

# Assembly Commission

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Meeting Venue:

**Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Tŷ Hywel**

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Meeting date:

**Thursday, 29 January 2015**

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Meeting time:

**13.00**

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Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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## **Agenda** AC(4)2015(2)

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### **1 Introduction**

Introduction and apologies

Declarations of interest

Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 1 – 3)

### **2 Security update – Oral item**

**3 Carbon Management Strategy – Conclusion and Future Plans** (Pages 4 – 15)

**4 Corporate Performance Report, April – December 2014** (Pages 16 – 33)

**5 Highlight Report (July – December 2014)** (Pages 34 – 83)

**6 Review of Assembly Commission Effectiveness – update on actions**

(Pages 84 – 89)

**7 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Minutes – 10 November 2014**

(Pages 90 – 100)

**8 Any other business**

## Assembly Commission

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Venue: **Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Tŷ Hywel**

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Date: **Thursday, 15 January 2015**

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Time: **09.00 – 10.15**

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**Minutes:** AC(4)2015(1)

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**Commission**

**Members:**

**Dame Rosemary Butler AM (Chair)**

**Peter Black AM**

**Angela Burns AM**

**Sandy Mewies AM**

**Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM**

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**Officials present:**

**Claire Clancy, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly**

**Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business**

**Craig Stephenson, Interim Director of Commission Services**

**Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation**

**Sulafa Thomas, Head of Commission Secretariat**

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**Others in  
attendance:**

**David Melding AM, Deputy Presiding Officer**

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## 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction and apologies

**There were no apologies.**

## 1.2 Declarations of interest

**There were no declarations of interest.**

## 1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting

**The minutes of the 4 December meeting were agreed.**

## **2 Constitutional Change – submission to the Secretary of State**

At the meeting on 17 November, Commissioners agreed to write to the Secretary of State for Wales in order to inform the anticipated St. David's Day cross-party agreement setting out the future of Welsh devolution settlement. The Commission discussed the scope and content of a draft report on this matter, as well as arrangements for sharing the report with stakeholders.

The Commission agreed that matters relating to the size of the Assembly, and its system of election, should be devolved to the institution itself, rather than being legislated for in Westminster. They felt this should be done as soon as possible. Commissioners also discussed the size of the National Assembly and the implications, particularly financial, of various increases in the size of the Assembly.

The Commission agreed that the number of elected Members in the Assembly must be increased. Commissioners reasoning was driven by the desire to give Members a realistic opportunity to scrutinise the policy, administration, spending and legislative proposals of the Welsh Government as robustly as the people of Wales deserve. They felt that the outcomes and impacts of the work that Members do are significant and that it was important to focus their report on addressing the needs of the institution. Commissioners acknowledged that there are costs associated with democracy, and observed that the figures in the paper they received demonstrate the cost, even with an increase in the number of Assembly Members, as remaining a very small percentage of the Welsh block; they asked for this to be emphasised in the report.

Commissioners discussed that the expectations on Members today, let alone any extension of the Assembly's powers and responsibilities, make the case for more Members compelling. They felt they would need to consider how to support Members to deliver their roles well in the period prior to an increase in Member numbers.

The Commission agreed to publish a report covering the themes of their discussions, and to write to the Secretary of State, and group leaders, sending a copy of the report. Commissioners felt it was important to focus their report on the facts and to make a useful contribution to the current constitutional debate. They agreed to make their report available to Members, the media and the public.

### **3 Any other business**

The Commission formally approved the appointment of the successful candidates in the two recent recruitment competitions for the Director of Commission Services and the Director of Finance.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 29 January, it will be one of the regular Performance themed meetings. The Commission will be considering the Corporate Performance Report April - December 2014, the Annual Report on our Carbon Management strategy and the latest Highlight report.

# Agenda Item 3

Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 4

Document is Restricted

Document is Restricted

# Agenda Item 5 ASSEMBLY – RESTRICTED

## Comisiwn y Cynulliad Assembly Commission

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Wales



### AC(4)2014(2) Paper 4

Date: 29 January 2015

Time: 13:00–14:30

Venue: Presiding Officer's office

Author name and contact number: Claire Clancy, ext 8233

*This paper has been prepared for consideration by the National Assembly for Wales Commission. It is confidential and should not be shared more widely. When the Commission meets to consider the paper, Commissioners will determine whether the paper should remain confidential or be published.*

## Highlight report to the Commission

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January 2015

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## Highlight report to the Commission

### 1.0 Introduction

1.1 The highlight report outlines work that has recently been undertaken, or is underway, to make progress towards the Commission's strategic goals. The report aims to provide Commissioners with useful information so that they can perform their role of oversight and holding management to account. This report gives an update on key activities and projects since June 2014.

## A. Strategic Goal – provide outstanding parliamentary support

### 2.0 Reporting of Proceedings review

2.1 A review has been underway to consider how we report proceedings, including the Record of Proceedings (ROP) and the wider question of how people get and use information about what has happened at the Assembly.

2.2 The review is:

- a. exploring and identifying different ways of working and the use of technology to improve efficiency and make best use of resources in this important area of activity;
- b. considering the form that reporting proceedings should take in order to meet the needs of Members and stakeholders; and
- c. assessing the opportunities that are available to use these products in different ways to make the Assembly's activities more transparent, open and easier to engage with in a digital world.

2.3 The first part of the review concentrated on making the production of the Record more cost effective and we have been looking closely at the processes involved, including making efficient use of Members' prepared speaking notes to reduce transcript time.

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2.4 Translation and Reporting Service (TRS) staff have trialled different ways of working during the autumn term in order to inform the outcome of the review. These are now being analysed.

**3.0 Machine Translation Project**

3.1 Responsibility for the on-going development and promotion of the Microsoft Translator rests with TRS. They are considering ways to ensure that service capacity can meet increasing demands for bilingual services.

**4.0 Members' use of the Research Service***Making information more interesting*

4.1 The Research Service trialled a series of infographics relating to the Welsh Government's budget this autumn. The aim was to provide Members, AMSS and the general public with quick and easy to digest representations of the scale of overall changes within Welsh Government spending plans. Feedback and interest from Members and the public was great. Our infographic of the Local Government Provisional Settlement had the highest use on the Research Service Twitter feed, in terms of tweets, re-tweets, likes and being mentioned in further tweets.

*Meetings between Research Service and AMSS*

4.2 The Research Service has held two 'Business Improvement Group' meetings with cross-party AMSS. The group's aim is to help us tailor our support to the changing needs of Members and their staff. The meetings considered our approach to proactive research publications e.g. what types of publications and topics AMSS and Members find useful – and the customer experience of submitting enquires. Some helpful ideas emerged, such as how we can make it easier for readers to access new publications relevant to them. As a service, we are finding the meetings really help us to understand how Members, AMSS and party groups use and view our services.

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Highlight Report to the Commission***Members' use of the Research Service*

**4.3** Assembly Members and their staff are continuing to make excellent use of the Research Service for confidential, individual research enquiries. For the period July to December 2014, enquiries were received from 53 AMs (88%); 49 (82%) asked at least twice; 46 (77%) asked at least 3 times and 45 (75%) asked at least 4 times – figures which are very similar to the previous period.

**5.0 Remuneration Board**

**5.1** The Remuneration Board is currently considering the full package of remuneration for Members in the Fifth Assembly. During the summer and autumn, the Board consulted on proposals for pension arrangements, changes to matters relating to the arrangements for AMSS and allowances for Members. In November, the Board also consulted on proposals for Member salaries in the Fifth Assembly, which provoked significant media and public interest. The Board will shortly issue a consultation on the Determination for the fifth year of the Fourth Assembly and the Determination for the Fifth Assembly.

**5.2** The Board will continue to meet regularly with Members, Party Leaders and AMSS to gather a wide representation of political views on every strand of its remit. It will also ensure that it gives the public the opportunity to engage with the Board through different methods of communication.

**6.0 Supporting Committees**

**6.1** In November, Commissioners considered progress against the review of committee support. Highlights of the improvements delivered include:

- more consistent and timely provision of papers;
- the increasing availability of the papers in English and Welsh;
- greater breadth and depth of engagement with the people of Wales, especially young people; and
- delivery of an ongoing programme of professional development for Members.

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**6.2** There are two key pieces of work underway and due for completion in the next quarter, which will ensure Commission services provide the optimum support for Members over the remainder of the Fourth Assembly. These are:

- deploying temporary additional resources to address a heavy legislative scrutiny workload; and
- holding meetings with individual Members to build up a profile of how they undertake committee work and thus inform service design.

**7.0 Information and Communications Technology*****Future Services Transition Project***

**7.1** The Future Services Transition Project was completed on time and under budget in July 2014. All contract arrangements with Atos have now come to an end, and, with the exception of the shared telephony service, that will end in July 2015, the Assembly and Welsh Government's ICT networks are now completely separate. The team worked closely with the Welsh Government to successfully ensure the continuation of Siambr ICT services for Welsh Ministers following network separation. The contract that provides ICT engineer support for Constituency Offices and homeworkers was awarded to Antur Teifi and started in August.

**7.2** Since we took on full control and ownership of our systems, the team has made a significant number of changes to update and rationalise the infrastructure. These include:

- migrating the backups of our data for the entire estate onto a new system;
- introducing substantial cost savings;
- reconfiguring and redistributing storage servers to increase capacity;
- making the best use of our equipment without having to buy more servers;

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- moving key systems onto newer, more resilient hardware, removing old equipment and reducing maintenance and power costs; and
- upgrading business critical software to the latest versions.

*Senedd.tv*

7.3 In September, the new Senedd.tv service was launched. It allows users to watch, pause and replay live broadcasts on numerous devices, including tablets and smartphones. Users can also select clips of meetings that can then be shared or embedded onto other websites. The new site automatically takes and updates all meeting information from the Assembly's Business Management System (ABMS), including, date, time, agenda items and attendees – all of which had to be manually inputted on the old system.

7.4 We have installed a new digital archive for the Assembly's proceedings, moving away from tape-based recordings to a more resilient and environmentally-friendly method of storage. The new archive offers full online access to high-quality footage for the Broadcasting Unit staff for the first time, and the host broadcaster can play back footage to broadcast partners at any time, even when the meeting is live. As a result of implementing the new system, we have been able to restart the BSL interpretation service for First Minister's Questions, in partnership with S4C and the Wales Council for Deaf People. This is shown on Tuesday's 'Y Dydd yn y Cynulliad' programme and the new Senedd.tv website's 'Senedd Extra' section.

*The Assembly Website*

7.5 The Assembly's website was successfully migrated onto a new Sharepoint platform in early September. Over 120,000 pages and 100,000 documents were moved onto the new platform, which allows the website to be more 'mobile-friendly' and offers enhanced searchability functions for users.

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*.wales/.cymru*

**7.6** As an early adopter of the new top level internet domain names for Wales, the Assembly became one of the first organisations to take on .wales / .cymru website addresses in early October. This was followed by the adoption of the new domain addresses for all Assembly e-mails in December.

**8.0 Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for Members and AMSS**

**8.1** Between July and December, a wide range of training and development opportunities have been attended by Members and support staff with 15 new Members participating in some form of CPD activity. In total, 145 CPD opportunities were taken up by Members during the six month period.

**8.2** During the same period a total of 71 new AMSS participated in some form of CPD activity, with a total of 258 CPD opportunities undertaken. Activities included:

- Budget briefings for Committees
- Legislative scrutiny with Committees
- Mindfulness for Members
- Media training for Members
- Scottish Referendum briefing
- Supreme court judgement
- Suicide intervention
- Effective writing
- Social media
- Strategic Leadership diploma
- Effective media relations
- Speech writing
- Welsh

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**9.0 Engagement and work of the Assembly on EU affairs**

Examples of activities of Committee of the Regions (CoR) Members and participation of AMs in EU conferences

- 9.1** The Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM visited Brussels for meetings with the Welsh MEPs, EU officials, and other Brussels-based representatives.
- 9.2** Mick Antoniw AM has been actively involved in the response of the Committee of the Regions to the Ukrainian crisis. He has been nominated as a new member of the Committee of the Region's CORLEAP (Eastern European Partnership political forum).
- 9.3** Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM spoke at a conference on the role of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in supporting territorial investments across the EU. He also participated in a high level group visit of politicians from the Committee of the Regions to the EIB in Luxembourg in November. All of this relates to Rhodri Glyn's work as rapporteur for the Committee of the Regions during 2013 on two reports looking at budget synergies and synergies between public and private finance, including the role of the EIB.
- 9.4** Both Mick Antoniw AM and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM also attended a number of Committee of the Regions 'committee' meetings and plenary sessions in Brussels during the autumn.
- 9.5** This January, David Melding AM, will speak at an EU conference at the Chamber of Deputies in the Italian Parliament in Rome. The conference is looking at the role of National Parliaments in the EU and David will speak about the role of sub-National Parliaments, presenting the Assembly's experiences with EU affairs and drawing from the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee's report into Wales' role in EU decision-making.

EU-related work in Committees and plenary

- 9.6** A wide range of EU-related work has been addressed by a number of Assembly Committees, and in plenary. Details can be found in the

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Winter edition of “Europe matters” which is attached to this Highlight Report as appendix 1.

Proactive EU outputs

- 9.7** The EU Office and the Research Service have produced a range of pro-active publications to support Members work on EU issues. These include the EU Weekly Update, Europe Matters, the @SeneddEurope twitter feed, and EU Policy Updates and blogs on InBrief Research blog, including the European Commission’s proposals for a European Strategic Investment Fund, the TTIP negotiations, possible EU support following the closure of the Murco plant in Milford Haven, and the recently adopted regulation on EU invasive alien species.
- 9.8** The Assembly’s Research Service in collaboration with colleagues from the libraries/research services in the Irish Parliament, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Scottish Parliament, the House of Commons and House of Lords, produced an updated paper on the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy reforms adopted in 2013. This paper has been shortlisted for the CAP 2014 Communication Awards by the European Commission, which takes place in Brussels on 29 January 2015.
- 9.9** On 26–28 January a delegation of 15 officials from the Assembly, drawn from the Research Service, Legal Service, Committees and Chamber Services, Private Office and Communications, will visit Brussels for an induction/training programme that has been organised and (in most part) financed by the European Commission.

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## B. Strategic goal – engage with the people of Wales and promote Wales

### 10.0 Women in Public Life

10.1 As part of the Women in Public Life campaign the Presiding Officer wrote to Party Leaders asking their parties to consider steps to ensure more women stand for election in 2016. Following their positive replies, the Presiding Officer invited them to nominate a member representative to be on the Assembly Women in Democracy Caucus. The Caucus has met several times with the aim to seek and impart best practice, particularly from other parliaments around the world to increase women's parliamentary representation. The Caucus report will be published in March 2015.

*Official launch of #POWiPL Mentoring and Development scheme*

10.2 The Presiding Officer's Mentoring and Developing Scheme is a programme that supports women who want to take a step into public life. With women being significantly underrepresented in public life this scheme has an important role to play. It will help to ensure the effective development and progression of women into roles that often have a direct influence on people's lives across Wales.

10.3 Chwarae Teg and Cardiff Business School planned the delivery and format of the scheme on behalf of the Assembly which led to its official launch on 9 October 2014.

10.4 Fourteen mentees are now paired up with approved mentors. They will meet on a regular basis so that the mentees can gain support, encouragement and experience to progress their personal development and confidence over the next 18 months. Mentees will also have an opportunity to shadow those in senior management roles and public life in a variety of sectors in Wales, such as Assembly Members and Chief Executives of organisations.

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*Launch of Joint Statement*

- 10.5** The Assembly, Welsh Ministers and Welsh Local Government Association reaffirmed their joint commitment to increasing the number of women in public office in Wales by signing a joint statement in the Senedd on the 25 June 2014.
- 10.6** All three institutions have undertaken strategic programmes to address the lack of women in public office in Wales.
- 11.0 Hyperlocal Newsday**
- 11.1** This event, hosted in partnership with Cardiff University’s Centre for Community Journalism, formed part of the Presiding Officer’s on-going campaign to address the democratic deficit caused by the gap in coverage of Welsh political life in the media.
- 11.2** The event gave hyperlocal and community journalists access to the Senedd to enable them to report the work of the Assembly that is relevant to their locality and audiences. Press conferences were arranged allowing all four parties the opportunity to address the journalists and to respond to their questions.
- 11.3** Professor Richard Sambrook, Director of the Centre for Journalism and former Director of Global News at the BBC, acted as news editor on the day offering advice and guidance to the hyperlocal and community journalists.
- 11.4** The news stories and interviews produced on the day can be viewed at the link below:
- <http://democraticdeficitwales.tumblr.com/>
- 11.5** The Assembly is now working with Cardiff University to draft a report outlining the main findings of the day and some of the action that could be taken to support hyperlocal and community journalists in the reporting of the work of the Assembly. We expect to publish the report early in 2015.

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**12.0 Influencing and preparing for constitutional change**

**12.1** The Presiding Officer has continued to promote her three priorities for constitutional change: capacity, sovereignty and reserved powers. She met with the new Secretary of State for Wales for the first time in November, and they agreed to have regular meetings in the future. In addition to this, they have exchanged correspondence on a variety of constitutional issues.

The Presiding Officer (and the four party leaders) gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Political and Constitutional Reform when the committee held a meeting at the Senedd on 4 December 2014.

**13.0 Involving young people in the work of the Assembly**

**13.1** Since September we have delivered 181 learning sessions, engaging face to face with **5,839** young people including two Question Time events in North Wales. A table detailing some of the highlights in this area can be found in Annex A.

**13.2** Information about how young people are getting increasingly involved in Assembly Business is now promoted on [www.yourassembly.org](http://www.yourassembly.org), including twitter and Facebook.

**13.3** In October, a qualified youth worker joined the team to develop our youth engagement activities across Wales. Numerous meetings with organisations and groups working with young people outside the ‘classroom experience’ have taken place. In December, two workshops were held with the BA Youth and Community Work students at the University of Wales, Trinity St David’s.

**13.4** In November, a national conversation on lowering the voting age to 16 was launched by the Presiding Officer. This consultation will run until 2 June 2015, after which we will analyse the results and present them for discussion at a Youth Day event in the Senedd in July.

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**14.0 Outreach activities**

**14.1** Between July and December the Communications team has worked with the following groups and organisations, delivering workshops to raise awareness and share information about the Assembly and its work:

<b>Communities First groups</b>	<b>Cadwyn</b>	<b>Disability forums</b>
Women Making a Difference	YMCA	Age Cymru
Pop Up Talent	Disability access groups	U3A
The Scouts	Kim Inspire	The Stroke Association
All Wales Participation Network	Youth Forum network	Principle Youth Workers Group
TAG – University of Wales network of BA/MA Youth Work	Agored Cymru	Children in Wales
Youth Cymru	ISSA Wales– New leaf programme working with Muslim and BME ex– offenders	Foundation for Refugee Education (Fred) Ltd
Girl Guiding	Paul Glaze from CWYS	Jason Nancurvis from Working on Wheels
URDD	Royal Welsh Agricultural Society	National Eisteddfod
National Theatre Wales	Wales Governance	Hansard Society

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	Centre	
Swansea University	Sports Wales	Welsh Government

## 15.0 Summer shows

15.1 In 2014 we visited 12 national and regional shows across Wales and spoke to nearly 10,000 members of the public. We particularly developed our offering at the National Eisteddfod and the Royal Welsh show where we secured more prominent, permanent structures, and continued our sponsorship of the Societies Pavilion at the National Eisteddfod.

15.2 We have also worked with partners to deliver the following programme of events that raised awareness of Assembly business and various initiatives.

### Royal Welsh Show

15.3 At the Royal Welsh show we worked with the Environment and Sustainability Committee to deliver a reception for the Committee's stakeholders to launch the Future Generations Bill consultation.

### National Eisteddfod

15.4 In partnership with the National Library for Wales, we delivered the event – *One hundred years since the beginning of the First World War – Remembering, learning, understanding, and grieving*. We used this event as a platform from which to launch our commemorative programme to mark the centenary since the start of the First World War.

15.5 *Women in the Arts* – a panel discussion event that discussed the role of Women in senior positions within the arts sector.

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**15.6** In partnership with the Wales Governance Centre we delivered the event – *Wrexham prison – good idea?* This event discussed the pros and cons of the proposed super prison in Wrexham.

**15.7** In partnership with the Welsh Government, S4C, the Welsh Association on translators, we delivered the event – *The Welsh language in a digital age*– which discussed the future of the Welsh language in the developing technological landscape.

**15.8** Other major events held during this period can be found in Annex B.

**16.0 Public Engagement with Committees**

**16.1** A number of public engagement activities have supported committee work aimed at getting a broader range of people involved in Assembly business. Examples include:

- Creating, promoting and summarising a survey on Recycling as part of the Environment and Sustainability Committee’s inquiry. We heard from 3,252 people, including 2,377 children and young people.
- Members of the Health and Social Care Committee visited projects such as the Wrexham Warehouse Project, Dan 24/7 in North Wales, DrugAid and Forsythia Youth Club in Merthyr as part of the committee’s inquiry into New Psychoactive Substances. These visits were followed by events with frontline staff in Wrexham and Merthyr Tydfil.
- A survey over the summer asked for young people’s opinions about the curriculum and qualifications. Over 1,000 young people took part. The data was used as part of the Enterprise and Business Committee’s Inquiry into Assisting Young People into Work. The data was also sent to Professor Donaldson by the Children Young People and Education Committee to inform the Welsh Government’s Reviews of Assessment and Curriculum.

Professor Donaldson said: *“I am very grateful to the committee for bringing this to my attention and for sharing with me the*

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*findings of your recent survey. It will certainly be of great interest to me as I formulate my recommendations for the Minister for Education and Skills”.*

The team also filmed young people from different parts of Wales for the inquiry. These videos were edited together into a video package which was shown to the Committee in a public committee meeting ahead of a scrutiny session with the Deputy Minister.

- We arranged an event for the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee as part of their inquiry into Making Laws in the Fourth Assembly. This was the first time that a committee event was CPD accredited, meaning that those in attendance were not only able to contribute to the inquiry by taking part in group discussions with Members, but also received CPD points for participating.
- As part of the Communities, Equalities and Local Government (CELG) committee inquiry in to Poverty, sessions were arranged across Wales where Members were able to visit projects such as Remploy, RNIB and the Oasis project to discuss issues with service users.

**17.0 Siambr Refit/Plenary Business Support Project**

**17.1** The solution that the Commission approved includes a revised desk layout, fixed refreshed IT and development of software in-house to replace the existing software in the Siambr.

**17.2** A full sized desk mock-up was produced to allow Members to see the proposed desk design and give feedback. There was a lot of constructive feedback which has now been used to refine the desk design so that it meets the needs of the Members.

**17.3** Progress has also been made to design and build the software which will be used during Plenary. Requirements gathering and test builds of the software have been progressing well and work will continue

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through the year. We will be consulting Members on the software in the early part of 2015.

**18.0 Social media**

**18.1** We have seen some significant milestones achieved during this period. Over 60,000 users have now watched a piece of video content on our YouTube channel since 2009, while more Twitter accounts have been launched to promote specific pieces of work at the Assembly, the latest being @SeneddOutreach/@SeneddAllgym. Further information is in Annex C.

**19.0 Media coverage of Assembly business**

**19.1** The media relations focus has been on several key strategic projects since July which have attracted good media coverage:

*Engagement with Young people*

**19.2** There was wide media coverage of the launch of Youth Charter in July including essay pieces by the Presiding Officer in Western Mail and Daily Post.

**19.3** This was followed up in November with wide-ranging coverage of the launch of the Votes@ 16 conversation, including interviews with the Presiding Officer on BBC Wales, ITV Wales and Heart Radio. The Western Mail and Daily Post again ran essay pieces from the Presiding Officer as well as coverage across smaller weekly titles including Golwg.

*Constitutional Change*

**19.4** A key focus for the media team has been raising the media profile of the Presiding Officer's position in the on-going debate about future constitutional arrangements. This has included essay work across many platforms including the Western Mail, Daily Post and the IWA's Clic on Wales. This included work during the lead-up to the Scottish referendum and the debate that has followed.

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**19.5** The Presiding Officer’s core messages of increased capacity, sovereignty and reserved powers have been promoted at every possible opportunity during the on-going debate about Britain’s constitutional future. For example, we issued a statement from the Presiding Officer following the publication of the Smith Commission report and those core messages have formed a central part of the media coverage across a range of Welsh media, and further afield including an interview on the state broadcaster in Iceland.

**19.6** Extensive coverage was also given to: the World War 1 commemorations on the Assembly’s estate as well as the Presiding Officer’s visit to Flanders; the Assembly’s emission’s targets; and the Commonwealth Games homecoming.

**20.0 Media coverage of Assembly Committees**

**20.1** Assembly committees have attracted good media coverage, with considerable attention paid to a number of reports. Examples were:

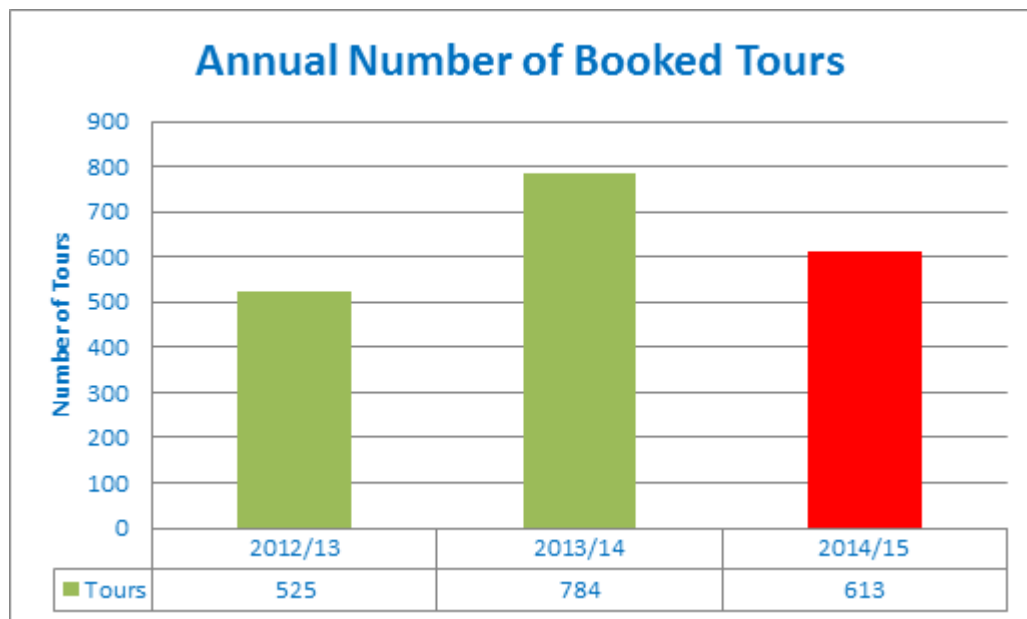
<b>Month</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
October	The presentation of a petition to the Petitions Committee calling for the Welsh Government not to proceed with the proposed ban on the use of e-cigarettes in public places.	<i>Western Mail</i> and <i>South Wales Argus</i>
	The Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee inquiry into how the Bill on holiday caravan parks could damage the caravan industry in Wales.	<i>South Wales Argus</i> , <i>North Wales Pioneer</i> , <i>North Wales Chronicle</i> , <i>Rhyl Journal</i> , <i>Denbighshire Free Press</i> and <i>News North Wales</i>
November	The Children and Young People Committee report on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	<i>BBC Wales News</i> , <i>ITV Wales News</i> , <i>S4C Newyddion</i> and in

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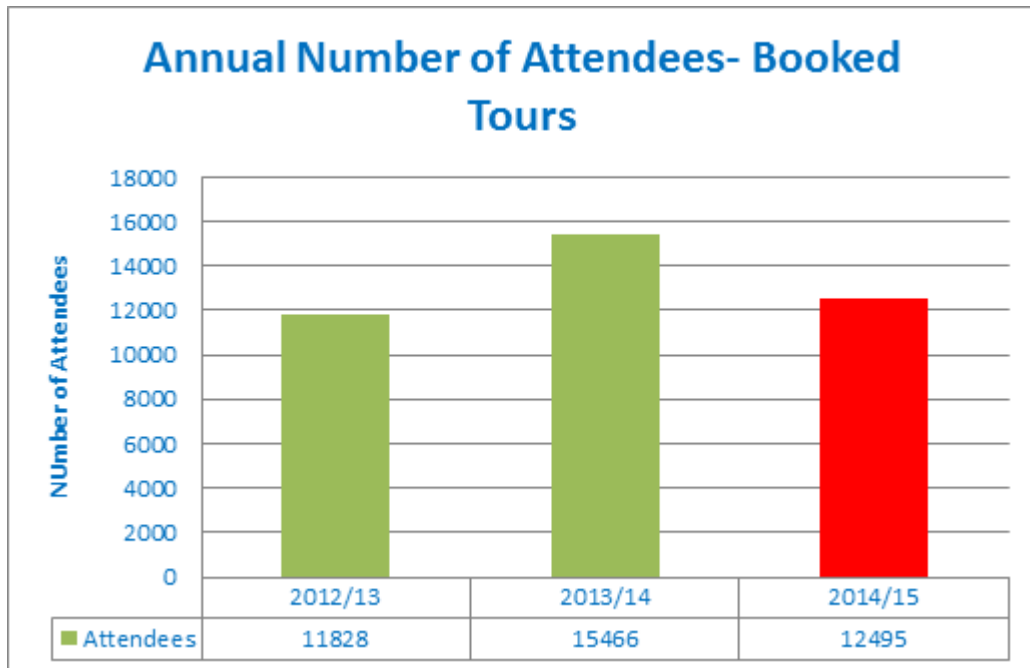
Month	Description	Coverage
	(CAMHS) in Wales	<i>Walesonline and South Wales Echo</i>
December	The Enterprise and Business Committee report on inward investment performance in Wales	<i>BBC Wales News, S4C Newyddion and BBC Wales Sunday Politics programme</i>

21.0 Tours of the Senedd

21.1 Pre-booked tours of the Senedd continue to be very popular as the graphs below show (figures for 2014/2015 are for 8 months). The feedback received is very positive and shows that groups leave with a much better understanding of the Assembly, the way it works and the current topics under consultation.



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22.0 Promoting Wales Internationally

22.1 Annex D lists the main international events and visits, including diplomatic visits.

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## C. Strategic goal – use resources wisely

### 23.0 Information Governance

- 23.1 An internal audit report in June recorded a satisfactory rating and noted significant progress having been made on raising awareness, across the Assembly, of the importance and responsibility for effective information governance.
- 23.2 A simplified protective marking scheme has been introduced; work continues to strengthen the information asset register process as a tool for managing information; and a self-assessment exercise has been undertaken by the Information Asset Owners.
- 23.3 The Information Governance Manager has delivered a number of awareness sessions in constituency offices to assist AMSS in relation to data protection and information management and these will continue to be offered over the coming year. Assembly Members are being assisted with data protection queries and a new data protection guidance document will be released early in 2015. Finally, a simple, easy-to-use information governance policy framework, will also be introduced early in 2015.

### 24.0 Capacity and Workforce Planning

- 24.1 Management Board has implemented a revised approach to Capacity Planning in order to improve our ability to deliver our corporate priorities, whilst at the same time managing effectively our finite resource pool.

### 25.0 Apprenticeship Scheme

- 25.1 The National Assembly for Wales Apprenticeship Program has been running for two years. Four Apprentices were recruited in the first year and another six Apprentices were recruited for 2013–14. The Apprentices are employed in various teams across the Assembly including our North Wales office.

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25.2 In October 2014 the Assembly was shortlisted as finalists in the annual prestigious Apprenticeship Awards Cymru. The awards recognise employers who commit to developing their workforce through apprenticeships.

25.3 Whilst we did not win the award, we were delighted to be nominated and will use the learning to help improve future Apprenticeship schemes. Our experience is helping us to develop an apprenticeship programme for Members, which is due to launch in time for the Fifth Assembly.

**26.0 Equality and accessibility**

*External Recognition*

26.1 The Assembly has received the **National Autistic Society Access Award**, which demonstrates our commitments to being an accessible venue for visitors on the autism spectrum.

26.2 We were also shortlisted for **Diverse Cymru’s Excellence in Equality Award** for the Equality Impact Assessment work done by the Remuneration Board.

*Events and Activities*

26.3 In June we raised awareness of different equality issues and promoted the support available to staff during an **Equality and Diversity Week**. Guest speakers included the Welsh Refugee Council, who discussed the realities of being a refugee in Wales, and the South Wales Police who discussed building trust and working with different communities.

26.4 In September **BSL interpretation of FMQs** was re-established. A BSL version of FMQs is now available to viewers later the same day on S4C and is archived on our YouTube channel.

26.5 In October our Black Minority Ethnic (BME) staff network and the Welsh Government’s Minority Ethnic Staff Network (MESN) held a joint event to celebrate **Black History Month**. The event focused on

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celebrating and showcasing the contribution of BME staff within the Welsh Government and the National Assembly.

- 26.6** To raise awareness of anti-bullying week (17–21 Nov 2014), contractors, Commission Staff, 18 Assembly Members and the Management Board took part in the **Hear it. Stop it. Don't be a Bystander Campaign** by signing a pledge to commit to challenging bullying behaviour and language.

*Supporting our Black Minority Ethnic (BME) staff and  
Increasing BME representation in the workforce*

- 26.7** To increase awareness, create a better understanding of the work of the Assembly and promote the Assembly as an employer of choice, our BME Action Plan Co-ordinator has attended job fairs and recruitment events, provided targeted coaching and support to potential BME job applicants, networked with over 20 diverse organisations and participated in community events like the Mela and the Black History Month Finale.
- 26.8** We are piloting the **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)** toolkit. The Equality Team have shared the EIA toolkit and guidance with colleagues across the organisation, ensuring that EIA's are embedded in all policy and project development.
- 26.9** In August our Internal Auditor did an **Equality Audit** looking at the adequacy and effectiveness of the Assembly's arrangements for equality and diversity. The audit identified a number of areas in which the Assembly is displaying good practice and some areas for improvement; overall it gave us a satisfactory grading.
- 27.0** **Work on the Assembly Estate – 10 Year Forward Maintenance and Refurbishment Plan**
- 27.1** As identified in the Assembly Commission Strategy for 2014–2016, we have developed a long term (rolling) prioritised investment programme for the estate, endorsed by the Investment and Resources Board. The plan will enable the Commission to ensure that our estate remains fit for purpose, reflects the Assembly's position nationally

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and internationally and positions the Senedd and the Pierhead at the heart of Welsh public life. The following projects have been completed over the past six months in the Tŷ Hywel buildings:

*Toilet Refurbishments*

- 27.2 Recognising that the Tŷ Hywel toilets have not been refurbished since the construction of the building in 1992, we have completed refurbishments including plumbing and pipework improvements. The refurbishments also ensured the inclusion of sustainable improvements including LED lighting, waterless urinals, sensor flushes, taps and soap dispensers. Further enhancements included increasing the size of cubicles where space allowed this. Considerable positive feedback has been received for these improvements to our facilities.

*Stairwell Refurbishment*

- 27.3 The stairwells had also not been refurbished since the buildings construction so have been redecorated, re-carpeted and fitted with low energy LED lighting to support our sustainability objectives.

*Tea point refurbishment*

- 27.4 The tea point refurbishments were completed in Assembly Member office areas over the summer recess to minimise disruption and this has been positively received by Members and their staff.

*New furniture for the Members' Tea Room*

- 27.5 Responding to feedback from Commissioners and Members, additional tables and seating were provided in the Members' Tea Room over the summer recess, to provide more table seating space in the Tea Room section for Members wishing to purchase food from the main restaurant hot counter. During the summer we also took the opportunity to replace the stained and damaged flooring. These additional facilities have been positively received by Members and are very well used.

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*Event space in the Milling Area*

- 27.6** Following feedback from Commissioners about the availability of event space during times of peak demand, a glass screen and glass doors have been installed to the Milling area adjacent to the Tŷ Hywel reception. We hope that Members will welcome the additional space this will provide for Member sponsored events.

*Cashpoint*

- 27.7** With the support of the in-house Post Office, a cashpoint was installed on the first floor corridor in September. The cashpoint has proved to be a very valuable and well used additional facility. However, we hope that Members and staff will continue to value and use the services of the Post Office on the Ground Floor, which are available from 10.30am to 1.30pm Tuesday to Thursday during session.

**28.0 Sustainability initiatives**

*Public Sector Sustainability Award*

- 28.1** In November the Assembly won the Most Sustainable Public Sector Organisation in Government at the Annual Public Sector Sustainability Awards ceremony. The award was given in recognition of an “impressive and important achievement” in contributing towards lowering the carbon emissions of the public sector. Some of the highlights recognised by the award are that the Assembly:

- has so far achieved a 37% reduction in energy emissions since 2008/09, against a 40% target;
- is in the process of assessing the feasibility of joining a proposed Cardiff district heating network using energy from waste as the primary fuel;
- will shortly be upgrading the existing Building Management System, providing further opportunities to optimise the efficiency of plant and use of energy;
- has increased its recycle rate from 68% to 96% since 2010/11; and

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- has achieved a reduction of 50% in waste CO2e emissions over the same period.

**28.2** The Commission has approved an energy reduction route map to reduce energy emissions by a further 30% by 2021 compared to 2012/13 levels.

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## D. Financial Update

### 29.0 2014–15 Financial position

29.1 The Commission's key financial performance indicators are to deliver a year end outturn underspend of 1% or less than the Budget, to achieve £500k of Value for Money savings and to pay invoices and expense claims within 10 days. We remain on target for each of these indicators.

29.2 Specifically, at the end of December 2014, the Commission is forecasting the year end position to be £200k (0.4%) underspent; the total Value for Money savings identified at the end of December is £542k including procurement action delivering £61k or 11%; and over the last quarter we have averaged 3.6 days to pay invoices and expense claims.

29.3 We have several projects being managed across this financial year and the next. There is, therefore, a risk that changes to projects' work programmes could affect the financial year end position. The Investment and Resourcing Board recently reviewed the financial contingency plans to manage this risk. The Board remains satisfied that the plans provide enough flexibility to absorb potential changes between now and the year end.

29.4 The Wales Audit Office are undertaking their interim audit in January in readiness for the year end.

29.5 The Commission will be laying a 2014–15 Supplementary Budget to increase the amounts for Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) and the income we can retain, so that both are in line with current forecasts.

### 30.0 Budget Update

30.1 In October, the 2015–16 Budget *Building on Investment and Change* was scrutinised by the Finance Committee before being debated and approved by Plenary on 19 November.

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**30.2** The total operational budget for 2015–16 is £50.9 million, which delivers a 1% real terms cut to the Commission when compared with 2014–15 Budget. In 2015–16, the financial impact of bringing ICT contracted–out services in house will be felt; this change placed ICT costs within our control and will release £800k for investment in ICT service improvements and enhancements.

**30.3** The proposed 2015–16 investment programme will include:

- updating of the ICT infrastructure, notably as we push forward with consolidating the ICT service in–house as well as a Siambro refit;
- progressing the Commission’s aspirations to become a truly bilingual organisation;
- sustainability work to reduce our environmental impact;
- outward engagement, including youth engagement;
- enhancing the Commission’s information management systems; and
- continuing our investment in the Assembly estate.

**30.4** Work has now started on drafting the 2016–17 Budget Strategy in readiness for Commission discussions later in the year.

**31.0 Procurement**

**31.1** The procurement team’s work supporting the Future ICT Services Programme has concluded. However, they continue to work closely with ICT to support two significant procurements –a new telephony solution and the re–tender of the broadcasting contract.

**31.2** The team has developed new contract management procedures and is rolling these out to all staff who manage contracts.

**31.3** Contract opportunities continue to be promoted where practicable to local SMEs. At present, 71% of our contracts by number (above £25k

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in value) are with local SMEs. A recent success in this area is the contract for ICT Field Engineers, which was previously provided by Atos, was awarded to Antur Teifi – an SME from Carmarthen.

*Key performance measures*

Measure	2014-15
Procurement savings	<b>£95,498</b>

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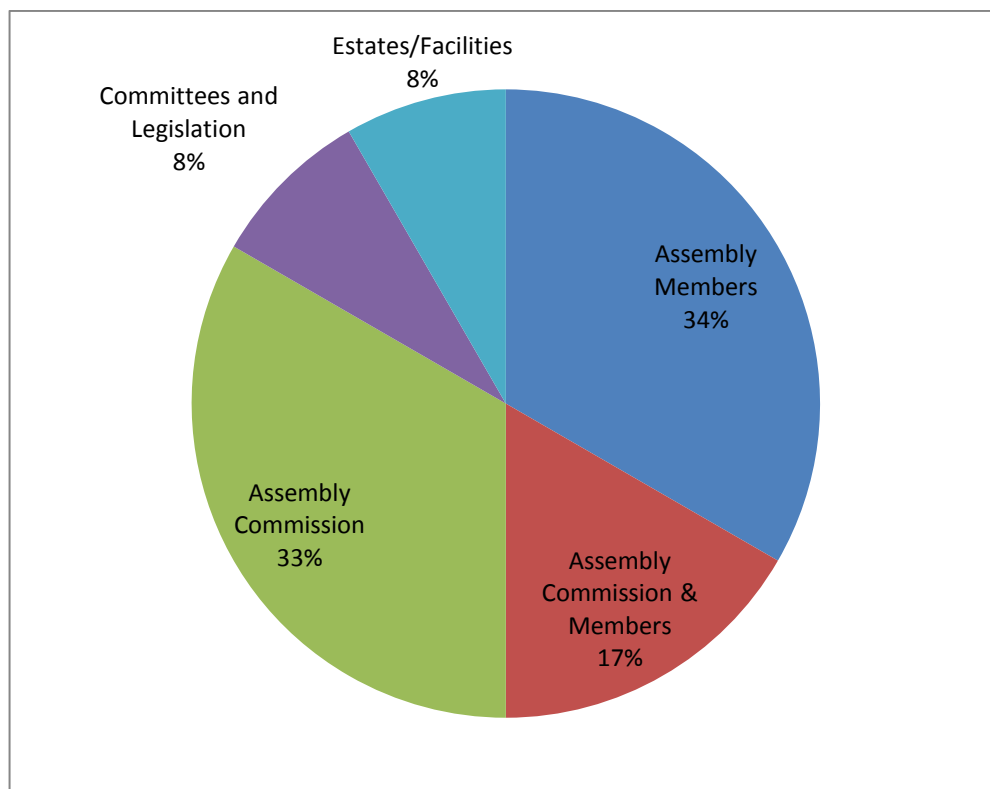
**E. Freedom of Information (FOI)**

**32.0 FOI requests for the period July–December 2014**

**32.1** A list of information disclosed since the last report under the Freedom of Information Act is attached at Annex E. This has been categorised to indicate the subject matter of FOI requests in the period. The list also includes details of information withheld due to FOI exemptions, those that have been partially released and those where no information is held.

**32.2** The chart below shows the 21 requests as they have been categorised. There were no time and cost exemptions applied.

**FOI requests by category (July–December 2014)**



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## Annex A

## Involving young people in the work of the Assembly

<b>Health and Social Care Committee</b>	Promoted the Legal Highs inquiry with schools and college groups, including online via the ‘yourassembly’ site.
<b>Environment and Sustainability</b>	Recycling Inquiry when over 2,783 young people responded to our survey.
<b>Scrutiny of the First Minister</b>	Every group of young people who met in the period leading up to the October meeting, were given the opportunity to suggest questions for Members to ask the First Minister during a scrutiny session on constitutional affairs.
<b>Enterprise and Business</b>	Collected evidence from young people to feed into the Enterprise and Business’ committee Assisting Young People into Work inquiry. 2,008 total number of young people engaged with.  Informed groups about the STEM skills inquiry in Wales
<b>Children and Young People</b>	Online promotion of how young people contributed to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health inquiry. Promoted report online.  Curriculum Assessment and Qualifications scoping questionnaire (1, 087)
<b>Private Member Bill</b>	Financial Literacy and Inclusion Bill survey ( 623)

## Other major events held June –December 2014

<b>Commonwealth Homecoming events</b>	A public event on the Senedd steps followed by a private reception to congratulate the Welsh commonwealth team on their successes during Glasgow 2014.
<b>Scottish Referendum Events</b>	A conference delivered in partnership with the Wales Governance Centre that outlined the impact the Scottish Referendum event will have on Wales.
<b>.Cymru/.Wales domain name change</b>	An event delivered in partnership with Nominet to officially launch the .Cymru/.Wales domain name.
<b>November 11 WW1 Commemorative programme</b>	<p>Remembrance Day 2014 marked the first in the Assembly’s annual series of events to commemorate those that lost their lives during the First World War. In 2014 we hosted the following events that acted as the Assembly’s official commemoration for the First World War centenary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of the Wales for Peace programme in collaboration with CEWC Cymru.</li> <li>• An event for the British Transport Police to commemorate those that lost their lives during the First World War.</li> <li>• Two minute silence.</li> <li>• A debate for young people in Siambr Hywel.</li> <li>• A lecture by the Head of International Politics at Aberystwyth University.</li> </ul>

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## Annex C

## Social Media in figures

Platform	Description
Social Media	Outreach Team are the latest to launch on Twitter bringing the Assembly's total number of channels on social media to 57 across 6 platforms.
YouTube	Achieved 60,000 views on YouTube since 2009. 43% coming from 2014 alone.
Corporate Twitter	5555th tweet posted on @AssemblyWales. First tweet posted in April 2009.
Rebranding of Twitter accounts	All Committee and Service area Twitter accounts are now prefixed 'Senedd'.
SeneddEnv	Environment and Sustainability Committee trialling devolved analytics whereby all recording of monthly statistical activity is recorded by the channel user.
Twitter	AM Remuneration Board Twitter account created to launch consultation on AM pay and benefits. The Outreach Team have their first dedicated channel on social media which has diverse content such as images, videos and questionnaires. Tweeted a WW1 Welsh related fact every day in November in the lead up to Armistice Day.
Twitter/Facebook /Blog	Most ever views for the 'InBrief' blog due to increased promotion on social media.
Twitter/Facebook	#1000Plenary – to celebrate the historic 1000th Plenary last week, we contacted all the Parliaments in the UK along with the Welsh Government and other organisations to advise them of the event and the hashtag #1000Plenary. In less than 24 hours, the reach

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	of the hashtag was over 405,000 making it the Assembly's most successful online campaign in a small timescale.
Storify	Storify is being used more widely across the Assembly as a tool to inform the public of the work we are undertaking. It is a great way to collate the information of a specific piece of work which can then be promoted on social media.

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## Annex D

## International events and visits, including diplomatic visits

May – December 2014

Date	Details
20 May	The Presiding Officer welcomed Noel A. Kinsella, Speaker of the Canadian Senate.
20 June	Commissioner <b>Peter Black AM</b> represented the Presiding Officer, and gave a presentation of the Assembly's work at the CALRE Working Group on e-democracy in Seville.
16–17 August	The Presiding Officer and the Assembly's Party Leaders visited Flanders to attend the Service of Dedication of the New Welsh National Memorial in Pilckem Ridge, Langemark where the Presiding Officer laid a wreath on behalf of the Assembly.
17–20 September	The Presiding Officer led a delegation including <b>Eluned Parrott AM</b> and <b>Antoinette Sandbach AM</b> to Iceland. The visit was as part of the Presiding Officer's <i>Assembly Women in Democracy Caucus</i> programme, and included a series of meetings to learn why Iceland is consistently ranked so highly for its gender equality in parliament as well as in wider society.
16–18 October	The Presiding Officer and Assembly Commissioners visited Flanders as part of an official WW1 commemoration programme, organised by the Flemish parliament.
19–21 October	The Deputy Presiding Officer led a cross party delegation to represent the Assembly at the 49 <sup>th</sup> Plenary Conference in Ashford and Flanders. During the visit to Flanders the DPO laid wreaths on behalf of the Assembly at the Welsh Memorial in Langemark and at the Menin Gates, Ypres.
25 October – 1 November	The Presiding Officer led a delegation, accompanied by Commissioners <b>Sandy Mewies AM</b> , <b>Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM</b> and <b>Peter Black AM</b> on the Assembly's first official visit to Canada. The visit programme included meetings at the Federal parliament in Ottawa, as well as a visit to the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick. A final copy of the

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	report has been seen by Commissioners and is available bilingually.
27 October	The Deputy Presiding Officer welcomed the President of Ireland to the Assembly during his two day visit to Wales, as part of celebrations to mark the centenary of the birth of Dylan Thomas.
5–8 November	The Presiding Officer attended the CALRE General Assembly meeting in Santiago de Compostela (Spain). During the meeting the Presiding Officer committed to establish and Chair the Gender Equality Working Group in 2015.

***Diplomatic visits***

The Presiding Officers also hosted the following diplomatic visits to the Assembly:

- 8 May – HE Mr Ranjan Mathai, **Indian High Commissioner** to the UK
- 14 May – HE Mr Diego Gomez–Pickering, **Mexican Ambassador** to the UK
- 15 May – HE Mr Konstantinos Bikas, **Greek Ambassador\*** to the UK
- 20 June – HE Aloun Ndombet–Assamba, **Jamaican High Commissioner** to the UK
- 26 June – HE Dr Peter Ammon, **German Ambassador** to the UK
- 16 October – HE Mr Pasquale Terracciano, **Italian Ambassador\*** to the UK
- 12 November – HE Dr Ivan Grdešić, **Croatian Ambassador** to the UK
- 19 November – HE Mr Peter Szabadhegy, **Hungarian Ambassador** to the UK

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- 19 November – HE Dr John Freeman **British Ambassador to Argentina**

\* These diplomatic visits took place as part of wider programmes which included meetings with Assembly Committee Chairs to discuss their countries priorities whilst holding the Presidency of the EU Council.

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ANNEX E

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

July – December 2014

21 requests for information were received during the period July 2014 – December 2014. The categories are indicative of the nature of the request.

**1. Information released following access to information requests**

Assembly Commission

- Use of Electoral posters in Tŷ Hywel and the Senedd.
- Copy of the BME action plan.
- New microphones in the Siambr.

Assembly Commission & Members

- Breakdown of 30 most visited websites.

Estates/Facilities

- Flag flying protocol.

**2. Information Withheld**

Assembly Members

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- Assembly Member’s salary increase. Relied on section 36 (Effective conduct of public affairs).

Committees and Legislation

- Evidence submitted relating to the River Lodge Hotel, Llangollen. Relied on section 36 (Effective conduct of public affairs).

**3. Partial Release of information but some information not held or withheld**

Committees and Legislation

- Cross party group meeting. Relied on section 22 (Future Publication).

Assembly Members

- Chauffeur driven cars. Relied on section 40 (Personal Data).

Assembly Commission

- Broadcasting contract information. Relied on section 43 (Commercial Interest).

**4. No information held**

Assembly Members

- Individual voting records. Information not held.
- Attendance record. Information not held.

Estates/Facilities

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- Security procedures when entering the Senedd and Tŷ Hywel (received twice). **Information not held.**

Committees and Legislation

- Local Land Charges Searches in Wales. **Information not held.**
- OECD review of health care. **Information not held.**
- Value for Money on learning and skills. **Information not held.**
- Value for Money on Welsh medium education (received 4 times). **Information not held.**

National Assembly for Wales  
EU Office

## Europe Matters

Issue 31 – Winter 2014/15

Cynulliad  
Cenedlaethol  
Cymru

National  
Assembly for  
Wales



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## Introduction



**Dame Rosemary Butler AM**  
**Presiding Officer**

I am delighted to introduce the 31st issue of Europe Matters, our update on the work of the National Assembly for Wales on European issues. Despite the pressure on Committees due to the high volume of legislation on their agendas, it is pleasing to see an active engagement in EU-related matters across the Assembly.

Environment and Sustainability Committee undertook an inquiry into the EU proposals on Organic Products, responded to the proposals to ban use of driftnets, as well as scrutinising Welsh Government preparations for implementation of the CAP and fisheries reforms. Enterprise and Business Committee this month holds a Ministerial scrutiny session on Welsh Government preparations for the new Structural Funds Programmes, and follow up to its inquiries on Horizon 2020 and EU Funding Opportunities. The Committee will discuss European Commission President Juncker's priorities, with David Hughes, Head of the Commission Office in Wales. Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee continues its monitoring of EU subsidiarity issues, and Chair David Melding AM attended the EC-UK Forum meeting of the Chairs of the UK/Devolved Legislatures in December, hosted by the Scottish Parliament. Children Young People and Education Committee visited the OECD in Paris to discuss the Wales PISA results, whilst Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into New Psychoactive Substances considered the relevance of draft EU legislation in this area to Wales.

During the autumn there were a number of plenary debates on important EU related matters, including the TTIP trade negotiations between the EU and US, and scope for EU funding support for workers affected by the Murco oil refinery closure in Pembrokeshire.

The Assembly Commission plans to visit Brussels later this year for high level meetings with the European Parliament and European Commission, and a delegation of Assembly officials will visit Brussels later this month for awareness training, financed and organised by the European Commission's Office in Wales.

We have welcomed a number of distinguished guests to the Assembly over the past few months, notably the Irish President Michael D Higgins as part of his visit to Wales to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Dylan Thomas, as well as Ambassadors to the UK from Italy, Croatia and Hungary. We look forward to the visit of a delegation from the Fijian Parliament led by the speaker Dr Jiko Luveni, and the Latvian Ambassador to the UK who will discuss his country's first Presidency of the EU with Committee Chairs at the end of February.

I wish you a positive and fruitful 2015.

## EU related topics in the Assembly's Committees

### Environment and Sustainability Committee

- In light of the volume of Welsh legislation that will occupy the Committee's time over the next 12 to 18 months the Committee has agreed to adopt a new approach to its European work. It will be tracking and seeking to influence EU proposals of interest to the Committee through written consultation and informal engagement with stakeholders. Any issues identified for Wales will be pursued through written communication with the EU institutions and Welsh Government. Some of the key EU areas of interest to the Committee are set out below. A full list can be found on the Committee's website.
- **Inquiry into the organic production and labelling of organic products:** This inquiry has looked at the potential impacts on Wales of the European Commission's proposals for a Regulation on organic production and the labelling of organic products and the proposals published in 2014. The inquiry is: considering the potential impacts of the proposals on the organics sector in Wales; considering recommendations for changes to the legal proposals published; acting as a forum for stakeholders in Wales to engage with the debate on the future of organic production in the EU. The Committee held an oral evidence session on 13 November and has written to the European Commission and Parliament outlining its key proposals for amendments to the text of the draft regulation.
- **Marine policy and fisheries:** The Committee has continued to keep development of the Welsh Government's marine and fisheries policy under review including delivery of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the Common Fisheries Policy in Wales. Further follow-up sessions will be held in early 2015.
- **Cultivation of GMOs:** Following on from the Council of the European Union's ('Council') agreement on a negotiation position on proposals to amend the authorisation process for the cultivation of GMO's, the Committee held factual briefing sessions with Welsh Government and European Commission officials on the content of the proposed amendments. The Committee intends to continue to monitor and track the negotiations on this proposal.
- **Ban on driftnets:** Following the publication by the European Commission of a regulation to prohibit the ban on driftnets the Environment and Sustainability Committee wrote to the Welsh Government to clarify its response to the proposals. The Committee intends to engage with Welsh stakeholders on their views on the proposals and recommendations for amendments and will write to the European institutions on the basis of the evidence it gathers.

### Enterprise and Business Committee

- **Inquiry into the Welsh Government's approach to the promotion of trade and inward investment:** This inquiry looked at the effectiveness of the Welsh Government's current support structures to promote exports by Welsh businesses and facilitate foreign direct investment, including cross-government working within the UK. The report was published in October and was debated in plenary on 3 December. The Minister agreed to reconsider her response to the Committee's report on trade and inward investment following the plenary debate. In particular, the Minister agreed to look again at what further information can be made available about the effectiveness of the Welsh Government's support for exporters. The Minister also agreed to refresh the detail on the Welsh Government's approach to trade and inward investment that is in the existing policy document, 'Economic renewal: a new direction', published in 2010.

- **Inquiries into (i) Employment opportunities for older people; (ii) Assisting Young People into Work; (iii) Inquiry into Tourism:** While the main foci of these three inquiries are Welsh and UK actions, each inquiry includes consideration of the impact and value-for-money of European funding. The Tourism report was published in November and will be debated in plenary on 21 January. The Committee will hold a further evidence session with the Minister in January.
- **EU scrutiny session:** the Committee will hold a scrutiny session with the Minister for Finance and Government Business on 21 January focusing on the Welsh Government’s preparations for the new Structural Funds Programmes for 2014-2020, and in follow up to the Committee’s inquiries into Horizon 2020 and EU Funding Opportunities 2014-2020. The Committee will also hold an update session with the Head of the European Commission’s Office in Wales, David Hughes, and the Assembly’s EU Office, focusing in particular on the European Commission’s Work Programme for 2015 and the priorities of the new European Commission.

### Children, Young People and Education Committee

- **Inquiry into Educational Outcomes for Children from Low Income Households:** The Committee held evidence sessions in autumn 2013 and went on to undertake focused work on the importance of parental engagement in 2014. A further evidence session with the Minister was held in December 2014 to conclude the inquiry.
- **OECD visit:** The Committee chair, Ann Jones AM, and other Committee members visited the OECD in Paris in September to discuss the Wales PISA results, the OECD’s review of the education system in Wales, Early Childhood Education and Care and financial education. The visit has informed the Committee’s scrutiny of the Welsh Government’s new Education Improvement Plan *Qualified for Life*.

### Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee

- **Report on Subsidiarity:** The monitoring report on relevant subsidiarity issues to Wales coming out of draft EU legislative proposals, covering the period May to December 2014, will be considered during the spring term.
- **EC-UK Forum:** The Chair of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee and Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM attended the most recent meeting of the Chairs of the EU (or equivalent) Committees in the UK and Devolved Legislatures, which was held on 8 December in the Scottish Parliament.
- **Driftnets:** In November the Committee identified a proposal for EU legislation on Driftnet Fishing as an issue of proportionality and subsequently wrote to EU Commissioner and the Chair of the House of Commons European Scrutiny Committee. The Committee has since noted updates from the EU Commissioner on this issue.
- **UK Government Balance of Competences Review:** in June 2014 the Committee responded to the UK Government Review of Balance of Competences on subsidiarity and proportionality.

### Health and Social Care Committee

- **Inquiry into new psychoactive substances (“legal highs”):** The Committee held evidence sessions and undertook engagement activity during autumn and winter 2014. The terms of reference for this Inquiry include consideration of international evidence on approaches taken to New Psychoactive Substances (NPS) in other countries. The Committee has received information that the European Commission has prepared draft legislation which would regulate NPS at EU level (over and above the current limited EU regulation). This new EU

approach has been questioned by the UK Government. The Committee took evidence from Home Office officials in January 2015.

- **Inquiry into progress made to date on implementing the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan:** The Committee reported in October 2014. During the inquiry, issues were raised about the implications of the draft EU Data Protection Regulations, specifically the amendments which were agreed to Articles 81 and 83, on the use of data to support NHS service delivery and health and scientific research in Wales. The Committee wrote to the Secretary of State for Justice to urge him to ensure that a suitable balance is struck between respecting individuals' privacy and protecting research in the EU level negotiations on the proposals.

### **Plenary business with dedicated sessions on European issues**

- 11 November: the Minister for Finance and Government Business gave an update on the 2014-2020 European Structural Funds programme, followed by a debate.
- 3 December: the Assembly noted the Report from Enterprise and Business Committee's inquiry into the Welsh Government's Approach to the Promotion of Trade and Inward Investment.
- 3 December: the Assembly debated the proposed Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.
- 10 December: the Assembly Noted the Report from the Health and Social Care Committee's inquiry into progress made on implementing the Welsh Government's Cancer Delivery Plan.
- 10 December: a short debate on Securing the future of Welsh farming - What Wales can learn from EU partners to ensure that the next generation of farmers are able to access land, build their businesses, and maximise the benefits of European development funds.

*Note: in addition to the above European issues feature in Ministerial Statements and in questions to Ministers on a regular basis.*

## External activities of Members on Assembly business

- 3 October: Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM was in Brussels for a meeting of the Natural Resources Commission in the Committee of the Regions.
- 7-8 October: Mick Antoniw AM and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM attended the plenary session of the Committee of the Regions in Brussels.
- 9 October: Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM chaired a panel session (including speakers from the European Investment Bank) on Financial Instruments in the EU 2014-2020, at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels during the Open Days 2014 Week of Cities and Regions.
- 16-17 October: the Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM, Sandy Mewies AM and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM participated in a commemoration of the First World War in West Flanders organised by the Flemish Parliament.
- 19-21 October: Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM lead a delegation of Assembly Members to the 49<sup>th</sup> British Irish Parliamentary Assembly Plenary to be held in Ashford, Kent and in Ypres Salient, Flanders to commemorate the anniversary of the First World War.
- 27-31 October: Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM lead a delegation of Assembly Commissioners on the Assembly's first outward visit to Canada. The visit included official visits to both the Federal Parliament in Ottawa as well as the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick in Fredericton.
- 5-8 November: Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM attended the CALRE General Assembly meeting which was held at the Galician Parliament in Santiago de Compostela (Spain).
- 20 November: Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM and Chair of the House of Lords European Committee Lord Tim Boswell both spoke at a conference on the role of National Parliaments in the EU organised by Cardiff University's European Documentation Centre.
- 27 November: Committee of the Regions representatives Mick Antoniw AM and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM chaired workshop sessions at an EU conference on youth employment organised by the Welsh Government in Cardiff.
- 19 January: Lindsay Whittle AM represented the Assembly at the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly, Economic Matters meeting on their current inquiry into the role of 'Youth Unemployment' in Belfast.
- 6-8 February: Commonwealth Parliament Assembly (CPA) Wales Branch Chair, Joyce Watson AM will lead a small delegation to attend the 2nd meeting of the Regional Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians to be hosted by the Gibraltar Parliament.
- 11-13 February: Mick Antoniw AM will attend the inaugural plenary of the new mandate of the Committee of the Regions in Brussels
- 22-24 February: Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM will lead a delegation of Assembly Members to the 50<sup>th</sup> British Irish Parliamentary Assembly Plenary to be held in Dublin.

## International and other VIPs visiting the Senedd

- 16 October: The Italian Ambassador, His Excellency Pasquale Q Terracciano visited the Assembly and give evidence to the Assembly's Committee Chairs on Italy's priorities during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union.
- 27 October: Deputy Presiding Officer David Melding AM met the Irish President Michael D Higgins as part of his visit to Wales to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Dylan Thomas.
- 12 November: Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM met the Croatian Ambassador, His Excellency Dr Ivan Grdešić.
- 19 November: Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM met the Hungarian Ambassador, His Excellency Mr Peter Szabadhegy.
- 19 November: Presiding Officer Dame Rosemary Butler AM met the British Ambassador to Argentina, Dr John Freeman.
- 2-3 February: The National Assembly for Wales will host an official visit by the Fijian Parliament, led by Speaker Dr. Jiko Luveni.
- 26 February: The Latvian Ambassador, His Excellency Mr Andris Teikmanis will visit the Assembly where he will meet the Presiding Officer and Assembly Committee Chairs to discuss Latvia's priorities during its six-month EU Presidency of the Council.

## Links

- [National Assembly for Wales homepage](#)
- [Assembly Business Notice](#)
- [Committee pages](#)
- [Research Service pages](#)
- [Research Service blog: Inbrief](#)

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### We welcome communication in either English or Welsh.

We hope you find this report of interest. If you do not wish to receive future editions of this newsletter, or if you have not received this directly and would like to add your name to the mailing list, please email Gregg Jones.

# Agenda Item 6

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# Agenda Item 7

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