

National Assembly for Wales
Enterprise and Business Committee

Bulletin - Autumn Term

September 2013



Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales

The National Assembly for Wales is the democratically elected body that represents the interests of Wales and its people, makes laws for Wales and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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The Committee was established on 22 June 2011 with a remit to examine legislation and hold the Welsh Government to account by scrutinising its expenditure, administration and policy, encompassing economic development; transport and infrastructure; employment; higher education and skills; and research and development, including technology and science.

Current Committee membership



Nick Ramsay (Chair)
Welsh Conservatives
Monmouth



Mick Antoniw
Welsh Labour
Pontypridd



Byron Davies
Welsh Conservatives
South Wales West



Keith Davies
Welsh Labour
Llanelli



Dafydd Elis-Thomas
Plaid Cymru
Dwyfor Meirionnydd



Julie James
Welsh Labour
Swansea West



Alun Ffred Jones
Plaid Cymru
Arfon



Eluned Parrott
Welsh Liberal Democrats
South Wales Central



David Rees
Welsh Labour
Aberavon



Joyce Watson
Welsh Labour
Mid and West Wales

On 24 September 2013 Rhun ap Iorwedd AM replaced Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM as a Member of the Enterprise and Business Committee



Enterprise and Business Committee

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Welcome to our committee update

This update of the Committee's recent and future activities is aimed at widening engagement in the Committee's activities and helping you to provide information and expertise to officials and Members. It has been produced by the Clerking team which supports the Committee's work.

Contact details

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You can also e-mail the Committee Clerking Team using this link:

enterprise.committee@wales.gov.uk.

Our fax number is: 029 2089 8021

Website:

<http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=228>

Work undertaken last term

European Matters

Horizon 2020

The Committee completed stage two of its inquiry into Horizon 2020 (the European Commission's proposals for developing research and innovation) and published its [stage two report](#) on 31 May 2013.

A [Plenary debate](#) was held on 3 July to discuss the Committee's report. In its [response to the report](#), the Government accepted or accepted in principle all of the recommendations.

The Committee held a follow-up session on European matters on 18 July, which focused on structural funds and Horizon 2020. The Committee was updated by a senior European Commission official and then scrutinised the Minister for Finance.

Next Generation Broadband

The Committee held a scrutiny session on next generation broadband with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on 2 May. A further session to update the Committee was held with BT on 18 July.

The First Minister was also questioned on the topic of next generation broadband by the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister on 19 July. The Committee is keeping a watching brief on this issue.

Youth Entrepreneurship

The Committee undertook an inquiry into youth entrepreneurship during the summer term. Following a consultation exercise the Committee took oral evidence from key stakeholders and held a scrutiny session with the Deputy Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on 26 June.

As part of the inquiry the Assembly's Outreach Team took evidence from students, young people going through the process of starting up a business,

young business owners, teachers and coaches across Wales. The interviews can be viewed on our [YouTube](#) pages.

The Committee also undertook fact-finding visits to two enterprise initiatives on 6 June: the Alacrity Foundation in Newport and the Flintshire Enterprise Club in Deeside. Alacrity is a joint project between the Welsh Government, Sir Terry Matthews's company Wesley Clover and other private investors, which provides graduates with two years' training and mentoring to help them establish businesses in high-tech industries. The Flintshire Enterprise Club was recently established by the Flintshire Business Entrepreneurship Network with funding from the Welsh Government's Communities First programme and support from Flintshire Council. The Club supports local entrepreneurs by providing networking opportunities, workshops, inspirational guest speakers and opportunities to learn from expert business people.

The report is due for publication in the autumn term and a debate will be scheduled once the Welsh Government has issued a response.

The impact of welfare reforms in Wales

The Committee held a scrutiny session on the impact of welfare reforms in Wales with the Minister for Communities and Tackling Poverty on 8 May.

Although welfare is not a devolved issue this was an opportunity to scrutinise the Welsh Government on how it is adhering to its Programme for Government commitment to mitigate the impact of the changes to the benefits system, proposed by the UK Government in the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The Committee subsequently wrote to the Minister to seek clarity in a number of issues. The Minister replied on 24 June.

Inquiry into Integrated Public Transport in Wales

The Committee [reported on its inquiry into integrated public transport](#) on 22 May. The report and [government response](#) were [debated in Plenary](#) on 3 July.

In its response to the report, the Government accepted or accepted in principle the majority of the recommendations.

A follow-up evidence session was held on 4 July with Nick Jones, Traffic Commissioner for Wales and the West Midlands. The main focus of this session was to further explore the Traffic Commissioner's views on the report's recommendation that the Welsh Government should "continue to lobby for devolution of bus regulation and registration powers, including making the Traffic Commissioner for Wales accountable to the Welsh Ministers". The Committee also wrote to the Silk Commission to recommend further devolution of transport powers.

Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) on Intellectual Property

On 4 June the Business Committee referred the LCM on Intellectual Property to the Enterprise and Business Committee for consideration.

The Committee considered the LCM at its meeting on 26 June and wrote to the First Minister setting out some of the issues that were of concern to Members and asking for further information on a number of matters. The First Minister responded on 11 July.

Active Travel (Wales) Bill

The Committee continued its stage 1 scrutiny of the Active Travel (Wales) Bill and took evidence from a wide variety of organisations and individuals on 18 April.

The Committee held a final evidence session with the Minister for Culture and Sport on 24 April and considered the key issues that have arisen during its scrutiny of the Bill in a private session on 2 May.

The [Committee published its stage 1 report](#) on 24 May. The [Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee also published a report](#) on the Bill's subordinate legislation provisions in the same month.

The Bill was approved unanimously at Stage 1 by the Assembly following a debate on its general principles in Plenary on 4 June 2013.

The Committee undertook stage 2 consideration of the Bill on 4 July. The Committee met to consider and dispose of the amendments at this meeting. All the Welsh Government's 30 amendments were agreed. Of the 27 non-Government amendments tabled, 4 were agreed, 17 were not agreed, 2 were withdrawn, and a further 4 fell.

An amended version of the Bill has been prepared by the Policy and Legislation Committee Service.

Stage 3 of the Bill commenced on 5 July 2013. Members had until 6pm on Tuesday, 24 September 2013 to table further amendments to the Bill through the Legislation Office. Stage 3 proceedings will take place in Plenary on 1 October 2013.

Support for Committees

The Committee regularly reviews its ways of working and has recently contributed to the internal review of support provided to Assembly Committees. The Committee will be trialling a new app, which aims to reduce paperwork and facilitate the work of Members.

Committee activity for the autumn term 2013:

Please note that information regarding dates and topics of inquiry is subject to change, depending on emerging priorities.

- The Committee will hold a one-off scrutiny session on city regions with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport and her advisers on 25 September.
- The Committee will be commencing an [inquiry into the future of the Wales and Borders Franchise](#) during October. The Committee has completed a consultation exercise which ran during the summer and

will now take evidence from stakeholders and scrutinise the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport.

- The Committee will hold Ministerial scrutiny sessions on the Welsh Government's draft budget on 17 October. The Minister for the Economy, Science and Transport will be in attendance for the morning session and the Minister for Education and Skills and the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology will both be in attendance for the afternoon session.
- The Committee will hold a one-day inquiry on the role of social enterprises in the Welsh economy on 7 November. This is intended to follow on from the Enterprise and Learning Committee's 2010 report (Third Assembly) and the scrutiny session the Enterprise and Business Committee held with the Minister on 4 July 2012. The Committee will scrutinise the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport in the afternoon session.
- The Committee will be commencing an inquiry into EU funding opportunities for Wales 2014–2020 during November and December.

How we plan inquiries

Ultimately all inquiries begin with the ideas, aspirations, expertise and knowledge of Assembly Members, who in turn are informed by their constituents and professional contacts. The Committee will also prioritise the scrutiny of legislation that comes under its remit.

Members and officials discuss the planning of inquiries every term so that the Committee has a rolling, flexible, programme of work.

Other ways inquiries may arise are:

- Frequently, the Committee will decide that it wishes to revisit certain inquiries, after a suitable time has elapsed, to determine whether the Welsh Government is implementing the Committee's recommendations. In these cases, it will carry out a relatively short follow-up inquiry.
- The Petitions Committee may propose that committees undertake inquiries and/or investigate issues raised in petitions.
- Committees may undertake pre-legislative scrutiny inquiries to ensure that forthcoming legislation as drafted is robust and meets the needs of all stakeholders.
- Where UK legislation has significant implications for Wales, the Committee may undertake scrutiny of UK draft Bills or UK Bills.
- The Committee may decide that a particular issue requires a more informal and flexible approach than scrutinising evidence in formal hearings. It may therefore establish a task and finish group of, say, four members, to undertake work behind the scenes, as it were, and then report back to the full Committee.
- Sometimes stakeholders suggest to the Committee directly that it should be considering other issues.

And finally...

Feedback please!

We wish to receive **as much feedback as possible** regarding how useful this document is to you, whether its contents are relevant and appropriate, and

whether you wish us to include anything that we have not covered this time around. Please e-mail michael.lewis@wales.gov.uk with your feedback.

Also please feel free to forward this document or our contact details to anyone you think would wish to know about the work and operations of the Enterprise and Business Committee.