



Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Chair
Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru

seneddLJC@senedd.wales

22 February 2022

Dear Huw,

Further to your letter of 10 December addressed to the First Minister and my appearance at Committee on 17 January, I am writing to provide further information in relation to the legislative capacity of the Welsh Government.

There continues to be pressure on our capacity to legislate but we take steps to meet that demand. We regularly review our processes for developing legislation and Ministers closely monitor the delivery of the legislative programme, taking action where needed to redeploy resources in line with legislative priorities, such as the large amount of legislation that has been required to respond to the coronavirus pandemic.

On the question of whether there are resources in the Welsh Government's draft budget to increase legislative capacity, our work to deliver the legislative programme is an element of the work of the Government as a whole. Consequently, there is not a separate budget allocation for that activity: it is allocated on a portfolio basis.

In relation to the programme for improving the accessibility of Welsh law, during the passage of the Legislation Bill the Explanatory Memorandum set out the indicative costs of the additional staffing that were required to increase drafting and translation capacity, as well as other staff to work on the non-legislative projects.

Since work has begun on preparing the first consolidation Bills and rolling out other accessibility projects, we have established the Legislative Codes Office. Staffing within that team comprises some newly funded posts as well as a redeployment of existing posts.

In terms of Welsh Government's Legal Services' capacity to develop legislation, the rolling recruitment of lawyers has been undertaken over the last two years to seek to minimise risk that vacancies have the potential to cause. Legal Services have also sought secondees to expand their resources when required to support delivery.

We have had extensive learning and development activity for staff working on legislation for many years. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have needed to redesign these learning activities to offer opportunities through virtual, rather than face-to-face, delivery.

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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.

This has, however, made it easier to access training on legislation across Welsh Government regardless, for example, of where in Wales staff are based.

We are proud of our delivery of a significant amount of primary and secondary legislation and we are moving forward with an ambitious Sixth Senedd legislative programme, committing to legislate in areas including Welsh taxes, social partnership and public procurement, agriculture and single use plastics.

I look forward to appearing at the Committee again on 28 February.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mick Antoniw". The signature is written in a cursive style. Below the signature, there is a short horizontal blue line.

Mick Antoniw AS/MS

Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog y Cyfansoddiad
Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution