

David Rees, Chair of the Future Senedd Committee

Via e-mail

February 2025

Quorum for Committee Meetings

Dear David,

In response to your letter of 27 November 2024 on behalf of the Future Senedd Committee, the Chairs' Forum discussed the question of quorum for committee meetings at its meeting on 17 February 2025.

Chairs considered the current provision as set out in Standing Orders 17.31 and 17.32 and agreed that quorum for committee meetings should remain at one-third of the committee members or three members, whichever was greater, for the Seventh Senedd.

It was noted that other legislatures in the UK did not have a requirement relating to political representation equivalent to the provision currently in Standing Order 17.32 that more than one political group should be represented at the beginning of a meeting. However, there was no general feeling that this provision should not be retained.

The principles which underpin the current quorum requirement – the need to ensure that a broad range of voices and political views is represented in committee work, the importance of protecting public confidence in a committee's work which might otherwise be damaged by low or unrepresentative attendance – were reaffirmed.

In discussion, some Chairs suggested that consideration might be given in future to whether the same quorum provision should apply to both policy scrutiny work and legislative scrutiny work, or if different levels of provision should be made. Again, there was no general agreement on that point.



It was recognised that the current quorum requirement created more of a potential practical problem for those committees with a smaller membership (for example, those committees with four or five members, instead of the more usual six members). However, it was agreed that this point should not affect the quorum requirement, but might inform future thinking about the size of committees.



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As a more general point the Chairs' Forum was keen to affirm the importance of setting a clear expectation of Members that committee work should be prioritised.

I hope that these points are helpful to the Future Senedd Committee in informing its work on thresholds. Please do let me know if the Committee has any further queries on which the views of the Chairs' Forum might be useful.

Yours sincerely,



Elin Jones MS/AS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg / We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

