

Rt Hon Elin Jones MS

Y Llywydd and Chair of the Business Committee

1 November 2024

Annwyl Lywydd

Reporting deadlines for legislative consent memoranda

We are currently considering legislative consent memoranda for the Great British Energy Bill and the Product Regulation and Metrology Bill, which have reporting deadlines of 15 November 2024 and 22 November 2024 respectively.

Given the nature of the Bills and the accompanying memoranda, we are taking evidence from Rebecca Evans MS, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning on these matters on 4 November 2024.

We have also taken evidence from Huw Irranca-Davies MS, the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs, on a legislative consent memorandum relating to the Water (Special Measures) Bill, which has a reporting deadline of 22 November 2024. During that session the Deputy First Minister indicated that a supplementary legislative consent memorandum would be required.

We are also taking evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government on 18 November 2024 on the legislative consent memorandum for the Renters' Rights Bill, which has a reporting deadline of 29 November 2024.

It is unlikely that we will be able to meet the reporting deadlines referred to above because of the need to take evidence as a consequence of the important matters of constitutional principle that are raised in each case.

We would therefore be grateful to receive extensions to the reporting deadlines for the above-mentioned memoranda to enable our reports to take account of the oral evidence sessions with the

relevant Cabinet Secretaries and also in the case of the memorandum on the Water (Special Measures) Bill, the likelihood of a supplementary memorandum. Given where the UK Bills appear to be in the UK Parliament's legislative cycle, we consider there should be sufficient scope for extensions to be granted.

Looking ahead, we suggest that a different approach to setting reporting deadlines may be beneficial to both Senedd Committees and the Welsh Government. We believe there may be merit in setting initial reporting deadlines to coincide with the likely end date of scrutiny in the first House of the UK Parliament to which the relevant Bill is introduced.

Using this approach would not impact on the tabling of the relevant legislative consent motions because the Bills would only be half-way through the legislative process in the UK Parliament. It would also potentially reduce the need for Senedd Committees to request extensions to reporting deadlines from the Business Committee but would also not prevent those committees from reporting earlier should they wish to do so. These reporting deadlines could then be extended automatically by the Business Committee, should supplementary legislative consent memoranda be laid that arise in later amending stages of the first House or earlier stages of the second House.

We would be grateful if the Business Committee could consider this suggestion. If it agrees, it may also wish to consider setting new reporting deadlines for all existing legislative consent memoranda to reflect that approach.

I am copying this letter to Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip. The letter is also being copied to the Chairs of the Senedd Committees that are also scrutinising the legislative consent memoranda referred to above: the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee; the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee and the Local Government and Housing Committee.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mike Hedges
Chair