

Committee update

Autumn 2024 – Spring 2025

Welcome to our ninth committee update

This is the ninth bulletin for the Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee. It provides an overview of the Committee's recent activities and planned work to help you stay up to date and engage with the Committee's work.

It has been produced by the Clerking team which supports the Committee. If you have any feedback, please let us know using the contact details below.

Contact details

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Current Work

The Foundational Economy

The Committee undertook an inquiry in to the Foundational Economy through the Autumn term, hearing oral evidence from a range of stakeholders across six panel sessions.

The Committee held a consultation as part of this inquiry, which ran from 29 August to 27 September, and received 22 responses.

The Committee is aiming to report in the spring term.

AI and the Welsh Economy

The Committee held a short one-day exploratory inquiry into AI and the Welsh Economy on 5 December, investigating the views of independent experts, the impact on businesses and consequences for the workforce.

As part of this, a targeted public consultation ran from 25 October to 28 November, and received 14 responses.

The Committee is aiming to publish a short report on its findings in the spring term.

Future of Welsh Steel

The Committee continues to monitor updates on this fast-moving issue, following the closure of the final blast furnace at Port Talbot's Tata steelworks.

On 28 August, the Committee received a response letter from the First Minister of Wales, addressing the Committee's ten recommendations.

The Committee held an oral evidence session on the future of Welsh steel on 20 November, with both the Secretary of State for Wales, the Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP, and Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning. Members explored topics including the deal between Tata and the UK Government, and current and future support for the workforce.

Green Economy

The Committee undertook an inquiry into the Green Economy throughout the spring and summer terms, and is currently drafting its report, which the Committee is aiming to publish next term.

Recent Activities

Committee Visit to Lake Vyrnwy



The Committee visited Powys on 2-3 October to meet with representatives of the local tourism and hospitality industry, and take up a long standing invitation to visit RSPB Lake Vyrnwy Nature Reserve.

This was a fact-finding visit for Members, during which they met with key hospitality and tourism stakeholders at Lake Vyrnwy Hotel, ahead of anticipated proposed Welsh Government legislation to introduce a visitor levy, and a registration and licencing scheme for visitor accommodation.

Members also visited the RSPB Lake Vyrnwy Nature Reserve to see their work on peatland restoration and sustainable land management.

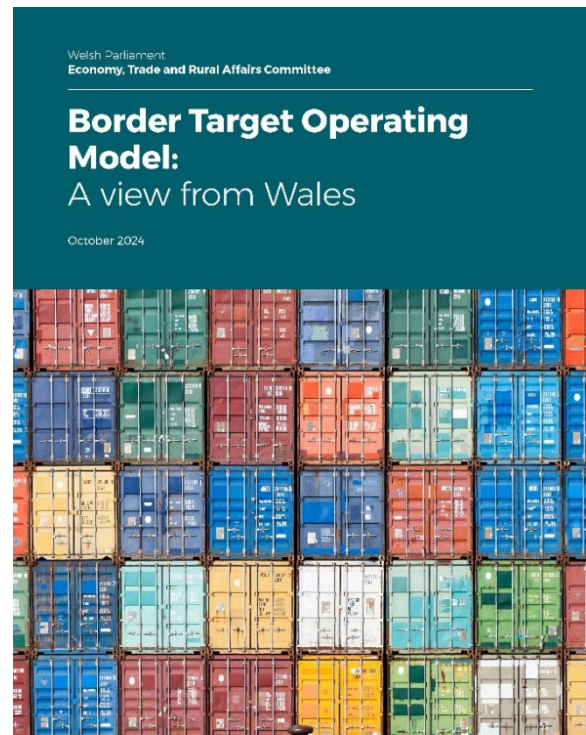
Development Bank of Wales

The Committee received a Welsh Government response to its report on the Development Bank of Wales on 28 August, followed by two responses from the Development Bank, on 4 September and 29 October.

A debate was held in Plenary on Wednesday 27 November.

The Committee also conducted their annual scrutiny of the Development Bank of Wales on 20 November.

Border Target Operating Model



The Committee published its report on the Border Target Operating Model on 29 October 2024.

Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) and Farming Connect

The Committee received a [response](#) to its [report](#) on the Welsh Government proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme from the Welsh Government on 10 September, and also received a [response](#) from Welsh Government on the Committee's Farming Connect [report](#) on 20 August.

A joint debate was held in [Plenary](#) on Wednesday 23 October, during which Members discussed both Committee reports, and also the [report](#) of the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee on proposals for a Sustainable Farming Scheme.

General Ministerial Scrutiny

The Committee held their first general scrutiny session with the newly appointed Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language, Rebecca Evans MS, and the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership, Jack Sargeant MS, in a joint session on [14 November](#).

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, Huw Irranca Davies MS, also appeared before the Committee in a General Ministerial Scrutiny session on [5 December](#).

Forward Work Programme

The Committee has agreed its [work programme](#) into Spring 2025. The published work programme indicates the current intentions of the Committee at the time of publishing; however, it may change at any time to respond to external events.

The work is expected to include annual Welsh Government budget scrutiny, a new inquiry into Apprenticeship pathways, and continued work on the implementation review of the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

The Committee has agreed a number of other areas of work, however these require further scoping to develop them into inquiries. More information on this scoping work will be included on the [website](#) as it is agreed.

Remit

The Committee was established on 23 June 2021, with a remit encompassing (but not restricted to): economic development, regeneration, skills, trade, research, and development (including technology and science), and rural affairs.

Committee Members



Committee Chair:
Paul Davies MS
Welsh Conservatives



Hefin David MS
Welsh Labour



Luke Fletcher MS
Plaid Cymru



Samuel Kurtz MS
Welsh Conservatives



Hannah Blythyn MS
Welsh Labour



Jenny Rathbone MS
Welsh Labour