

**Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y  
Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau  
Rhyngwladol**

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

**Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd,  
yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith**

**Climate Change, Environment,  
and Infrastructure Committee**

**Pwyllgor yr Economi,  
Masnach a Materion Gwledig**

**Economy, Trade, and  
Rural Affairs Committee**

Rt Hon Elin Jones MS  
Llywydd and Chair  
Business Committee

12 July 2024

**Cross committee exchange visit to Oireachtas**

Dear Llywydd

We are writing to the Business Committee to seek permission for a cross-committee exchange visit to the Oireachtas between 18 and 20 September 2024.

On 7 March 2024, the Dirprwy Lywydd and Members representing the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations (CCWLSIR) Committee and the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs (ETRA) Committee met with Ceann Comhairle (Speaker) of the Dáil Éireann, Seán Ó Feargháil and the Irish Government's Consul General of Ireland, Denise McQuade. During that meeting, the Ceann Comhairle suggested a series of exchange visits between the Oireachtas and the Senedd. Our proposed visit in September is the first in these series of exchanges.

A cross-committee visit to the Oireachtas would provide an opportunity to agree ways of working in line with commitments agreed by CCWLSIR Committee during its Wales-Ireland relations inquiry while

**Senedd Cymru**

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN  
SeneddDiwylliant@senedd.cymru  
senedd.cymru/SeneddDiwylliant  
0300 200 6565

**Welsh Parliament**

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN  
SeneddCulture@senedd.wales  
senedd.wales/SeneddCulture  
0300 200 6565

providing a forum for Members to discuss common areas of shared interest and cooperation. Areas discussed during the meeting with Ceann Comhairle included themes and policy areas from the Wales-Ireland relations inquiry, such as culture and heritage, language, and climate change (in particular, renewable energy cooperation in the Irish Sea). For this reason, it is proposed that Members from the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee (CCEI) also participate in this exchange. Ireland is an important trading partner of Wales, and rural affairs was also discussed as an important area of shared interest and commonalities between the two nations. As such, it is also proposed that Members from the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs (ETRA) Committee join the exchange.

Joint working between the Oireachtas and the Senedd is a key pillar of the international agreement between the Welsh and Irish governments, the Shared Statement and Joint Action Plan. Both the Welsh and Irish governments have regularly reiterated that they stand ready to support Senedd-Oireachtas interparliamentary work and are currently in the process of reviewing CCWLSIR Committee report's findings to inform decisions on Wales-Ireland cooperation beyond 2025. The First Minister has also invited the CCLWSIR Committee's input into the governments' plans for cooperation 2026-2030. The areas of cooperation outlined above are expected to be carried forward in the renewed Wales-Ireland Shared Statement beyond 2025, with the exception of rural affairs.

As part of the CCWLSIR Committee's legacy work on Wales-Ireland relations, the Chair has also established a regular meetings schedule with the Consul General of Ireland to share information and in preparation for Wales-Ireland cooperation beyond 2025. At their last meeting on 20 March 2024, the Consul General proposed that the CCWLSIR Committee meets again with the Irish Government's Department for Foreign Affairs on the Committee's next visit to Dublin to share updates on key areas of Wales-Ireland relations, such as diaspora support.

We also intend to conduct visits with relevant stakeholders involved in work that supports the Wales-Ireland agenda.

We believe this exchange visit will present an opportunity to develop a reciprocal programme of exchanges and joint working between Senedd and Oireachtas committees with a focus on Wales-Ireland cooperation beyond 2025.

In order to minimise disruption as much as possible on Senedd business, we have identified 18 to 20 September 2024 as an appropriate date to conduct this exchange visit. In this week, two of our committees will be meeting on the Wednesday morning (CCEI and ETRA) and it will be a reserve week for another (CCWLSIR).

Our intention is to travel following committee business on the Wednesday to arrive in Dublin on Wednesday evening. This will allow Members to conduct a full day of meetings and discussions at the

Oireachtas and with the Irish Government on Thursday. We will undertake further visits on the Friday morning with relevant stakeholders before travelling back on Friday afternoon.

The Members that have been confirmed by committees as participating in the exchange are:

- Delyth Jewell MS and Alun Davies MS (CCWLSIR)
- Luke Fletcher MS and Samuel Kurtz MS (ETRA);
- Llyr Gruffudd MS and one other Member to be confirmed (CCEI).

The Dirprwy Lywydd will lead the delegation as part of his dedicated international programme for the Sixth Senedd, and will undertake a programme of parliamentary and procedural meetings as part of the visit. This model of cross-committee international engagement comes as part of the delivery of the Senedd's International Framework which puts Senedd business at the heart of international activity.

We would be grateful if the Business Committee could confirm our approach and give permission to allow the Members noted to leave Plenary early on Wednesday 18 September 2024.

Yours sincerely,

Delyth Jewell MS

Llyr Gruffudd MS

Paul Davies MS

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.