoral study, have influenced the draft budget.
- Details on whether decisions to raise the tuition fee limit for undergraduate studies has influenced allocations to Medr

- Details of the Medr allocation, including details of any hypothecated funding, or funding which is intended for specific activities including mental health and student well-being.
- Details of any 2026-27 allocation intended for the delivery of degree apprenticeships and if it is intended to be used to recruit new apprentices or to teach out existing apprentices.
- Details of any capital funding to be made available to Medr, including any conditions to be placed on it by the Welsh Government.
- Details of any contingencies / reserves / non-allocated funds within any of the 2026-27 tertiary education related BELs, including the BELs within the post-16 Learner Support Action; details of how the funds are / can be deployed; and details of any deployment of them during 2025-26.

Other post-16 education provision

- Information on the Welsh Government's expectations on how Medr will use its total allocation to fund other post-16 education provision.
- Details of funding for the International Learning Exchange Programme (Taith) including its extension to March 2028.
- Details of budget provision for the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, either from the Education MEG or the Welsh Language BEL of the Central Services and Administration MEG.

Young Person's Guarantee

- Details of budget provision from the Education MEG which contributes to the Young Person's Guarantee and how this relates to funding from the Economy, Energy and Planning MEG.

Capital funding for school and college infrastructure

- Information on budget provision for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme and progress of the programme to date, including expenditure and numbers of projects completed/approved to date under Band B.
- A projection of when Band B is likely to be completed by and an update on the next phase of the programme consisting of local authorities' 9-year investment plans.
- An updated assessment of the implications of the cost of living, for example energy prices and construction costs, for the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, including any impact on the progress and costs of projects.

- The financial implications from the Welsh Government's carbon net zero policies and how this affects the Education MEG in 2026-27.
- Provision within the Education MEG – and clarification of whether capital or revenue – for school and college repairs and maintenance, in both 2025-26 and 2026-27, and confirmation of whether this is part of the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme.

Capital funding for childcare

- Confirmation of the status of the Childcare and Early Years Capital Programme, which was originally due to end Spring 2025 but received further funding in 2025-26, and whether there are any allocations to extend this into 2026-27.
- Information on capital funding from the Education MEG for the Childcare Offer and Flying Start programme and any allocations for the purposes of the commitment to roll out Flying Start childcare to all 2 year olds.

Capital funding for the Community Focused Schools initiative

- Information on arrangements for funding aimed at increasing the community focused nature of education estates and adapting premises for community use.

Agenda Item 3.5

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru
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SeneddCulture@senedd.wales

4 August 2025

Dear Delyth,

I recently shared with the Committee a letter to the chair of the UK Statistics Authority, Sir Robert Chote, regarding the Authority's recommendations to the UK government about future population and migration statistics.

The UK government has now officially responded to the Authority's recommendations and confirmed that they are [commissioning the Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) to conduct a mandatory, questionnaire-based, whole-population census of Wales and England in 2031](#).

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the ONS in planning for Census 2031, building on the lessons learned from Census 2021. The census needs to meet the needs of users in Wales for timely, inclusive, and high-quality population statistics that will inform policy, allocate resources, and support the delivery of public services across Wales in the future. We will also work closely with the devolved governments in Scotland and Northern Ireland as they carry out their own censuses in 2031.

As census preparations develop, the Committee may like to hear from the Office for National Statistics in future to scrutinise their plans. I have also written to the Chair of the Finance Committee on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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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.

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations
Committee

20 August 2025

Dear Delyth,

On 28 February, I wrote to you to provide my response to recommendations 1-5 of the Committee's report on the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26. In follow up to my response, I am writing to provide you with further information relating to recommendation 2 on employer National Insurance Contributions (NIC).

The total increase in national insurance contributions for the culture and sport Arm's-Length Bodies (ALBs), as part of the UK Governments decision to increase employer NICs in the autumn UK budget, was £1,116,000.

ALB	Rise in NIC (2025-26)
Amgueddfa Cymru	£660,000
Arts Council of Wales	£131,000
National Library of Wales	£195,000
Royal Commission	£28,000
Sport Wales	£102,000

The UK Government provided £800,000 funding using the Barnett formula. This left a shortfall of £316,000 for the culture and sport ALBs to cover the additional cost. As announced by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language on 30 May, 50% of this shortfall was covered by the Welsh Government. The total funding provided by the UK Government and the Welsh Government for the NICs increase was £957,000 (86% of the increase).

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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.

ALB	UK Government funding	Welsh Government funding	Total
Amgueddfa Cymru	£473,000	£94,000	£567,000
Arts Council of Wales	£94,000	£18,000	£112,000
National Library of Wales	£140,000	£27,000	£167,000
Royal Commission	£20,000	£4,000	£24,000
Sport Wales	£73,000	£14,000	£87,000

Yours sincerely,



Jack Sargeant AS/MS

Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership

Y Gweinidog Diwylliant, Sgiliau a Phartneriaeth Gymdeithasol

**Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee**

By email

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Mark Drakeford MS

Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

Welsh Government

28 July 2025

Cymraeg for all? inquiry: Ministerial evidence session follow-up

Dear Mark,

Thank you for appearing before the Committee on 16 July 2025, to provide evidence for our inquiry. I am writing to seek clarification on several matters discussed during the session, and to follow up with some additional questions that we were unable to address due to time constraints.

1. During the session, it was noted that an increase in grant funding in the last budget round ensured that each *Menter Iaith* received either a minimum uplift of 5%, or an increase to bring their annual grant to at least £100,000. This was the first such increase in several years and was widely welcomed. For those mentrau iaith that previously received a baseline grant of around £60,000, this is a significant increase in their core budget. For those who were already in receipt of £100,000+, the increase of 5 percent is significantly lower as a proportion of their grant funding. Set against the backdrop of significant inflationary costs, particularly costs to hold larger local events and festivals, and rising staffing costs, is the Welsh Government considering further adjustments to address this disparity in funding for the mentrau?
2. Could you provide a breakdown of the proportion of the Welsh Government's Welsh language budget in recent years that has been specifically allocated to lay the foundations for future Welsh language technological development?
3. Could you clarify whether the Welsh Government intends to publish a formal strategy/plan beyond the priorities or establish an expert advisory group to support the long-term development of Welsh language technology?
4. To what extent is there a need for a more strategic approach to Welsh language research, particularly in relation to language use, and through which mechanisms or institutions could such a strategy be delivered effectively?
5. Whether you agree with the evidence that there's currently a knowledge gap in terms of Welsh language use and use of technology in Welsh? If so, how effective can policies and strategies aimed at increasing language use in the digital sphere be if they are developed without a robust evidence base?
6. One of the issues raised during this inquiry is the 'confidence gap' - where individuals who are able to speak Welsh may not feel confident enough to use the language or to identify themselves as Welsh speakers in data and official statistics. Could you set out how the Welsh Government is active in

addressing this confidence gap to ensure robust evidence and data to inform future language policy development.

We would be grateful for your responses to these questions at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell AS

Cadeirydd y Pwyllgor

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Ein cyf/Our ref: MD-20250716

Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communications, Welsh Language,
Sport, and International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru,
Cardiff Bay,
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15 August 2025

Dear Delyth,

Thank you for your letter, dated 28 July, requesting further information following my appearance before the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee on 16 July. I answer each of your questions in turn below.

- 1. During the session, it was noted that an increase in grant funding in the last budget round ensured that each Menter Iaith received either a minimum uplift of 5%, or an increase to bring their annual grant to at least £100,000. This was the first such increase in several years and was widely welcomed. For those mentrau iaith that previously received a baseline grant of around £60,000, this is a significant increase in their core budget. For those who were already in receipt of £100,000+, the increase of 5 percent is significantly lower as a proportion of their grant funding. Set against the backdrop of significant inflationary costs, particularly costs to hold larger local events and festivals, and rising staffing costs, is the Welsh Government considering further adjustments to address this disparity in funding for the mentrau**

Securing a minimum of £100,000 for each language initiative has been a consistent request from Mentrau Iaith Cymru over recent years. We are pleased that the financial situation of the 2025-26 financial year has allowed us to enable this. The financial situation did not allow for an increase of more than 5% for the rest of the mentrau iaith. Nevertheless, a number of mentrau succeed in obtaining further funding from other sources (Mentrau Iaith Cymru figures show that the annual

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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.

turnover of Mentrau Iaith during 2023-24 was £6,905,852. £2,331,473 of this amount came from the Welsh Government's core grant and £4,574,379 came from other sources of funding). Officials are in regular discussions with grant partners in order to identify other relevant funding streams that they could consider beyond those of *Cymraeg 2050*.

2. Could you provide a breakdown of the proportion of the Welsh Government's Welsh language budget in recent years that has been specifically allocated to lay the foundations for future Welsh language technological development?

From the Welsh Government's *Cymraeg 2050* funds, we have spent almost £3 million (£2,907,464) on technology and the Welsh language since the launch of our *Welsh Language Technology Action Plan* in 2018. The table below details this expenditure per annum. A [final report on the Scheme](#) is also available on our website.

Year	Sum
2025-26	£402,150
2024-25	£383,000
2023-24	£418,000
2022-23	£493,000
2021-22	£460,000
2020-21	£467,000
2019-20	£184,314
2018-19	£100,000

3. Could you clarify whether the Welsh Government intends to publish a formal strategy/plan beyond the priorities or establish an expert advisory group to support the long-term development of Welsh language technology?

In drafting the priorities for technology and the Welsh language (published in January this year), we held a call for information so we could understand the wishes and priorities of people in the field. The [call and a summary of the response to it are available on our website](#). During the rest of this Senedd term, our focus will be on the practical implementation of the priorities. As we do this, we'll work closely with experts from the Centre for Digital Public Services, experts in technology companies, our own technology experts and others. We don't, therefore, intend to form a specific group for technology and Cymraeg before the end of this Senedd term.

4. To what extent is there a need for a more strategic approach to Welsh language research, particularly in relation to language use, and through which mechanisms or institutions could such a strategy be delivered effectively?

We're currently planning and working with the wider research community to ensure that we develop policy based on sound and relevant evidence. Our statisticians and

researchers plan our evidence annually, aligned with the core themes of *Cymraeg 2050*. An important development in the coming months will be the publication of a *Cymraeg 2050 Areas of Research Interest* document (see [Areas of research interest](#) on the UK Government website for more information on this approach). The document will communicate to the wider research community the key research questions relating to *Cymraeg 2050* on which we'd like to collaborate. Its aim is to facilitate the exchange of information, promote the impact of research on policy, and support applications for funding for research on the Welsh language. When the document is published, we'll engage in further discussion with the research community on these areas.

In relation to language use in particular, a Welsh Language Use Survey was carried out between July 2019 and March 2020 to examine how Welsh speakers use the language in a variety of contexts—socially, in the workplace, and on digital platforms. Although the survey ended earlier than expected due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all findings have been published [on the Welsh Government website](#). We're currently considering undertaking a further Welsh Language Use Survey, supported by a new contract for the National Survey for Wales. To complement this, Prosiect BRO will offer detailed information on language use at a community level.

The ARFOR 2 programme is also an example of a strategic approach to conducting research and evaluation. ARFOR 2 piloted economic interventions to support entrepreneurship and business growth, while safeguarding the Welsh language in key areas. Evaluation and learning were embedded throughout the process, including independent assessments and targeted research on issues such as language use in the workplace and young people's emigration.

We also continue to commission research, for example an evaluation of the *Welsh Language Communities Housing Plan*, which looks at the impact and implementation of the plan.

5. Whether you agree with the evidence that there's currently a knowledge gap in terms of Welsh language use and use of technology in Welsh? If so, how effective can policies and strategies aimed at increasing language use in the digital sphere be if they are developed without a robust evidence base?

Measuring how many people use Welsh on technology - and how long they spend using Welsh on technology - can be challenging. This is partly due to the wide range of software available in Welsh (Copilot, other artificial intelligence machines, translation engines, speech technology and many Welsh language interfaces [and much other provision]), and partly because we create and consume Welsh and English content on the same machine regardless of the language of that machine's interface. Welsh is no different from other languages around the world in this respect.

However, it's possible to develop a picture of the success of our work by looking at factors such as the number of tool downloads such as the Cysgliad Bangor spell and grammar checker (around 15,000 since our grant to Bangor University made

Cysgliad available free of charge to individuals, the education and voluntary sectors and to organisations with 10 members of staff or fewer), Wikipedia articles and Welsh Wikidata items.

A Welsh Language Use Survey was carried out between July 2019 and March 2020 to examine how Welsh speakers use the language in a variety of contexts, including on digital platforms. As I note above, we're currently considering undertaking a further survey, supported by a new contract for the National Survey for Wales.

- 6. One of the issues raised during this inquiry is the 'confidence gap' - where individuals who are able to speak Welsh may not feel confident enough to use the language or to identify themselves as Welsh speakers in data and official statistics. Could you set out how the Welsh Government is active in addressing this confidence gap to ensure robust evidence and data to inform future language policy development.**

We'll develop a Code to offer a single standard approach to describing ability in Welsh on the basis of common reference levels (CEFR) that anyone can refer to, as a result of the Welsh Language and Education (Wales) Act 2025. This will make it easier for individuals, regardless of their level of Welsh, to describe their ability in our language. As the approach is used over time, it will enrich the evidence base available to us to inform language policy development.

Improving the confidence of Welsh speakers at all levels wherever they are on their language journey is at the heart of our activity to implement *Cymraeg 2050*. Giving people skills as early in their lives as possible is part of the jigsaw - and that's the focus of what we're doing in the field of education. In our [Evidence Paper](#) to the Committee, we also referred to the work of the National Centre for Learning Welsh and the mentrau iaith. These, and the work of all our other partners, contribute to building confidence in Cymraeg. Providing opportunities for people to use their Welsh language skills is a key part of the effort to build their confidence. The theory behind this is that giving people opportunities to use the Welsh language increases confidence - and in turn that increase of confidence leads to greater use of Cymraeg.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Drakeford AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language

Evidence from the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee's 'Cymraeg for All?' inquiry

This response has been coordinated by the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society, which is an interdisciplinary research centre at Aberystwyth University with the aim of developing our understanding of contemporary politics and society in Wales, supporting and developing first class research in the social sciences, and contributing to public debate and policy development in Wales. The Centre's Regional or Minority Languages research theme brings together staff across a number of departments with expertise in this area.

This evidence focuses mainly on findings arising from research carried out by academics from Aberystwyth University and from our knowledge of developments in the context of other regional or minority languages as a result of involvement in projects such as Agile Cymru. We have included references to relevant work and publications. You are welcome to contact us if you would like to discuss any of these points further or if you would like to know more about the research behind them.

Those who have contributed to this response from Aberystwyth University (in alphabetical order) are Dr Hanna Binks, Dr Ben Ó Ceallaigh, Professor Rhys Jones, Dr Huw Lewis, Dr Elin Royles, and Anne Uruska.

One of the main challenges in terms of analysing the issues raised by the inquiry is the lack of research about the Welsh language. One of the reasons is the challenge of securing research funding for research related to the sociolinguistics of the Welsh language. One example of the feedback that we have received from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) grant application assessors when rejecting an application on language revival and socio-economic changes that focused on Welsh and Gaelic and placing them in the context of regional languages across Europe was: 'The Panel felt that this proposal was original and could potentially have an impact. The links with policy makers was welcomed, as was the involvement of non-academics. However, the Panel considered this to be too local/regional.'

Another example is feedback on a project application on the impact of COVID-19 on youth organisations working in the Celtic languages: '*However overall concerns were highlighted regarding the urgency of the project, it was felt that the case for urgency was not made fully.*' The implications of these types of decisions in response to grant applications are less research and a tendency towards smaller projects with less funding. Beyond the research councils, there is also a need for consistency in terms of transparency in research funding processes for issues relating to the Welsh language and sociolinguistics in Wales.

Context

1. Give a brief overview of the main challenges in terms of **increasing use of the Welsh language** throughout Wales, and the specific challenges facing Welsh speakers and learners in areas that have **fewer Welsh speakers**.

When asking specifically about the challenges that arise in '**areas that have fewer Welsh speakers**', we suggest that it would be beneficial if the committee were to spend time weighing up exactly what they have in mind when using such terminology. As the research of Rhys Jones and Huw Lewis has shown, the geography of the Welsh language has changed in significant ways since the 1980s.¹ As a result, nowadays when referring to levels of Welsh speakers (more, fewer etc.), we need to be very clear as to whether we are discussing in terms

¹ Jones and Lewis (2019).

of percentages or numbers of speakers, as they have different implications for the discussion. For example, the four counties in Wales that have the highest *percentage* (and therefore the highest density) of Welsh speakers are: Gwynedd; Anglesey; Carmarthenshire; and Ceredigion. However, the four counties that have the highest *number* of Welsh speakers are: Gwynedd; Anglesey; Carmarthenshire and Cardiff. Therefore, while a higher percentage of Welsh speakers live in Ceredigion, a higher number of speakers now live in Cardiff. This succinctly conveys the need for a little more care when referring to areas with more/fewer Welsh speakers. This is not just a technical point either. Rather, appreciating this diversity in the linguistic geography of Wales is important in order to avoid reinforcing a misleading geographical imagination – one that suggests that significant levels of Welsh speakers are only found in the west.

Beyond the above point, another challenge that arises when considering the question is the current weaknesses in gathering data on language use in Wales. There is an urgent need for quality data about language use that is gathered systematically and regularly. Currently, the Language Use Survey is relied upon to collect data about language use. It is not carried out regularly and does not assess in more detail below local authority level. This is a considerable gap in the ability of the Welsh Government and other stakeholders to assess progress in relation to the second main target of the *Cymraeg 2050* strategy, which is to increase the numbers using the Welsh language. As outlined in our report on methods of assessing language viability, there is room for improving data collection methods on language use across quantitative and qualitative data. The cases of the Basque Country and Catalonia provide examples where more comprehensive data are collected through different types of surveys, leading to far greater understanding of the levels of language use in those cases than in Wales.²

Research was carried out into use of the Welsh language among young people aged 16-18 in four education settings in different parts of Wales as part of the Education, Language and Identity project, which was part of the larger WISERD Civil Society project.³ The context was an international situation of awareness that learning a regional or minority language at school does not translate into social use of it and a growing recognition of over-reliance on the education system in many examples of efforts to revive regional or minority languages. In a survey carried out as part of the project of 150 young people in schools or colleges teaching in Welsh, 15.5% said that they always or almost always speak Welsh at school. With regard to areas with fewer Welsh speakers, young people in the research locations in north east and south east Wales explained that there are restrictions on their ability to use Welsh socially in their areas. Some pointed out that a lack of opportunities hindered their social use of the language and contrasted with the situation in areas with a higher density of Welsh speakers where there were more opportunities to socialise in Welsh and to speak Welsh on the street. At the same time, in the areas in the east, there was a difference in the experiences of young people living on a housing estate or in a village with a higher proportion of Welsh speakers as very local circumstances affected the informal opportunities to use the Welsh language in these areas.

Many similar elements have emerged in Anne Uruska's PhD research into Welsh learners aged 16-20. Their main obstacle to using Welsh is the lack of opportunities to speak Welsh outside of school / college and there is demand for youth clubs and specific interest clubs where they can practice their Welsh. It was noted that some participants benefited from Young

² Royles, E., Jones, R., Lewis, H. (2024). 'Methods of Assessing Linguistic Vitality Report'. Available from: [10.20391/605eb48c-05e5-44bc-96c5-83394bce046c](https://doi.org/10.20391/605eb48c-05e5-44bc-96c5-83394bce046c).

³ Jones, R., Royles, E., O'Hanlon, F., Paterson, L. (2022). 'The contemporary threat to minority languages and cultures: civil society, young people and Celtic language use in Scotland and Wales' in P. Chaney and I Rees Jones (ed.) *Civil Society in an Age of Uncertainty: Institutions, Governance and Existential Challenges* (Bristol: Policy Press).

Farmers Clubs which operate in Welsh and give opportunities to socialise in Welsh or in a bilingual context. One of the findings of the work is that there more information needs to be shared about apps that are available in Welsh. Another finding is that there is scope to foster enthusiasm for the Welsh language, including training and support for teachers so that there is an enthusiastic workforce to inspire students in relation to the Welsh language.⁴

Wider economic factors have a significant impact on the ability to increase use of the language across Wales by increasing the number of speakers, including in areas with fewer speakers. Firstly, Ben Ó Ceallaigh understands language revival as a postmaterialist issue. He explains that a postmaterialist issue is only likely to be significant for people when their other material needs are on a solid basis, such as housing, income, health care. The implications of the housing crisis, cuts to essential public services, the cost of living crisis and the fragility of the economic situation of many of the population means that many people have bigger problems to consider than the future of the Welsh language. He argues that a situation where almost a third of Welsh children live in poverty and the way that people have had to face the serious choice between 'heating or eating' means that learning Welsh is a marginal issue for an increasing number of people compared to an economic climate where there is less austerity. If the vision of *Cymraeg 2050* is to be realised, tens of thousands more adults need to be learning Welsh to a high level of competence. Similarly, young adults who are more likely to face economic uncertainty and linked to this are time-poor, are less likely to be able to attend classes at higher levels of Welsh for adults, and there is a trend that retired people are the largest numbers in those classes.⁵

Increasing confidence

3. *How important is "ownership" of Welsh in terms of language acquisition, and how can this reinforce a sense of belonging to Wales and the community?*

We draw attention to three projects, two in the Basque Country and the other in Northern Ireland, where there is a growing emphasis on efforts to give a firmer basis for discussing why they speak a minority language with children and young people and elicit an idea of ownership of it.

Firstly, in the Basque Country Soziolinguistica Klusterra is working on a project to systematically integrate an understanding of sociolinguistics in the educational curriculum, further building on what is in place to expand pupils' sociolinguistic understanding and awareness. This is seen as a way of increasing young people's motivation to speak Basque and sharing linguistic, cultural, social and emotional resources with them to do so. In 2024, a report was produced laying the foundations for this and a programme was drawn up for the integration of sociolinguistics in the educational system in 2025. The intention is to incorporate learning about sociolinguistics across the whole curriculum in order to:

- increase sociolinguistic awareness
- support the development of confident Basque speakers
- encourage the use of Basque
- prepare pupils to live in a multilingual society

Initial work has been carried out to develop this agenda to date. That has drawn attention to the need to establish working groups and sub-projects, the need to work alongside strengthening linguistic fluency and cultural transfer, the importance of coordinating and

⁴ Anne Uruska's ongoing PhD: 'Experiences, motivation, and progression of Welsh learners between 16 and 20 years of age.'

⁵ Ó Ceallaigh, B. (2024). 'The rising cost of living, postmaterialism, and the fate of linguistic minorities: some comments based on Irish and other Celtic contexts,' *Linguistic Minorities in Europe Online*, <https://doi.org/10.1515/lme.30889187>

liaising with other initiatives to revive the Basque language, a long-term commitment and the need for adequate funding for the development.⁶

Another project in the Basque Country is the work of Ane Ortega and others, included as part of the 'Equilling' project to use participatory action research to try to understand the challenges facing young people in terms of their sense of belonging to the Basque language and the lack of use of it. Focus was placed on understanding the attitudes and feelings of young people towards the Basque language. This raised issues such as who are authentic speakers of a language, the significance of understanding the experiences and feelings of these young speakers. Attention was also drawn to the implications of linguistic ability and a sense of identity to their language use, which is an important element of their ownership of it. One of the results of the project was to try to enable a change in habits and increase the use of the language by raising self-awareness and discussing young people's relationship with the language.⁷

Thirdly, engendering a sense of belonging and ownership of the Irish language is central to the youth work carried out by the Glór na Móna and Fóram na nÓg organisations in promoting the Irish language among young people in Northern Ireland. There is an emphasis on increasing awareness of how Irish has been treated and deprived of resources and how it is a language of resistance. Emphasis is also placed on linking the language with identity and also on linking with the international situation of indigenous organisations across the world. The emphasis on a sense of belonging and ownership encourages young people to speak up and act for the Irish language and creates a sense of community among the young people that speak the language.⁸

These are three different methods of trying to understand and elicit a sense of belonging to a minority language among young people which show that this agenda is on the rise, and there are common characteristics between them.

In addition to this international work, the challenges associated with promoting the idea of ownership and belonging to the Welsh language in Wales need to be weighed up. The points made in response to question two above may be supplemented. Studies by Daniel Evans on Porthcawl and by Dafydd Evans on north-east Wales showed that the residents of these areas did not feel that they belonged to – or were included in – general perceptions of Welshness. These groups felt that they were excluded from a particular version of Welshness, where the ability to speak Welsh was important, and one that was geographically connected with the most western areas of the country. These studies support the need to ensure that the Welsh language, the ability to belong to it and to belong to ideas of Welshness, are promoted beyond the areas in which Welsh is most prevalent.

4. What policies, activities or methods should be *prioritised* in order to increase the confidence of individuals/groups to use more Welsh in their everyday lives. Are there *specific challenges* in areas with a lower density of Welsh speakers?

⁶ Information received by Soziolinguistika Klusterra researchers.

⁷ Ortega, A., Goriozarri, J., Amorrortu, E. (2022). 'Participatory action research to promote linguistic mudas among new speakers of Basque: design and benefits,' *Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 55-67. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2021.1968877>. See also the Equilling website: <https://www.equilling.eu/en/>

⁸ An example is the report by Neil, G., McArdle, E. (2020). *A Model of Irish-medium youth work* available from: <https://www.glornamona.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/A-MODEL-IMY-2020-1UPDATED-MODEL-2020.pdf>

Again, we would like to draw attention to two initiatives in the Basque Country which seek to further develop the opportunities to use a minority language in social situations and especially in the field of sport and leisure clubs, encouraging the development of ways of working so that the clubs are a safe space to use the Basque language.

First, Euskara Kirolkide is a Sociolinguistika Klusterra project established in 2020 to create a safe space for Basque in sport, previously known as Sport D model. The aim was to try to increase the use of the Basque language in young people's leisure activities by working with six sport clubs.⁹

The BiKKE project by the Bizkaia provincial council has worked to reinforce the social use of the Basque language through sport. Activity includes providing grants, training in Basque and creating campaigns in collaboration with the sport federations in the area. The programme was developed to operate at three levels of basic, intermediate and advanced, including an assessment and evaluation process. The focus is on what happens within clubs in terms of the use of the Basque language in activities, oral and written communication methods, promotion and on websites and so in terms of the use of the language as a training and competition language, but also in terms of internal administration.

We have seen positive steps in Wales in terms of raising the prestige and widespread ownership of the Welsh language through some of our main sporting bodies. So far much of this activity has focused on increasing the formal status of the Welsh language, for example in social media messaging, announcements during matches and programmes. The type of developments outlined above would be further steps in this agenda and would mainstream language planning into the training and internal operation of sporting federations and down to local club level – areas which are central to the social use of language.

One of the challenges facing Welsh speakers in areas with a lower density of Welsh speakers is the lack of information about the opportunities to use Welsh. Organic use of the language cannot be relied upon, as may happen in areas with a higher density of speakers, in areas where the use of Welsh is more networked and inconsistent. There are opportunities in this context to use technology in order to enable more use of the language, for example in order to identify the shops, restaurants and so on where there are opportunities to use Welsh in a town or city. Some initial research was carried out in this area on the use of technology to identify the use of Scottish Gaelic in the city of Glasgow by Professor Bernadette O'Rourke.

Linguistic robustness

*7. To what extent are witnesses aware of the concept of **taking linguistic risk**, and its effectiveness in boosting the confidence of second language learners of all abilities. Is there scope in Wales to do more of this, especially in areas with fewer Welsh speakers?*

In recent work, research was carried out into the psychological motivations of adult learners to learn Welsh, recognising the extent to which individuals' self-determination influences their decisions rather than external factors. The nature of the incentives can influence the degree of commitment and effort of individuals to learn Welsh. The perception was that there are a number of different motivations for learning Welsh. For some, the motivation is to enjoy learning Welsh, which follows on from their wider desire to learn in general. This can be a general matter of enjoying learning languages, or a more specific desire to learn more about their personal heritage, or to access culture. Other motivations include specific instrumental reasons - such as work and career opportunities, or holidays to Wales, supporting children attending Welsh-medium schools. One of the broadest themes was a sense of duty, which varied from a sense of duty to learn the Welsh language to a desire to save it as well.

⁹ A project managed by Jone Miren Hernandez (UPV/ EHU) in collaboration with Soziolinguistika Klusterra. See <https://euskarakirolkide.eus/en/>

In terms of how confident learners are in terms of speaking the language, many mentioned feelings of anxiety or worry about making mistakes when communicating with fluent Welsh speakers. One learner referred to uncertainty about the response that they would get when trying to do this without 'knowing that someone speaks Welsh'. As a result, they were 'anxious about starting a conversation', reducing the likelihood of using their language skills. Vocabulary issues were also mentioned. The language learned is often specific to the area and subject. A lack of familiarity with Welsh vocabulary outside the classroom hinders its wider use. It could be considered whether the teaching provides the vocabulary skills needed to use Welsh more widely in the community.¹⁰

In terms of confidence, a piece of research into teenagers from non-Welsh speaking families that learned Welsh in the education system shows that linguistic confidence is statistically a better predictor of language acquisition compared to language use. As a result of higher confidence levels, they are more likely to use the language in more 'challenging' situations and as a result have more contact with the language, develop their language skills and become more familiar with more complex language. This means that there is more confidence to use it in the community when learning a language, influencing the development of linguistic skills.¹¹

Community and social use

9. *To what extent is it possible to 'engineer' social use of Welsh in the community, through events and activities, especially in areas with fewer Welsh speakers.*

Note the examples above in response to question four in terms of work to develop the language in sport and leisure clubs in the Basque Country.

Note also the Eusle project that has been developed by Soziolinguistika Klusterra to influence language habits and to offer practical methods to enable change in language habits to increase the use of the Basque language. It responds to the tendency that language habits are established in a short period of time, and once they have been established, those habits are difficult to change. The project was originally implemented in workplaces in the private and public sector to change language habits within the group to increase use of the Basque language.¹² Eusle shows that, under the appropriate conditions, attitudes and the use of a minority language among teams of staff in workplaces can be changed. Eusle was considered a simple enough tool to increase the use of the Basque language, without incentivising sessions, classes or a large budget. A key element is that contributors voluntarily create new language habits as the intervention creates a new and different context and that they need to validate the new practice in relation to the Basque language constantly during the intervention. Eusle has also been used in various other contexts, including with young people in sport.

The workplace

¹⁰ Binks, H.L & Lewis, ME, (in the process of completion). 'Why learn Welsh? Using Self Determination Theory to predict the psychological motivations of Welsh language learners.'

¹¹ Binks, H. L. & Thomas, E. M., (in the process of completion). 'Do extralinguistic factors moderate proficiency in Welsh-English Adolescent Bilinguals?'

¹² See Section 5, Royles, E. (2025). Arfor, workplaces and the Welsh language: good practice lessons on the impact of workplaces on regional or minority languages to support the ARFOR II programme. Available from: [10.20391/833f269f-c5b1-4a36-aeca-436697e60ffe](https://doi.org/10.20391/833f269f-c5b1-4a36-aeca-436697e60ffe). See Jauregi, P. and Suberbiola, P. (2018). 'Eusle medologia: gaztelanian finkatutako hizkuntza-ohiruretatik euskarazkoetara lan-munduan' *BAT Soziolinguistika Aldizkaraia*, 107, 97-131. Available from: <https://bat.soziolinguistika.eus/produktua/eusle-metodologia-gaztelanian-finkatutako-hizkuntza-ohituretatik-euskarazkoetara-lan-munduan/>

13. Has there been enough focus on the workplace as a place to change linguistic behaviour in Wales, and how should policy makers try to address this.

A number of developments have been seen in workplaces in the public sector over the past few years due to the language standards but there is scope to go a bit further to realise the potential of workplaces to influence and change linguistic behaviour in the public and private sectors and the third sector/social enterprises.

As part of this it would be useful to start by establishing a clearer understanding of the different ways in which specific jobs, or the workplaces associated with them, can influence individuals' use of the Welsh language. The question was considered in a recent online article¹³ and it was suggested that the following categories could be used as a guide in order to consider the extent to which different jobs influence individuals' day-to-day use of the Welsh language:

- Does the job require the use of spoken or written Welsh with colleagues in order to fulfill the requirements of the job (internal working language).
- Does the job require the use of spoken or written use of Welsh with customers or people from outside the company/organisation in order to fulfill the requirements of the job (external work language).
- Does the job encourage the use of spoken or written Welsh with colleagues when discussing informal non-work-related matters (language at work).

In terms of current policies, research has shown that there is a tendency among businesses etc. to focus on the economic benefits of using the Welsh language in marketing material and on signs and creating opportunities for customers to use the Welsh language as part of that. Less focus was placed on the use of internal language in workplaces either formally (ie internal work language) or informally (ie informal work language). It is argued that the contribution of workplaces is very important in terms of the revival of a minority language in areas that have or are experiencing a language shift. Specifically, in areas where there is a tendency for young Welsh speakers to increasingly move to use English, jobs or workplaces that call for and plan the extensive use of Welsh could contribute in terms of offsetting that language shift by normalising its use in the workplace.¹⁴

In Wales, the focus is on promotion and support in the private sector and the third sector, as they do not come under the arrangements of the Language Standards unless bodies provide public services in Wales. Guidance and support are provided through the Welsh Language Commissioner for businesses and charities to develop Welsh-medium services, and they can also receive support to create a Welsh language development plan as a long-term plan to develop services in Welsh. Official recognition is provided through the 'Cynnig Cymraeg' to organisations that have created a Welsh language development plan. The report argues that there is scope to assess the support to assist and encourage organisations to develop their use of Welsh as the language of the workplace. The method of including language clauses in contracts could also be expanded and developed. There is also scope to consider the function of legal duties to develop use of the language in these sectors.¹⁵

¹³ Lewis, H. (2023). Creating work to support the language?, *Observatory*. Available from: <https://arsyllfa.cymru/creating-work-to-support-the-language/>

¹⁴ Lewis, H. (2023). Creating work to support the language?, *Observatory*. Available from: <https://arsyllfa.cymru/creating-work-to-support-the-language/>

¹⁵ Royles, E. (2025). Arfor, workplaces and the Welsh language: good practice lessons on the impact of workplaces on regional or minority languages to support the ARFOR II programme. Available from: [10.20391/833f269f-c5b1-4a36-aeca-436697e60ffe](https://doi.org/10.20391/833f269f-c5b1-4a36-aeca-436697e60ffe).

14. Elaborating on examples of good practice and successful schemes to develop the use of the Welsh language in the workplace, and how this could be expanded and extended to other workplaces.

In a report that discusses the use of Welsh in workplaces¹⁶, Elin Royles outlines a number of recommendations based on good practice and successful schemes in Wales and the Basque Country

Overall, the Basque Country is an example of a wide range of efforts to support the development of language planning in workplaces. Obvious examples were Bai Euskarari: an organisation that leads on a number of projects related to the promotion of Basque in the workplace, the Government's *Lanhitz programme* ('language at work') to promote the use of Basque in companies, and the Bikain certificate of excellence recognising the quality of Basque language management and initiatives to encourage innovation. This is implemented alongside legal arrangements that set out language duties in terms of using the official languages for companies or service delivery bodies. In addition, government funding is provided for various initiatives, and efforts are supported by professional advisory services on language planning that assist in setting priorities in terms of the use of Basque and its presence in the workplace in a systematic, clear and simple way, taking into account internal and managerial arrangements to enable use. All of this happens in the context of a positive discourse for the use of Basque in workplaces.

As a result, one of the report's recommendations is to develop an initiative to share good practice and therefore encourage positive action in terms of language management in Wales. Another example in Wales is the 'Leading in a Bilingual Country' programme, which provides training on culture change which addresses the psychological issues of leaders' attitudes towards the Welsh language as a way of enabling change in workplaces.

15. The legacy of Eisteddfodau

The WISERD Civil Society project on Education, Language and Identity looked at young people's views on attending the Eisteddfod, and Maes-B specifically. He showed that Maes-B acts as a space that can create social networks where the Welsh language is used. The response of young Welsh speakers, including an interviewee from south-east Wales, was to connect Maes-B with the idea of a large Welsh language family, which created a feeling of belonging and group identity, and that it was an example of the use of the Welsh language by young people that's established by the young people themselves. This was seen as something unusual among young people from Anglicised areas of Wales. Some of the interviewees argued that it was particularly important for young people who did not come from Welsh-speaking families, and that it's a key experience of socialising in Welsh. One interviewee from a non-Welsh speaking family explained that in secondary school she had developed more contact with friends who attended Welsh events, had started listening to Welsh music and had started attending festivals such as Tafwyl and the Eisteddfod. Overall, these events are an important part of enabling speaking Welsh socially with friends and contribute to taking

¹⁶ See Royles, E. (2025).

ownership of a minority language, as the young people themselves determine the linguistic habits rather than teachers, youth leaders etc.¹⁷

¹⁷ Jones, R., Royles, E., O'Hanlon, F., Paterson, L. (2022). 'The contemporary threat to minority languages and cultures: civil society, young people and Celtic language use in Scotland and Wales' in P. Chaney and I Rees Jones (ed.) *Civil Society in an Age of Uncertainty: Institutions, Governance and Existential Challenges* (Bristol: Policy Press).

30th July 2025

Sent by email

Dear Delyth Jewell MS,

I am writing on behalf of cricket clubs across Wales, who are increasingly concerned about the risks posed by cricket balls leaving grounds, particularly as new housing developments continue to emerge near longstanding sports facilities.

Cricket is more than just a sport, Criced, is a 'Sport For All', and a cherished part of Welsh communities. It develops teamwork, resilience, respect, and community pride. As the national governing body, Cricket Wales is committed to safeguarding this heritage, 'Protecting What's Precious', while ensuring cricket's growth and accessibility for future generations. However, planning decisions are threatening the viability and safety of our grounds due to a lack of clear guidance and accountability in the planning process.

One of the most pressing issues is the increasing frequency of developments being approved adjacent to cricket grounds without proper consideration of the potential for ball strike. These developments often encroach on formerly protective green buffers, introducing real safety concerns for new residents and placing significant financial burdens on community clubs who are forced to install protective netting or fencing costs that typically range between £80,000 and £100,000 per ground.

At present, Sport Wales is not routinely consulted during the planning stages of such developments. This stands in stark contrast to planning practices in England, where Sport England works in partnership with national governing bodies to assess potential risks and recommend mitigation measures prior to construction. Wales currently lacks a comparable system of early-stage engagement and accountability.

Cricket Wales urges the Welsh Government and the Senedd to introduce clear planning policy requiring:

- Review of the existing agent of change principle in the planning policy;
- Formal consultation with Sport Wales or relevant governing bodies where developments are proposed near sports facilities;
- Developers to assess and fund any necessary safety mitigation, such as fencing or ball-stop netting, at the planning stage where a risk of ball strike is identified;
- Local councils and developers to recognise and act on their shared duty of care to both new residents and existing community facilities.

Such a policy would preserve the functionality and appeal of cherished green spaces like cricket grounds. A clear policy would support community sport, specifically cricket, in not carrying the financial burden. Far from being an obstacle to development, well-maintained and accessible sports grounds are a genuine asset to new communities, contributing to their health, identity, and overall well-being.

This proposal aligns directly with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, in particular the goal of creating a Wales of cohesive communities, places that are safe, attractive, and connected. We have discussed this matter with the Future Generations Commissioner, who understands that statutory bodies have a shared responsibility to uphold this principle in decision-making.

We believe the time is right for the Welsh Government to introduce a planning policy that recognises the dual needs of community sport and responsible development. Clear, proactive guidance would support developers, protect green spaces, and ensure that community clubs are not left to carry the burden of safety costs alone.

We would welcome the opportunity to engage with Members of the Senedd further on this matter and to support the development of planning policy that reflects the value of sport, safety, and cohesive communities in a modern, inclusive Wales.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Barry Cawte
Cricket Wales CEO
On behalf of Cricket Clubs in Wales.

Agenda Item 6

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

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Senedd Committees

Via e-mail

8 July 2025

Consultation: Reviewing Committee Effectiveness in the Sixth Senedd

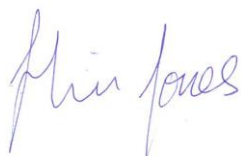
Dear Chair,

You will be aware that the Chairs' Forum is currently considering how committees have operated during the Sixth Senedd. The aim of this work is to identify whether committee procedures and practices can be improved to ensure the scrutiny function is as effective as possible, and to use this information to inform the Seventh Senedd. The Forum is keen to consider wider cultural issues around the operation of Senedd committees, as well as practical matters such as size and function.

The Future Senedd Committee has also made a [number of recommendations](#) to the Forum about the committee system and considerations for the Seventh Senedd, and these have been factored into our work on this matter.

The Forum has launched a [consultation](#), and we would be grateful for the views of individual Committees on the questions in the [consultation document](#), and any reflections that you may consider relevant by **12 September 2025**.

Yours sincerely,



Elin Jones MS/AS

Chair

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





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