

Agenda – Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Meeting Venue:	For further information contact:
Committee room 4 – Tŷ Hywel and video conference via Zoom	Robert Donovan Committee Clerk
Meeting date: 5 February 2026	0300 200 6565
Meeting time: 09.30	SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

Hybrid

**** There will be periodic comfort breaks called by the Chair ****

Private pre-meeting

09.15 – 09.30

Public session

09.30 – 16.00

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions, and declarations of interest

09.30

2 Papers to note

09.30

2.1 Sea Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations 2026

(Pages 1 – 2)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate

Change and Rural Affairs – 22 January 2026



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

2.2 Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2026–27

(Pages 3 – 27)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response – Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 23 January 2026

Welsh Government response – Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 26 January 2026

2.3 Industry Wales

(Pages 28 – 33)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair and the CEO of Industry Wales – 21 January 2026

2.4 Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Stage 1 report

(Pages 34 – 39)

Attached Documents:

Further responses from the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language – 27 January 2026

2.5 Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Development Bank of Wales

(Pages 40 – 47)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of the Development Bank of Wales – 28 January 2026

2.6 Holyhead Port Closure

(Pages 48 – 52)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Road Haulage Association – 23 January 2026

Letter from the Irish Road Haulage Association – 27 January 2026

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales – 29 January 2026

2.7 Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement

(Page 53)

Attached Documents:

Meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU relations – Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 29 January 2026

2.8 Follow-up from the committee meeting held on 21 January 2026 – Inward Investment

(Pages 54 – 55)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to stakeholders – 30 January 2026

2.9 Inward Investment

(Pages 56 – 61)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to Global Welsh – 30 January 2026

Letter from the Chair to the New York Welsh – 30 January 2026

Letter from the Chair to the British Chambers of Commerce – 30 January 2026

3 Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Stage 2 proceedings

09.30 – 16.00

Rt Hon Mark Drakeford MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language, Welsh Government

Robbie Thomas, Head of Licensing of Visitor Accommodation, Welsh Government

Rebecca Hawkins, Legislative Policy Adviser, Licensing of Visitor Accommodation, Welsh Government

Kate Lewandowska, Office of the Legislative Counsel, Welsh Government

Documents relevant to Stage 2 proceedings will be available on the [Bill page](#).

The Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee agreed on [21 January 2026](#), under Standing Order 26.21, that the order of consideration for Stage 2 proceedings would be:

Sections 1–4; Schedule 1; Sections 5–14; Schedule 2; Sections 15–60; Long Title.

4 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(vi) to resolve to exclude the public from the next meeting on Wednesday 11 February 2026

16.00

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: MA/HIDCC/0057/26

Andrew RT Davies, MS
Chair,
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

22 January 2026

Dear Andrew,

I wish to inform the Committee of the intention to consent, in this instance, to the Secretary of State making and laying the Sea Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations 2026.

The Regulations will be made under section 36(1)(b) and (c) of the Fisheries Act 2020 and section 15 of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023. The Regulations amend assimilated legislation, Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123 fixing for 2020 the fishing opportunities for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, applicable in Union waters and, for Union fishing vessels, in certain non-Union waters.

The Regulations make adjustments to the level of European seabass that may be caught within British fishery limits, as specified in Article 10(5) of Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123, for recreational fisheries. Increasing the number of fish which can be retain from two per day to three. The Regulations also remove picked dogfish (spur dog) of over 100cm from the list of prohibited species contained in Article 16 of Council Regulation (EU) 2020/123.

These changes were agreed during the recent UK EU fisheries consultations under the framework of the Trade and Cooperation agreement.

In accordance with section 40 of the Fisheries Act 2020, the Secretary of State has approached the Welsh and Scottish Ministers, and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland for consent to the making of these Regulations.

Although the Welsh Government's general principle is that the law relating to devolved matters should be made in Wales, on this occasion, it is considered appropriate for the Secretary of State to legislate on a UK-wide basis. The purpose of the Regulations is to make minor technical amendments to existing assimilated legislation of UK-wide application, to implement UK international obligations arising as a consequence of the UK-

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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.

EU annual Fisheries Consultations. A UK-wide approach to the making of the amendments ensures timely implementation and policy continuity, providing a level playing field for fishers across the UK.

There is no policy divergence between the Welsh and UK Government in this matter, and the Regulations amend retained legislation with UK wide extent that was not made bilingually.

The Regulations will be laid before the UK Parliament on 6 February.

I have written similarly to the Chair of the Chair of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huw', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

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



Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs Committee -Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Introduction

On 14 October 2025 the Welsh Government laid its outline Draft Budget for 2026-27 and on 3 November 2025, laid its detailed Draft Budget. This response follows evidence given to the Committee in its budget scrutiny meeting on 26 November 2025.

In that meeting the Committee held three scrutiny sessions. The first session examined rural affairs with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs (“the Deputy First Minister”). The second session examined trade and border related issues with the Deputy First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning (“the Cabinet Secretary”). The final session looked at the economy and skills, with the Cabinet Secretary and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership (“the Minister”).

Recommendations following the three scrutiny sessions have been considered carefully. Recommendations 1 – 18 are being responded to by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership. Recommendations 19 - 25 will be answered separately by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs. We would like to thank the Committee for their continued support.

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1. Economy and Skills

There are some recommendations which this Welsh Government fully accepts, but which we have had to reject as they will be for the next Government to decide whether it wishes to take them forward.

Business Support

Recommendation 1. The Welsh Government must increase funding to Business Wales to a level that it can maximise its positive impact on GVA.

Response: Accept

£22.5m is allocated to the Business Wales service in the 2026/27 budget which will enable the service to engage with over 30,000 young people, engage with 5,000 adults in early-stage enterprise, provide direct support to over 5,500 entrepreneurs and businesses and support 4,000 jobs. This forms part of a wider suite of support available via the Welsh Government to SMEs across Wales.

Recommendation 2. The Welsh Government should update the Committee regarding progress in implementing the Business Support Review recommendations.

Response: Accept

The Committee will be updated on the implementation of the recommendations made within the Business Support Review in due course.

Recommendation 3. The Welsh Government should set out how the support for eligible retail businesses through the introduction of the new retail multiplier compares to that available through the relief offered through the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Rates Relief scheme in 2025-26.

Response: Accept

The new retail multiplier (0.350) will be 30% lower than the standard multiplier (0.502) which applies from 1 April 2026 onwards, and 38% lower than the 2025-26 multiplier. This reduction comes as a consequence of both the 2026 non-domestic rates revaluation and the decision to introduce a lower retail multiplier.

Recommendation 4. The next Welsh Government should monitor the impact of the new business rates multiplier on the high street retail sector and look to extend this to hospitality and leisure high street business at the earliest opportunity if it is successful.

Response: Reject

The Welsh Government recognises the importance of post-implementation monitoring arrangements, as reflected in the impact assessments related to this policy. As the innovative first use of our powers to prescribe differential multipliers, this is intended to help inform the approach to potential further reforms in future. It will be for the next government to decide whether to make any further changes to the multipliers applicable in Wales.

Tech Valleys

Recommendation 5. The Welsh Government should retain the £100m target for Tech Valleys, clarify what is achievable for the Tech Valleys project and issue a revised timeline for that achievement.

Response: Accept

The Tech Valleys programme is tackling entrenched issues - economic deprivation, skills shortages, infrastructure gaps, and cultural inertia – by attempting to capitalise on the opportunities of the fourth industrial revolution to create a sustainable tech ecosystem.

Despite significant investment to-date, the Tech Valleys northern valleys area is still experiencing the challenges caused by physical and perceived isolation of valley communities, even with A465 upgrades, and slow private sector buy-in which is critical for long-term sustainability. However, significant progress has been made in the areas where the Tech Valleys programme has invested.

There is therefore a strong argument to continue the Tech Valleys programme and funding commitment but to profile expenditure over a longer period in order to enable further projects to be developed for the programme.

Recommendation 6. The next Welsh Government should honour the Tech Valleys commitment and invest the outstanding balance of project as quickly as possible.

Response: Accept in principle

The economic case for continued investment in the Tech Valleys programme remains strong. The Tech Valleys programme addresses entrenched economic challenges and has demonstrated meaningful progress. An accelerated injection of funds could unlock stalled or complex projects particularly if a dedicated delivery team could be resourced. Therefore, the Welsh Government accepts this recommendation *in principle*, to provide reassurance to partners and stakeholders to support the continuation of focused delivery efforts, without binding the next Government.

Productivity and competitiveness

Recommendation 7. The Welsh Government should include a high-level commitment to productivity growth in the Final Budget and consider implementing the Wales Productivity Forum's recommendations, especially creating a national productivity plan, to support this aim.

Response: Accept in principle

Delivering the **Economic Mission** remains central to our approach. Our mission sets out a clear vision for a stronger, fairer, and greener economy, and productivity growth is a key driver in achieving these outcomes. We recognise the importance of achieving long term productivity growth will require strong cross-government collaboration, and we are actively exploring all devolved levers to improve productivity across both public and private sectors.

We are continuing to work closely with the UK Government to maximise investment opportunities in future growth sectors identified in the Industrial Strategy, such as digital technologies and clean energy. These investments will be crucial in raising productivity levels in Wales over the medium and long term. We are also taking forward recommendations from our Short-Term Review on SME Productivity. SMEs account for the vast majority of enterprises in Wales, and this stream of work will seek to ensure we provide more accessible, high-quality support, get the funding they need, use new ideas and sell overseas.

We will consider the Wales Productivity Forum's recommendations as part of our ongoing work to strengthen Wales's economic resilience and competitiveness. It

is noted productivity growth is one of the national well-being indicators under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 so is already subject to the monitoring and reporting associated with those indicators.

Employment support and economic inactivity

Recommendation 8. The Welsh Government should consider how existing and new funding streams can be best used to support economically inactive people into work. As part of this work, it should explore how proposals recently developed by the Institute of Directors Wales and the Learning and Work Institute Wales can contribute and consider whether additional funding from the 2026-27 budget could be used to pilot any elements of these proposals ahead of the roll-out of the new employability support programme in 2027.

Response: Accept in principle

The Welsh Government will consider the recommendations in these reports in the development of the Employability Support Programme which is due for launch in 2027. The programme scope includes:

- NEETs (16-24)
- Those who are 25 and over and experiencing short-term unemployment (up to 6 months)
- Those who are 25 and over and experiencing long-term unemployment (unemployed for over 6 months and up to 24 months)
- Economically inactive

The Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership will issue an update to the Senedd on the Employability Support Programme developments in the spring term.

Recommendation 9. The Welsh Government should monitor the increased investment into employment support services to ensure they are supporting people with learning disabilities to access the job market. If gaps are found in provision, the Welsh Government must take action to provide specialist services similar to those offered under the Engage to Change programme.

Response: Accept in principle

Significant investment has already been directed into employability support in Wales and the Engage to Change model is being considered as part of preparations for the new Employability Support Programme. We recognise the importance of ensuring that this investment improves outcomes for people with learning disabilities who continue to face disproportionate barriers in accessing the labour market. We have already strengthened our monitoring arrangements across current employability provision to assess how effectively services are supporting people with learning disabilities into work.

Recommendation 10. The Welsh Government should set out how it will respond to further rises in unemployment, particularly if there is any labour market shock, and how it is ensuring sufficient funding is available for programmes such as ReAct+, so they are fully prepared to respond to any increase in unemployment. The next Welsh Government must also ensure preparing for a possible increase in unemployment is part of their financial plans.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government recognises the need to plan proactively for any projected and potential rises in unemployment, including the possibility of sudden labour market shocks. We maintain real-time intelligence on redundancies across Wales ensuring that programmes such as ReAct+ remain sufficiently resourced and operationally flexible to manage increased demand.

The new Employability Support Programme is being designed with flexibility in mind and it will be for the new Government to agree the policy direction and funding model for the Employability Support programme post-election.

The Global Centre of Rail Excellence

Recommendation 11. The Welsh Government should clearly set out contingency plans alongside publication of the final budget to ensure best value is achieved from their investment in the GCRE if they do not achieve additional private sector investment next calendar year.

Response: Accept in Principle

Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE) Ltd is currently working on an update to the test rail track project business plan alongside alternative options for the site which can be delivered alongside the core rail project or independently. The planning will take account of the implications resulting from the success or failure of the project to raise the private investment required for the core rail project. Those options will be presented to Welsh Government in the form of an updated Programme Business Case and plan, from which GCRE will derive and present a contingency plan for agreement by Welsh Government.

Skills

Recommendation 12. The Welsh Government should provide the Committee with specific information on the steers provided around the Apprenticeship Action BEL and what Welsh Government expects Medr to do.

Response: Accept

An uplift of £5m has been allocated to the Apprenticeships BEL as part of the Final Budget package. This is on top of the additional funding that was allocated as part of the draft budget. This funding supports the increased volume of apprenticeship starts and higher delivery costs and reflects both Welsh Government strategic priorities and the operational responsibilities now held by Medr following the transfer of functions.

We expect Medr to use this funding to:

- manage the continuing learner pressure created by the additional £4m Medr repurposed in 2025–26;
- ensure stability within the apprenticeship contract system;
- prioritise apprenticeships aligned with identified economic needs, including digital, engineering, manufacturing, net zero and foundational economy sectors;
- maintain quality, respond to employer demand, and ensure value for money;

- support the design of the new apprenticeship programme for delivery from 2027.

The expectations attached to this budget form part of the wider responsibilities previously set out to Medr at its establishment, including the requirement to develop a tertiary system responsive to economic need; maintain quality and widen participation; put the learner at the centre of the system; and ensure the tertiary education system contributes to Wales's economic and societal priorities. Medr must also act in accordance with the Welsh Government's Statement of Strategic Priorities and the Agency Agreement under the Tertiary Education and Research Act. These expectations underpin deployment of the Apprenticeship BEL and ensure alignment across the tertiary education system.

Recommendation 13. The Welsh Government should clarify exactly how the forward financial pressure on the apprenticeship budget will be dealt with, including, if necessary, how additional funding will be identified.

Response: Accept

Forward financial pressures on the apprenticeship budget for 2026–27 arise from:

- the cohort of additional starts supported by the £4m in-year Medr reallocation in 2025–26; and
- continued demand and rising delivery costs across priority frameworks.

Medr estimated that continuing learner costs for 2026–27 would total just over £3.3m. Following the 2026–27 Final Budget, and an additional allocation of funding for Apprenticeships budgets, the previously identified forward pressure has now been removed. The uplift is sufficient to meet all continuing learner costs in full while maintaining programme stability and supporting future apprenticeship activity. Remaining funding will be prioritised in line with Welsh Government strategic objectives.

In line with established Welsh Government financial management processes, Medr will continue to monitor its ringfenced allocation closely, identify emerging risks, and work with officials to consider any mitigations required during the year. Further adjustments will be managed through ongoing budget processes to ensure resources continue to be aligned to strategic priorities and deliver value for money.

Welsh Government requires Medr to maintain robust budget monitoring, alert officials to any developing pressures, and ensure that funding decisions continue

to support programme objectives. These expectations remain central to our approach to managing apprenticeship forward pressures for 2026–27.

Recommendation 14. The Welsh Government should strongly consider using unallocated funds to support the apprenticeship sector and more broadly to support apprentices access to study.

Response: Accept

The apprenticeship programme remains a ministerial priority. As part of the 2026-27 final budget, Ministers have provided an additional £5m increase to support the apprenticeship programme and have protected apprenticeship funding as a ringfenced allocation within Medr’s settlement. We will continue to consider the overall funding of Apprenticeships and if in-year opportunities arise, the apprenticeship budget will continue to be considered a priority for supplementary allocations.

In relation to supporting apprentices’ access to study, the Welsh Government continues to work with Medr and providers to help ensure that apprentices can access the learning and support they need to successfully complete their programmes. This includes maintaining investment in key support mechanisms such as Additional Learning Needs (ALN) support within further education, strengthening careers and guidance services, ensuring providers have appropriate funding to deliver high quality off-the-job learning, and prioritising frameworks that enable progression from Level 2 through to higher-level and degree apprenticeships. We will continue to reflect on where barriers to access exist including travel, digital access, and learning support and work with partners to identify mitigations within the available budget envelope.

Recommendation 15. The Minister should set out his thoughts on if more subjects should be added to the degree apprenticeship programme, how much that might cost and what the benefits may be to learners and the economy.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government recognises that expanding degree apprenticeships may be beneficial where there is clear evidence of employer demand, learner need and economic value. Degree apprenticeships currently cost around £27,000 per learner, meaning any expansion must be planned on a multi-year basis. As an

example, approximately 100 additional places would require around £1m in Year 1, £2m in Year 2 and £3m in Year 3 due to the continuation of learners.

In developing the new Apprenticeship Programme for implementation from August 2027, Medr has already undertaken extensive consultation and engagement activity directly relevant to future higher-level and degree apprenticeship provision. Through the national consultation launched in September 2025 and earlier stakeholder engagement, Medr has sought views from training providers, employers, industry bodies, learners, and representative organisations on the high-level principles for the new programme, sector frameworks, progression routes, flexible delivery models and the definition of apprenticeships from Level 2 through to Level 6. Crucially, Medr is reviewing all existing apprenticeship frameworks between 2025 and 2027, ensuring they support progression “from Level 2 upwards, to degree apprenticeships where appropriate”, alongside considering sector demand, future skills needs and employer expectations. This evidence gathering will inform future decisions on whether new subjects should be added to the degree apprenticeship offer and where expansion would bring the greatest benefit to learners, employers and the Welsh economy.

The Welsh Government is open to considering the expansion of degree apprenticeships but believes any decision must be grounded in clear evidence of employer demand, learner benefit and economic impact, and will be informed by the ongoing work led by Medr. Welsh Government will work with Medr, universities and the Regional Skills Partnerships to understand sector readiness, financial implications, and the areas where expansion would generate the greatest economic and social return.

2. Trade and Borders

Border Control Posts (BCPs)

Export, Trade and Inward Investment

Recommendation 16. The Welsh Government must keep the Committee updated on expected impacts of UK-EU negotiations on Welsh Government policy, operations and budget, particularly as they relate to Border Control Post development.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government actively updates and reviews its priorities as the UK-EU negotiations develop and circumstances change. We will continue to consider any potential impact on Wales as part of this ongoing work. However, as negotiations are currently active, we cannot comment on what may be included or what that impact may be until any agreement is finalised.

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs set out the Welsh Government's position on Border Control Posts (BCPs) in Wales, and this statement¹ remains the current position. The decision to pause the implementation of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) arrangements was made by the UK Government which has indicated that this will remain subject to review. Working with colleagues in the UK and Scottish governments, the Welsh Government will keep the implications for border control posts in Wales under review. We will update the Committee as appropriate.

¹ [Written Statement: Border Controls on imports into Wales from Ireland](#)

Recommendation 17. The Welsh Government should provide an estimate of costs to business relating to BCPs and administrative costs relating to the post-Brexit trade regime.

Response: Reject

There are no costs specifically for Welsh businesses. We have not operated BCPs in Wales and – assuming a successful outcome for the negotiations with the EU – do not intend to do so.

Welsh companies may face some additional costs in doing business with Europe post-Brexit, for example if they import relevant goods through Dover, but these costs are no different from those faced by other British companies.

Recommendation 18. The Welsh Government should clarify which quarterly periods will be covered by the HMRC review of UK trade statistics in response to this report, and provide analysis to the Committee of its findings by March 2026.

Response: Accept in principle

HMRC published a pre-announcement of corrections to the UK Overseas Trade in goods Statistics following the identification of an error affecting exports of fuels (HS2 Chapter 27).

This error affects data from **March 2024 onwards**.

Corrections have not yet been applied to the published datasets. These will be incorporated into:

- ONS Q3 revised Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on 22 December 2025.
- ONS UK Trade release and HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics (OTS) on 15 January 2026.

At the Wales level, HMRC announced their intention to publish Regional Trade Statistics (RTS) for year ending Q3, 2025 as planned on 18 December 2025. Headline analysis was undertaken by statisticians in Welsh Government: Welsh international goods trade: October 2024 to September 2025. This analysis did not reflect the HMRC corrections; instead, trade data excluding ‘oil’ was also presented to provide a stable baseline until revised data becomes available.

Revised RTS accounting for the correction will be available on 19 March 2026 for all UK nations and regions including Wales, alongside a corrected timeseries

back to March 2024. Ahead of publication, HMRC has estimated that the correction would increase Wales's goods exports for 2024 by approximately 7.9%, (£1.4 bn) compared with the current published annual 2024 total of £17.5 bn. For January - September 2025, exports are estimated to increase by around 12.1% (£1.5 bn) compared with the current 2025 published total of £12.7 bn.

Welsh Government analysts will produce analysis of the implications of the error to Wales's export performance once the revised data is available. However, due to the planned timing of the data release (19 March), it is unlikely that a full analysis can be provided to the Committee within the March 2026 timescale.

3. Rural Affairs

Recommendations 19 – 25 will be answered by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs.



Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs Committee -Scrutiny of the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27

Introduction

On 14 October 2025 the Welsh Government laid its outline Draft Budget for 2026-27 and its detailed Draft Budget on 3 November 2025. This response follows evidence given to the Committee in its budget scrutiny meeting on 26 November 2025.

In that meeting the Committee held three scrutiny sessions. The first session examined rural affairs with the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs. The second session examined trade and border related issues with the Deputy First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning . The final session looked at the economy and skills, with the Cabinet Secretary and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership.

Recommendations following the three scrutiny sessions have been considered carefully. Recommendations 19 - 25 will be answered below by the Deputy First Minister. Recommendations 1 – 18 are being answered separately.

We would like to thank the Committee for their continued support

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1. Agricultural support

Recommendation 19.

The Welsh Government must consider all possible mechanisms available to it to ensure the SFS receives the funding needed to deliver its ambition, through supporting farmers. As part of this, the Welsh Government must make its position on Barnettisation of agricultural support clear and should reopen negotiations with the UK around moving back to a needs/production based allocation for agriculture.

Response: Accept in Principle

We are providing £367m in fiscal year 2026-27, including all the replacement farm funding (£339.6m) baselined into WG budget from 2024-5. The Welsh Government achieved this following the UK Government decision to remove the ringfence previously imposed on agricultural funding in Wales, which means Welsh Ministers now decide on the level of agricultural funding for Wales.

Welsh Ministers recognise the importance of the sector. That is why the Welsh Government is maintaining a budget of £238m for the Universal layer and legacy Basic Payment scheme in 2026, thereby encouraging as many farmers as possible into the SFS so they can start to realise the benefits as soon as possible while guaranteeing at least £102m this year to encourage substantial uptake of the Optional and Collaborative Actions, which will be critical to meeting our climate and nature commitments.

In the same way as for all other areas of spending, the Barnett formula will only be applied to any future changes in spending in England on programmes which are devolved in Wales. Wales receives the same change per head as in England, with an additional 5% needs factor. The Finance Interministerial Standing Committee (F:ISC) has agreed to a joint piece of work looking at ways of improving the operation of the Barnett formula. This work will report at the next F:ISC in the spring.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 20.

This and the next Welsh Government should consider how they can return the real terms value of the agricultural support package to pre 2016 levels.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government is committed to invest in agriculture support and farm funding that works to achieve our shared ambitions for sustainable food security and securing critical carbon and environmental objectives. It is for Welsh Ministers, with the Senedd's approval, to decide how to allocate the Welsh Government's budget to reflect the circumstances and priorities in Wales. While agriculture and farm funding budgets now operate solely on annual cycles, unlike previous European Union funded programmes, the Welsh Government will always seek to use all available resources to secure a budget that best supports this important sector.

Financial Implications – this work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

2. Fisheries

Recommendation 21.

The Welsh Government should consider if allocating additional funding to the Fisheries BEL could speed up the development of the outstanding Fisheries Management Plans.

Response: Accept

The funding will accelerate the delivery of science and evidence projects which will inform both the content of Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs) and how we implement specific actions, particularly for non-quota stocks. For example, we have recently commissioned a study that will significantly improve our understanding of brown crab and lobster fisheries within Welsh waters to inform the Crab and Lobster FMP and future management actions.

Financial Implications – this work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 22.

The Welsh Government should keep the Committee up to date with developments around the Fisheries and Coastal Growth Fund.

Response: Accept

We welcome the consequential allocation of £18 million over 12 years and the £1.29 million allocated in 2026-27 from UK Government, resulting from the announced £360 million UK Fishing and Coastal Growth Fund.

The importance of our fishing industry and coastal communities has been recognised in the draft Welsh Government budget with an additional £1.29 million allocated for the fisheries sector for the 2026-27 financial year.

The additional budget will be invested in the following priority areas:

- Market development
- Environmental protection and sustainability
- Workforce investment
- Coastal growth and capacity building

- Science and evidence.

I would be happy to keep the Committee updated with progress on delivery as the discussions with stakeholders and the anticipated activity develops.

Financial Implications – None.

Recommendation 23.

Welsh Government should consider how the Fisheries and Coastal Growth Fund could be used to ensure Welsh seafood supply chain benefits remain in Wales for the benefit of coastal communities, including investing in the seafood processing sector.

Response: Accept

Funding opportunities to ensure the Welsh seafood supply chain benefits remain in Wales are integral to the priorities for this additional budget.

Financial Implications – this work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

3. Bovine TB

Recommendation 24.

The review into bTB compensation payments should be completed before the end of this Senedd to inform the next Welsh Government's approach. However, the Welsh Government must take a preventative approach to bTB funding through tackling the disease itself with effective policies. These should be devised based on evidence and advice of the Technical Advisory Group and Programme Board including learning lessons from best practice within and outside Wales.

Response: Accept in part

We are commissioning an independent review into bovine TB compensation via a procurement exercise. The intent is to award the contract prior to the pre-election period, with a report expected by the end of 2026.

The Technical Advisory Group and the TB Eradication Programme Board have identified a programme of work, which is enabling them to focus on key areas of bovine TB. The advice they provide is based on evidence, which includes lessons learned and best practice from within and outside Wales. Recent changes to policy have already benefitted from such co-design, and this approach continues.

Financial Implications – this work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

4. Horticulture

Recommendation 25.

The Welsh Government should clearly set out in this budget, and the next Welsh Government should in set out in future budgets, the support horticulture will receive from across all allocations.

Response: Reject

The Welsh Government provides various forms of support to the horticulture sector. However, presenting a single headline figure for the total expenditure on this sector would not accurately reflect the nature of the support provided.

A major component of support for the sector is the Knowledge Transfer programme, Farming Connect. Whilst the current contract will come to an end on 31 March 2026, there will be a new programme available from 1 April offering free and subsidised interventions of support.

The Welsh Government currently provides two bespoke capital grant schemes that are designed for horticulturalists - the Agriculture Diversification and Horticulture Scheme and the Small Grants - Horticulture Start up Scheme. Horticulturalists also benefit from all other grant schemes that are cross-sectoral, such as efficiency and environmental grants, where the budget allocations do not specify farm type or sector. It should also be noted that the Agriculture Diversification and Horticulture Scheme covers expenditure for diversification into sectors other than horticulture. The amount spent under these schemes depends on the number and quality of applications received and does not necessarily reflect the level of budget available.

Financial Implications – this work will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

Senedd Cymru

21 January 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

We are writing on behalf of the Board of Sector Development Wales Partnership (trading as Industry Wales) to provide the Committee with an update on recent developments relating to the Welsh Government Review of Industry Wales and the subsequent decision to dissolve the organisation.

Given the significance of this decision for Wales's industrial landscape, workforce, and sector engagement arrangements, the Board considered it appropriate to ensure the Committee is sighted on the sequence of events, the concerns raised to date, and the documentation now available.

Context and recent developments

As the Committee may be aware, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning laid a Written Statement before the Senedd on **2 October 2025** announcing the decision to dissolve Industry Wales. That Written Statement was explicitly based on the recommendations of a Welsh Government Review undertaken during mid-2025.

The Written Statement was the **first formal notification** received by Industry Wales staff and Board members that a decision had been taken. The Board did not have prior sight of the Review that informed the Written Statement and did not receive a copy of the Review until **19 January 2026**, more than three months after the statement had been laid before the Senedd.

During this period, and **prior to receiving the Review**, the Board wrote formally to the Senedd's **Finance Committee** and **Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee**, as well as to the **Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning**, to raise concerns regarding process, access to

information, and the absence of Board engagement. These letters are included in the attached pack to provide transparency and to demonstrate the chronology of engagement before the Board was able to scrutinise the Review itself.

The Board further notes that the Review was only provided following correspondence with Senedd scrutiny committees earlier this month, which was subsequently forwarded to Welsh Government officials.

While the Board does not seek to draw conclusions from this sequence, it considers it important context for the Committee's understanding that the Written Statement announcing dissolution was made on the basis of a Review to which the Board had no access at the time and no opportunity to scrutinise, respond to, or contextualise.

Since receiving the Review, the Board has undertaken detailed scrutiny of its findings, methodology and conclusions. While the Board accepts the Review's diagnosis that historic governance arrangements and remit clarity required reform, it has raised concerns that the evidence presented does not sufficiently support the preferred recommendation, nor does it fully reflect the corrective action already undertaken by the current executive team.

Purpose of this correspondence

This correspondence is not intended to seek a particular outcome from the Committee, but to:

- ensure Members are sighted on the **process and timing** surrounding the Review and decision;
- highlight **substantive concerns about evidence, methodology, remit coverage, workforce impacts and transition planning**; and
- provide the Committee with a clear, navigable pack of relevant documents should it wish to consider these matters further.

Documents enclosed and confidentiality

For ease of reference, the Board is providing the following documents as a single pack:

1. **Welsh Government Review (March 2025): Sector Development Wales Partnership (trading as Industry Wales) Review – Final Report**

The Review undertaken during 2025 which informed the Written Statement of 2 October 2025.

Shared with the Committee in confidence.

2. **Board letter to Senedd scrutiny committees (January 2026) – Finance Committee and Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee**

Correspondence sent prior to the Board receiving the Review, raising concerns regarding process, access to information, governance context and transition planning.

Already a public document

3. **Board letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning (January 2026)**

Correspondence sent prior to the Board receiving the Review, setting out concerns regarding process and seeking transparency and engagement.

Shared with the Committee in confidence.

4. **Board submission / briefing paper to the Senedd Committees (January 2026)**

A fully referenced Board paper analysing the Review's findings and conclusions, including where the Board believes the evidence does not sufficiently support the preferred recommendation.

Shared with the Committee in confidence.

5. **Board's formal response to the Cabinet Secretary (January 2026)**

The Board's formal response to the Review following receipt on 19 January 2026, addressing process, methodology, remit coverage, workforce impacts and transition risk.

Shared with the Committee in confidence.

Welsh Government officials have indicated that they are expecting a **formal request from the Committee** for the Review. Should the Committee choose to make such a request, the Board understands that the Review would then enter the public domain, at which point the accompanying briefing paper and correspondence could also be released publicly **if the Committee judges that appropriate.**

Members may find it helpful to read items **(4)** and **(5)** first, as these provide the Board's consolidated analysis and formal position, with the Review included at **(1)** for cross-reference.

Closing

The Board remains committed to engaging constructively with Senedd scrutiny and to supporting a clear understanding of the issues arising from this process. We would, of course, be happy to provide further clarification or oral evidence should the Committee consider that helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Keith Ridgway
Chair, Industry Wales



Dr Jenifer Baxter
Chief Executive, Industry Wales

On behalf of the Board
Sector Development Wales Partnership
(trading as Industry Wales)

Annex A: Chronology of Key Events – Industry Wales Review and Decision

Date	Event	Notes / significance
Early–Mid 2025	Welsh Government Review of Sector Development Wales Partnership (Industry Wales) conducted	Review commissioned and interviews undertaken. Industry Wales Board was not formally consulted on emerging findings or options during this period.
Mid-2025	Review analysis completed	Review included AI-assisted synthesis of interview material. Board did not have sight of outputs, methodology, or draft conclusions.
2 October 2025	Written Statement laid before the Senedd by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning	Statement announced the decision to dissolve Industry Wales. This was the first formal notification received by Industry Wales staff and Board members.
2 October 2025	Written Statement explicitly based on the Review's recommendations	Decision announced before the Review was shared with the organisation most directly affected by its conclusions.
October– December 2025	Post-announcement period	Industry Wales Board and staff had no access to the Review, limiting ability to understand the evidence base, rationale, or proposed transition arrangements.
Early January 2026	Board writes to Senedd Finance Committee and Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee	Correspondence raised concerns regarding process, evidence, governance context, workforce impacts and absence of transition planning.

Date	Event	Notes / significance
Mid-January 2026	Correspondence forwarded to Welsh Government officials	Committees shared Board correspondence with officials for awareness and response.
19 January 2026	Welsh Government Review provided to Industry Wales Board	First time the Board received the Review that informed the Written Statement — more than three months after the decision was announced publicly.
Late January 2026	Board undertakes detailed analysis of the Review	Scrutiny included human review and triangulated analysis using multiple AI tools to test evidential robustness and options appraisal.
January 2026	Formal Board responses issued	Letters sent to Senedd scrutiny committees and the Cabinet Secretary setting out concerns regarding evidence, methodology, remit coverage, audit context, workforce impacts and transition risk.
January-February 2026	Ongoing engagement and documentation sharing	Board provides further material to support transparency, accountability and scrutiny, including audit outcomes and governance improvements.
31 March 2026	Planned cessation of Industry Wales	Industry Wales is scheduled to cease operations at the end of March 2026, underscoring the urgency of resolving outstanding issues relating to transition, workforce support and continuity of remit.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA-MDFWL-3074-25

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

27 January 2026

Dear Andrew,

Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill

Further to my letter of 12 January 2026 and the 13 January general principles debate on the Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill ("the Bill"), I am writing now to provide you with confirmation of the government responses to each of the 23 recommendations in the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee's Stage 1 report.

Recommendation 1

Future Seneddau and governments should not take the timetable afforded to this Bill as a precedent for the making and scrutiny of non-emergency legislation. Such a short timeframe should be avoided unless exceptional circumstances demand otherwise,

Government Response - Noted

As I said during the general principles debate on 13 January, it is inevitable that where Bills are scheduled for the final year of a Senedd term this is going to create time constraints and pressures. The alternative would significantly limit the capacity of future Seneddau to legislate.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that the Senedd, taking into account the recommendations in this report, agrees the general principles of the Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
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CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Mark.Drakeford@llyw.cymru

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.

Government Response - Noted

I thanked the committee for its recommendation that the Bill be supported at the general principles debate and am pleased that the Bill will now proceed to Stage 2.

Recommendation 3

The Welsh Government should amend the Bill at Stage 2 to make commencement of the licensing scheme subject to further Senedd approval.

Government Response – Reject

Commencement Orders are not subject to Senedd procedure.

Agreeing to this recommendation would mean a further approval would be required in order to implement an Act that the Senedd had already agreed. As such, the Government cannot accept this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

The Welsh Government should amend the Bill at Stage 2 to ensure that commencement of the Bill's provisions can take place no later than the end of the next scheduled Senedd term.

Government Response – Accept in principle

As confirmed in my letter of 12 January, I have now tabled various amendments, including a sunrise provision to commence the Act, if it has not been commenced by March 2030.

Recommendation 5

In his response to this report, the Cabinet Secretary should set out what discussions have taken place, and are planned to take place, with representatives of the tourism industry on proposals for the Bill's implementation.

Government Response – Accept

As I confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, Welsh Government officials have throughout the development of the Bill engaged on an ongoing basis with key stakeholders and will continue to do so. See also my response to related recommendation 21 below.

Recommendation 6

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should set out what amendments he plans to bring forward at Stage 2.

Government Response – Accept

I set out in detail in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, my intended Stage 2 amendments, and I have now tabled them.

Recommendation 7

The Welsh Government should amend the Bill at Stage 2 to commit to undertaking and publishing a review of the operation and effect of the provisions in the Bill by no later than April 2034.

Government Response – Accept in principle

As I confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, I have now tabled such an amendment.

Recommendation 8

In responding to this report, the Welsh Government should set out what work has been carried out to date on developing the code of practice and associated guidance. Further, the Welsh Government should provide further detail on the anticipated content of the code.

Government Response – Accept

The guidance on the licensing scheme will be produced once the regulations have been drafted. We intend this to be issued well before the scheme is operational.

The code of practice goes far wider than the licensing scheme, but is integral to its operational delivery. Officials have been discussing a Welsh tourism code of practice with those who produce the English equivalent for some time. We would naturally want a code of practice to reflect the up-to-date legislation, so plan to reconsider the options next year.

Recommendation 9

The Welsh Government should consider amending the Bill at Stage 2 to ensure an appropriate minimum time period for Senedd consideration of regulations proposed under section 5.

Government Response – Accept in principle

As I confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, I have now tabled an amendment to consult for a minimum period prior to the use of the power under paragraph 5(1)(b).

Recommendation 10

The Welsh Government should ensure that guidance issued under section 55 addresses visitor accommodation providers' obligations in relation to the general fitness standard in section 7.

Government Response – Accept

The future guidance on the scheme will provide more detail on this, as well as other aspects of the regulatory regime under the Bill.

Recommendation 11

The Welsh Government should address waste management and anti-social behaviour issues in its code of practice, to ensure that operators are aware of their responsibilities and, further, should amend the Explanatory Memorandum to set out the licensee's existing obligations relating to the disposal of visitor waste

Government Response – Accept

Officials will address this when the code of practice is produced. In the meantime, I will be amending the Explanatory Memorandum to reflect this recommendation.

Recommendation 12

The Welsh Government should consider including energy performance certificates as an additional standard when exploring future updates to the licensing scheme.

Government Response – Accept

Energy performance policy is the responsibility of the UK Government. However, we will continue to monitor developments in that area, and consider any future potential implications for the licensing system.

Recommendation 13

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should confirm whether he intends to bring forward amendments at Stage 2 to in relation to the proposed fire prevention standard in section 9.

Government Response – Accept

As confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, I have now tabled such an amendment.

Recommendation 14

The Welsh Revenue Authority should commit to providing regular updates on its work relating to the register and the licensing scheme to a relevant committee of the next Senedd.

Government Response – Noted

The WRA regularly updates the Finance Committee on its work, and I suggest that future updates should cover its work relating to the register and the licensing scheme. The relevant committee will no doubt be confirmed by the next Senedd.

Recommendation 15

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should review the additional evidence provided by the Short Term Accommodation Association and confirm the average number of total licences that Rent Smart Wales deals with each year and the time taken to process applications at present. The Cabinet Secretary should also set out any estimate he has made of the length of time it will take to process and issue the estimated 30,000 visitor accommodation licences that will need to be issued in the first year of operating the licensing scheme.

Government Response – Accept

I confirmed in my letter of 12 January that officials were reviewing the additional evidence shared by the Short Term Accommodation Association and that I would follow up in writing with the Committee.

The Short Term Accommodation Association are right to highlight that the number of applications Rent Smart Wales receive year-on-year is lower than will be the case in the initial implementation of the Bill. I would not, however, draw an equivalence between the application processes. The application process for Rent Smart Wales is different to the one in the Bill: their licensing system requires a fit and proper person test for applicants, and also includes agents. Their compliance activity includes large scale agent audits, which are also not a feature of the licensing system proposed in the Bill. These differences result in a significantly different balance of where and how the compliance activity falls for the approximately 200,000 properties subject to the Rent Smart Wales regime, and I do not agree that the number of applications is the same as the number of licences Rent Smart Wales deals with year-on-year.

Officials have discussed plans for licensing with Rent Smart Wales, including processing applications and compliance checking and, where relevant, this has informed the assumptions made about how long it may take to process applications and to check documents which underpin the analysis presented in the Regulatory Impact Assessment for the Bill.

Recommendation 16

The Welsh Government should amend the Bill at Stage 2 to extend the minimum period for which a visitor accommodation licence may be granted.

Government Response – Accept in principle

As confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, I have now tabled an amendment which allows for different licence periods.

Recommendation 17

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should provide further information to the Senedd about how the provision for complaints in section 22 is expected to work in practice, including how complaints will be assessed and what the practical effect will be of a complaint being upheld

Government Response – Accept

I provided a detailed response to this recommendation in my letter of 12 January.

Recommendation 18

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Welsh Government should update the Committee on discussions with local authorities as to their potential role in the enforcement process, and clarify the potential role Visit Wales might play.

Government Response – Accept

I provided a detailed response to this recommendation in my letter of 12 January.

Recommendation 19

The Welsh Government should bring forward an amendment to the Bill at Stage 2 to provide that the regulations made under section 38 will be subject to the Senedd approval procedure.

Government Response – Accept in principle

As I confirmed in my letter of 12 January, and during the general principles debate, I have now tabled such an amendment.

Recommendation 20

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Welsh Government should set out in further detail how the provision in section 42 is intended to work in practice, including its justification for the inclusion of 42(4).

Government Response – Accept

I provided a detailed response to this recommendation in my letter of 12 January.

Recommendation 21

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should:

- provide an update on discussions with booking platforms / agents regarding the provisions in sections 46 and 47,
- provide further information on the rationale for extending the proposed offence to bodies other than visitor accommodation providers, and
- provide further information on the specific steps that may need to be taken to establish a defence to the proposed offence.

Government Response – Accept

I provided a detailed response to this recommendation in my letter of 12 January.

Recommendation 22

The Welsh Government should consider tabling an amendment to the Bill at Stage 2 to limit the scope of the advertising and marketing offence in section 47 to visitor accommodation providers only.

Government Response – Reject

I responded to this recommendation during the general principles debate on the Bill.

Recommendation 23

In advance of the Stage 1 debate, the Cabinet Secretary should respond to the specific additional evidence received by the Committee.

Government Response – Accept in principle

I confirmed in my letter of 12 January that analysis of the additional evidence provided to the Committee was ongoing and that I would follow up in writing with any additional clarifications or responses required as a result of that analysis.

Officials have considered the evidence provided, and where I considered changes were necessary as a result, I have tabled amendments to that effect. We will continue to consider the evidence alongside the Bill throughout Stage 2, and will consider whether further amendments are necessary at Stage 3.

Many of the points raised in the additional evidence were discussed during scrutiny, including the policy intention of the Bill, the general fitness standard, and the way we will support continuity of business during the rollout of the scheme, but check documentation before issuing a licence. I addressed many of these points again in the general principles debate. In particular, I have considered these issues with the visitor in mind. For the scheme to achieve its purpose, we have to be able to reassure visitors that the accommodation they book will meet the standards they expect.

I hope this response is useful, and I look forward to continuing to work constructively with the committee during Stage 2.

I am copying this letter to the Chairs of the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee, and the Finance Committee for information.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Drakeford AS/MS

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

Agenda Item 2.5



Mr. Andrew R.T. Davies MS
Chair, Senedd Economy, Transport & Rural Affairs Committee
Welsh Government
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Via email to: SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

28 January 2026

Update following the committee's recommendation on complaints handling

Dear Andrew,

I am writing to provide the Committee with an update on the work undertaken by the Development Bank of Wales in response to Recommendation 10 of the Committee's report, relating to complaint handling.

As the Committee will be aware, the Welsh Government commissioned its Project Assessment Review which reported in 2025 following which the Cabinet Secretary for Economy updated the Committee on the outcomes of that report in August noting that:

"I am pleased to note the Review Team found the arrangements between the Welsh Government Partnership Team and DBW are effective, and the bank is well placed to deliver on its objectives and targets set out in the Corporate Plan.

*The Team also found comprehensive and robust due diligence is undertaken in respect of the bank's customers, which mitigates financial and reputational risk, and the bank follows robust processes to follow up on complaints, of which there are few. In line with the findings of good practice for both complaints handling and due diligence there were no specific recommendations for further actions related to either of these areas."*¹

No specific recommendations were made by the review team regarding complaints save to note a need for greater detail on the process to be followed where a complaint is to be referred onwards to the Welsh Government Partnership team. This point has since been clarified in the latest update to the Framework Document.

1

<https://business.senedd.wales/documents/s164692/Letter%20from%20the%20Cabinet%20Secretary%20for%20Economy%20Energy%20and%20Planning%20-%204%20August%202025.pdf>

Development Bank of Wales Plc

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info@developmentbank.wales | developmentbank.wales



Mewn Partneriaeth â
Llywodraeth Cymru
In Partnership with
Welsh Government

Development Bank of Wales Plc is the holding company of a Group that trades as Development Bank of Wales. The Group is made up of a number of subsidiaries which are registered with names including the initials DBW. Development Bank of Wales Plc is a development finance company wholly owned by the Welsh Ministers and it is neither authorised nor regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) or the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). The Development Bank of Wales has three subsidiaries which are authorised and regulated by the FCA. Please note that neither the Development Bank of Wales Plc nor any of its subsidiaries are banking institutions or operate as such. This means that none of the group entities are able to accept deposits from the public. A complete legal structure chart for Development Bank of Wales Plc can be found at www.developmentbank.wales

Pack Page 40

While the external review provided assurance that our complaints processes are robust and proportionate, the Board also viewed the Committee's recommendation as an opportunity to further strengthen understanding, transparency and prevention across the investment lifecycle.

A further complaint handling review was carried out by independent internal auditors, RSM UK Risk Assurance Services LLP (RSM) as part of the 2025-2026 internal audit plan.

A copy of RSM's audit outcome overview together with a summary of management actions is attached as Appendix 1. As noted in the attached, RSM identified one medium and seven low priority actions, all of which have been actioned.

These priority actions are defined by RSM as follows:

- Medium: timely management attention is necessary
- Low: there is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.

The medium priority action relates to the assessment and categorisation of customer feedback and complaints. In the financial year ended 31st March 2025, a total of 50 instances of customer feedback were logged. RSM identified one instance where a response to a customer survey had been classified as feedback, when because the response expressed dissatisfaction, it should have been classified as a complaint.

Finally, following a specific complaint received in 2024 relating to events at an investee company in 2018, the board of directors of the Development Bank of Wales plc revisited the key aspects of the case with the support of an independent governance review.

Following careful consideration of the matters raised in the complaint the board is satisfied that the Development Bank acted appropriately and in line with market practice.

As part of our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and to meeting the high standards expected of a public body, management is implementing the following measures to further strengthen our governance:

1. An operational review of arrangements for the storage and retention of contemporaneous notes of decisions relating to investments
2. Broadening existing procedures to cater for the limited number of situations where complaints are received from individuals who are technically non-customers (non-customer complaints)
3. Clarification of the escalation pathway and appeals process applicable to non-customer complaints
4. An enhancement to existing procedures to provide a clear recommendation to founders that they should take independent advice on the content and implications of investment-related documents (such as investment agreements, articles of association, and directors' service agreements). The aim is to better equip founders to make their own well-informed decisions, to promote understanding of the documents being signed and to minimise the risk of future disputes.

Beyond addressing the specific actions, management has reflected on how to ensure that learning from feedback and complaints more effectively informs the guidance we provide to founders at the outset of the investment process.

We have recently introduced the *Founders' Playbook*, developed from in-depth research with technology business founders and informed by themes emerging from the Committee's inquiry and market feedback. The Playbook provides practical guidance to improve founder understanding of investment structures, governance responsibilities and decision-making at key growth stages, helping to reduce the risk of misunderstanding and future disputes. ([Founder's playbook](#))

These measures build on the fact that our processes have continued to evolve as a matter of good practice. Taken together, they reflect not only assurance over the robustness of our complaints handling, but a commitment to learning from experience and embedding that learning into clearer guidance and support for founders across Wales.

We trust this demonstrates the board's commitment to transparency, good governance and to responding constructively to the Committee's recommendation and oversight.

Yours sincerely,



Sally Bridgeland
Chair, Development Bank of Wales
Hon Group Captain Sally Bridgeland BSc ARCS FIA FRSA FSIP
601 (County of London) Sqn RAuxAF

Appendix 1

AUDIT OUTCOME OVERVIEW

In line with our scope, included at Appendix C, the overview of our findings is detailed below.

Background: As part of the 2025-26 internal audit plan for the Development Bank of Wales ('DBW' or 'the Bank'), we reviewed key elements of the control framework in place over complaints.

Complaints is an area where there is currently external focus. This is also an area that RSM has not yet covered since our appointment in 2022-23.

Whilst limited aspects of DBW's operations are subject to Financial Conduct Authority ('FCA') regulation, the Bank intentionally aligns its working practices with regulatory expectations, to offer a consistent standard of service to its borrowers when compared to similar lenders. Our review compared aspects of DBW's processes against regulatory expectations, and to best practice observed within the Bank's cohort of peers across the financial services sector.

The DBW Investments 10 Fund is FCA regulated, and is therefore subject to the FCA's DISP Handbook. As part of this review, we assessed whether the complaints related to this fund have been handled in line with the regulatory requirements. We also reviewed the complaints processes for Help to Buy Wales Limited ('HtBW'), and FW Capital, whilst also testing adherence to procedures for these complaints.

Conclusion: We observed that DBW operates a well-developed control framework over complaints. There are policies and procedures in place, and management information (MI) is regularly presented through the governance structure. From our sample testing, we found that complaint cases are handled in line with policies, procedures and regulatory requirements. There is a process in place for undertaking root cause analysis over complaints received, which includes the sharing of lessons learnt.


However, we did identify a number of areas where the framework can be improved. Most notably, we identified a case that met with the FCA's definition of a complaint, but which was categorised as customer feedback. Misclassification of complaints as feedback can result in complaints not being properly investigated, escalated, or reported, leading to regulatory non-compliance, missed opportunities to address customer concerns and poor customer outcomes.

Additional areas for enhancement of the framework included formally evidencing review and approval of the policy for complaints, introducing standard templates for customer communications, and including additional areas in the MI.

Overall, we raised one medium and seven low priority actions.

Internal audit opinion:

Based on this, we have provided the following opinion:

 Minimal Assurance	 Partial Assurance	 Reasonable Assurance	 Substantial Assurance
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Taking account of the issues identified, the board can take reasonable assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to manage this risk are suitably designed, consistently applied and effective.

However, we have identified issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure that the control framework is effective in managing the identified risk(s).

Audit themes:

Whilst the majority of actions raised from this review were deemed low priority, the main theme arising was the comprehensiveness of policies, procedures and MI. For example, the provision of additional guidance within procedures, or the inclusion of additional insights within MI for Board level oversight purposes.

Making the recommended enhancements will strengthen the framework around complaints further.

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The action priorities are defined as*:

High
Immediate management attention is necessary.

Medium
Timely management attention is necessary.

Low
There is scope for enhancing control or improving efficiency.

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
Complaints Processing				
1	A process will be implemented to systematically assess all customer feedback submissions, regardless of the channel received, to determine whether they meet the FCA's definition of a complaint. Where feedback expresses dissatisfaction relating to the firm's provision of, or failure to provide, a financial service, it will be re-categorised as a complaint.	Medium	[Redacted]	30 September 2025
2	Relevant staff will be reminded of the requirement to log complaints in the Complaints Register as soon as they are received.	Low	[Redacted]	30 September 2025
Policy and Procedures				
3	To formally evidence the annual review and approval of the current version of the 'Complaints Policy & Procedures', the approval email chain will be shared with the Compliance team in order that the approval can be recorded on the policy register. Going forward, the approval will be documented within the version control table of the policy itself, clearly indicating the names, roles, and dates of review and approval for each version.	Low	[Redacted]	30 September 2025
4	Once approved, the new 'Customer Feedback Resolved' email template will be implemented. This will be saved within the Complaints folder, with links within the Procedure document). Older versions will be deleted. A communication to the team will be made to make them aware of the new version, and that this will be the standard for all relevant client communications going forward.	Low	[Redacted]	30 September 2025

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
5	<p>The Complaints Policy & Procedures will be updated to fully align with the FCA DISP 1.2.1R requirements for consumer awareness and accessibility of complaints procedures.</p> <p>Specifically, the policy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly state where and how customers can access information about the complaints process, including providing details on the DBW website and in customer-facing documents. (DISP 1.2.1 R2); confirm that information about the complaints process is made available to customers upon request, and that a copy is provided automatically when a complaint is received (unless resolved by close of the next business day). (DISP 1.2.1 R3); and ensure the policy explicitly requires that information about the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS), including the FOS website address, is published on the DBW website and included in the general conditions of customer contracts, in addition to being provided directly to eligible complainants in response letters. (DISP 1.2.1 R4). 	Low	[Redacted]	30 September 2025
6	<p>The HtBW Complaints Procedure will be updated to fully align with the relevant FCA DISP requirements.</p> <p>Specifically, the policy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clearly state that information about the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS), including the FOS website address, is published on the HtBW website and included in the general conditions of contract with eligible complainants, as required by DISP 1.2.1R; include a clear statement that HtBW will cooperate fully with the FOS and comply promptly with any settlements or awards made by it, in line with DISP 1.4.4R; add a section describing the process for forwarding complaints to another respondent when that party may be solely or jointly responsible, as set out in DISP 1.7.1R; address the procedure for handling complaints received from another respondent under DISP 1.7.2R, including a statement that such complaints are treated as if made directly to HtBW and that DISP time limits apply from the date the forwarded complaint is received; and include guidance for handling complaints received outside the time limits for referral to the FOS, in accordance with DISP 1.8.1R. 	Low	[Redacted]	30 September 2025

Ref	Action	Priority	Responsible Owner	Date
Root Cause Analysis				
7	Actions and outcomes for any relevant issues raised within MI will be documented in all future quarterly MI packs.	Low	[REDACTED]	30 September 2025
Management Information				
8	The MI packs will be updated for all entities (DBW, FWC, and HtBW) to include a clear summary and breakdown of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the number and percentage of complaints resolved within three business days of receipt (early resolution); andthe number and percentage of complaints where the eight-week final response deadline was met or missed.	Low	[REDACTED]	31 July 2025

Agenda Item 2.6

Andrew RT Davies MS
Economy Trade & Rural Affairs Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff, CF99 1SN

23rd January 2026

Dear Chair

Thank you for contacting me regarding this feedback but also thanks for the opportunity to speak to the Committee last year.

I have found the Irish Sea Resilience Task Force to be extremely useful. I think it was imperative that lessons were learned as the closure of Holyhead in Dec 24 had far reaching implications for all the Western Sea Ports and for road haulage movements to the island of Ireland through them.

I do believe those hard lessons have been learned to an extent and that communication between the Govts on both sides of the water have improved. For our sector, however, the key question was around how communications between the Welsh Govt and our sector had improved. I for one was critical of how information (or lack of it) was disseminated at the time and I am happy to say that the quality of information about the recent closures has been better. This good news comes with the caveat that I had to reach out to the Welsh Govt to get that information, but what I was given was clear, concise, and accurate. I was also told that had I not called first, I was on a list of people they were going to contact.

It is imperative that this progress continues through the creation of a Welsh Freight group where many of those called to the Taskforce can contribute to a two-way flow of information between those driving the economy and those responsible for the Economy.

I hope this feedback proves to be useful to you but please free to contact me via email on m.reid@rha.uk.net if you have any further questions or if I can be of any further help..

Yours sincerely,



Martin Reid
Policy Director for Scotland, Wales, and NI
RHA
m.reid@rha.uk.net
07801 500713

Andrew RT Davies
MS Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

27th January 2026

Holyhead Port Closures

Dear Mr. Davies,

The handling of the most recent incident was notably improved when compared with the events of 2024/2025. That progress should be acknowledged. However, as with all incidents of this nature, there remain clear lessons to be learned and further improvements that must be made.

On this occasion, Stena were slow to recognise the severity of the damage and to notify either the Welsh or Irish Governments and their respective Departments of Transport. The damage occurred at approximately 08:00–08:30 and was clearly visible, including a hole in the vessel’s hull. It would be reasonable for any competent operator to understand that such damage would inevitably require delay, inspection, and contingency planning.

Despite this, it was the Irish Road Haulage Association that alerted the Irish Government at approximately 10:00. The Irish authorities then informed the Welsh Government while simultaneously seeking clarity from Stena. Only following this intervention was the incident classified as major or severe, triggering the appropriate level of inspection and response.

This raises a fundamental issue. In incidents of this scale, there should be a mandatory requirement for ferry operators to immediately notify the relevant authorities. Whether this obligation is established through legislation, protocol, licence conditions, or binding regulation, it must be unequivocal and enforceable.

At a minimum, ferry operators such as Stena and Irish Ferries should immediately alert freight and coach operators holding direct accounts with them. There remains a reluctance to do so, which we believe is driven more by market protection and commercial interests than by the needs of Wales, Ireland, the travelling public, tourism, and the haulage and transport sectors.

Notably, the ferry operator did not initiate any discussion regarding alternative routing or contingency arrangements. Such discussions should commence immediately upon the occurrence of an incident and continue throughout the inspection process.

In fairness, a decision and reopening timeline was communicated at approximately 15:00, representing a significant improvement. However, we firmly believe this was influenced by the direct involvement of both Welsh and Irish Government officials. Our association was actively pressing Departments, Ministers, Politicians, and Media outlets. Without that level of pressure, it is doubtful that the same urgency or responsiveness would have been achieved.

One striking observation from this response is the continued absence of pre-prepared alternative plans or route scenarios, despite the experiences of 2024/2025. We have not been informed, nor do we believe either Government has seen the completion of the promised interoperability trials allowing ferries to berth and manoeuvre at all ports serving Wales and Ireland. These trials were repeatedly committed to at meetings and forums, with completion promised by November 2025.

Once these trials are completed, there should be ready-made scenario templates for alternative routing. These must account for freight logistics, departure and arrival ports, and include Birkenhead, Liverpool, and all ferry operators, not solely Ro-Ro services. Such planning is essential for worst-case scenarios arising from weather, climate impacts, human error, or unforeseen accidents.

We would also ask the Welsh authorities to assess whether any older berths further within the port remain available or could be reactivated, even for smaller vessels, particularly when shelter is required.

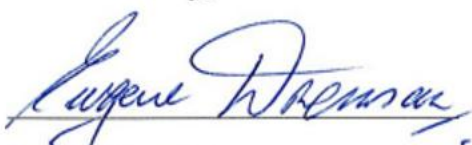
In addition, we strongly encourage a detailed review of the current single-berth scheduling system. From our observations, this approach is now well embedded and functioning effectively. During two test periods over Christmas, the single-vessel scheduling allowed heavy seasonal traffic to flow steadily, with reduced congestion, less clustering, and improved safety on the A55. It also improved access for local traffic and reduced emissions, contributing positively to carbon reduction.

From a safety perspective, this system significantly improves conditions within the port for employees, users, and statutory agencies, allowing them to operate more effectively and securely. The efficiencies gained benefit all stakeholders.

While ferry companies are private entities, there are wider public, economic, and safety considerations that must take precedence over purely commercial interests. If operators believe they have incurred losses, they should quantify these and engage constructively so that such concerns can be incorporated into workable solutions. However, under no circumstances should we revert to scenarios where multiple ferry arrivals and departures are scheduled simultaneously, as this creates unnecessary risk and congestion while reducing flexibility for all ferry Customers. With eight sailings constrained to just four available time slots, the resulting compressed timetable forces ferries to arrive and depart at the same time. This leads to traffic congestion within ports and on surrounding road networks, as well as excessive vehicle stacking inside port areas, particularly in Dublin, where space is already severely limited.

We respectfully request a thorough and in-depth review of these matters.

Yours sincerely,


Eugene Drennan



Ein cyf/Our ref:KS/PO/58/2026

Andrew RT Davies, MS

Chair of the Economy,
Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

29 January 2026

Dear Andrew

Thank you for your letter regarding the closure of Terminal 5 at Holyhead Port after a berthing incident on Friday, 5 December.

I share your concern about this further incident within the Port of Holyhead and acknowledge that since this letter another incident took place at the beginning of January 2026. I have spoken to the port operator about both incidents.

The closure of terminal 5 did not affect crossings and the Port maintained a full sailing schedule thereafter. While passenger and freight capacity, loading cargo, trade volume and economic activity are ultimately matters for the Port as a commercial entity, I have been reassured by Port officials that no impacts were felt across these areas.

Since December 2024 and following your work and that of the Welsh Government convened Irish Sea Taskforce, we have seen an improvement in the response to subsequent port closures. There is now a commitment on the parts of any Welsh Port dealing with an incident, to inform governments and the core taskforce membership group as quickly as possible and continue to share communication in a timely manner until normal operations resume.

I have thanked all those involved for putting into practice those key elements that we discussed and agreed at our Irish Sea taskforce as being vital when an incident of this nature occurs.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
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Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales

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.

As a commercial entity any actions on the prevention of further incidents must come from the Port Authority itself and they have reviewed all marine procedures and historical berthing incidents undertaken. This includes looking for any trends or common issues. Their berthing parameters have been reduced and guidance issued on berthing and the use of fenders to all companies and masters. We remain in very close contact with Stena Line.

On 14 January I issued a written statement on the Irish Sea Taskforce and published the recommendations [Ministers welcome strengthened ties as Irish Sea Taskforce recommendations published | GOV.WALES](#)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio



Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair of Economy, Trade, and
Rural Affairs Committee

Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

29 January 2026

Dear Andrew

I am writing to inform you that the meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU relations was held on 21 January 2026.

Also attending the meeting were:

- Nick Thomas-Symonds, Minister for the Cabinet Office.
- Angus Robertson, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture, Scottish Government
- Michelle O'Neill, First Minister of Northern Ireland
- Emma Little-Pengelly, Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland

This was the second meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU relations since the UK and EU summit on the 19 May 2025 and the announcement of the UK-EU Common Understanding Agreement.

During the meeting I outlined the priority areas for Welsh Government, including where we believe future agreements will require devolved implementation, or where we believe negotiations will significantly impact on Wales.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
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Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

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.

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Ken Poole
Head of Economic Development
Cardiff Council

Councillor Dave Hughes
Leader
Flintshire County Council

Councillor Rob Stewart
Leader
Swansea Council

30 January 2026

Dear Ken, Dave and Rob,

Follow-up from the committee meeting held on 21 January 2026 – Inward Investment

Thank you again for attending the Committee's evidence session on 21 January 2026, as part of its inquiry into Inward Investment. As mentioned at the end of the session, time constraints for the meeting meant that there were a few questions the Committee were unable to reach, but would be very keen to hear your views on. These are as follows:

- How much of a barrier is infrastructure to Wales attracting more inward investment? What are the key challenges Wales faces, and how should these be addressed?
- To what extent do businesses in your area currently benefit from inward investment supply chains, and how can they be better supported to do so by the Welsh and UK governments?

- With only four months until the next Senedd election, what would be your top three inward investment priorities for the next Welsh Government to take forward from May 2026, and why?

With thanks in advance, I would be very grateful to receive your responses please by 19 February 2026.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with some capital letters.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Walter May
CEO
Global Welsh

30 January 2026

Dear Walter,

Inward investment inquiry

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee is currently undertaking an [inquiry into inward investment](#). We feel that Global Welsh may have valuable insight that would help us understand the experience of investors based outside of the UK and we greatly appreciate any thoughts you can share.

We would be particularly keen to hear your views, if any, on:

1. The role of the Welsh Government's overseas offices including whether you feel they are effectively promoting Wales as a destination for inward investment and any information you may have on their success in generating inward investment leads; and
2. The "customer journey" for investors who are in the process of investing in Wales more broadly.

We would also welcome your feedback on any other areas covered by the Inquiry. The terms of reference are:

- How effective is the Welsh Government's approach to attracting inward investors to Wales, and what are its main strengths and weaknesses? How should any perceived weaknesses be addressed?

- To what extent does the Welsh Government's approach to attracting inward investment target areas of strength within the Welsh economy? How successfully it is taking opportunities in emerging sectors with the potential to play a key role in the future economy?
- How well do the different layers of government work together to bring inward investment into Wales, and are there any improvements that could be made?
- How effectively does the Welsh Government provide ongoing support to inward investors, and to what extent does this support existing investors to expand or safeguard their operations in Wales?
- What are the key barriers Wales faces in attracting and retaining inward investment, and how should these be tackled?
- Which examples of best practice from beyond Wales could the Welsh Government learn from in relation to attracting inward investment and providing ongoing support to inward investors?
- To what extent does the available data provide a clear and comprehensive picture of inward investment into Wales, and are there any improvements that should be made?

If possible, please can you send your response by 19 February 2026. Your contribution will help ensure that we consider a wide range of views as part of our report.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Ty Francis MBE and Marc Walby
Co-founders
New York Welsh

30 January 2026

Dear Ty and Marc,

Inward investment inquiry

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee is currently undertaking an [inquiry into inward investment](#). We feel that New York Welsh may have valuable insight that would help us understand the experience of investors based outside of the UK and we greatly appreciate any thoughts you can share.

We would be particularly keen to hear your views, if any, on:

1. The role of the Welsh Government's overseas offices including whether you feel they are effectively promoting Wales as a destination for inward investment and any information you may have on their success in generating inward investment leads; and
2. The "customer journey" for investors who are in the process of investing in Wales more broadly.

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If possible, please can you send your response by 19 February 2026. Your contribution will help ensure that we consider a wide range of views as part of our report.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Shevaun Haviland CBE

Director General

British Chambers of Commerce

30 January 2026

Dear Shevaun,

Inward investment inquiry

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee is currently undertaking an [inquiry into inward investment](#). We feel that the British Chambers of Commerce may have valuable insight that would help us understand the experience of investors based outside of the UK and we greatly appreciate any thoughts you can share.

We would be particularly keen to hear your views, if any, on:

1. The role of the Welsh Government's overseas offices including whether you feel they are effectively promoting Wales as a destination for inward investment and any information you may have on their success in generating inward investment leads; and
2. The "customer journey" for investors who are in the process of investing in Wales more broadly.

We would also welcome your feedback on any other areas covered by the Inquiry. The terms of reference are:

- How effective is the Welsh Government's approach to attracting inward investors to Wales, and what are its main strengths and weaknesses? How should any perceived weaknesses be addressed?

- To what extent does the Welsh Government's approach to attracting inward investment target areas of strength within the Welsh economy? How successfully it is taking opportunities in emerging sectors with the potential to play a key role in the future economy?
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- To what extent does the available data provide a clear and comprehensive picture of inward investment into Wales, and are there any improvements that should be made?

If possible, please can you send your response by 19 February 2026. Your contribution will help ensure that we consider a wide range of views as part of our report.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English