

Enterprise and Business Committee

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 Members and officials. It has been produced by the Clerking team which supports the Committee's work.

The Committee has recently launched its new twitter feed. For all the latest news from the Committee follow us on: [@SeneddEcon](https://twitter.com/SeneddEcon)

Work undertaken in the summer term 2014

Inquiry into Tourism

The Committee commenced its **inquiry into tourism**. Following a consultation exercise, the Committee took oral evidence from key stakeholders and held a **scrutiny session with the Minister for Culture and Sport** on 2 July.

As part of the inquiry the Assembly Outreach team arranged two visits to St Davids Visitor Centre, Pembrokeshire and National Museum, Cardiff for the Committee to meet local tourism businesses.

Oriel y Parc St David's Visitors Centre, Pembrokeshire



National Museum, Cardiff



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The Committee is due to hold a similar stakeholder event in North Wales at Llechwedd Slate Caverns, Blaenau Ffestiniog on 18 September.

The Committee will hold a scrutiny session with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on 2 October.

The Committee is due to publish its report during the second half of the autumn term.

Follow-up inquiry into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Skills

The Committee commenced its **follow-up inquiry into STEM skills**. Following a consultation exercise during the spring term, the Committee began taking oral evidence from key stakeholders. The initial session on 30 April took the form of two online web-chats to seek the views of Higher Education (HE)/Further Education (FE) students on STEM subjects (**web-chat 1**) and the gender imbalance within these subjects (**web-chat 2**).



Above: Committee Members engage with STEM students via web-chat.



<http://ow.ly/AkIS5>

Video: Rhun ap Iorwerth AM and Julie James AM offer their thoughts on the STEM skills / gender imbalance webchat.

The Committee held a **scrutiny session with the Minister for Education and Skills; The Deputy Minister for Technology and Skills and the Chief Scientific Adviser** on 12 June.

The report will be published on 26 September at the Curriculum and Assessment Review Conference, Cardiff. A Plenary debate has been scheduled for 26 November to coincide with the Welsh Government's response to the report.

The **previous inquiry on STEM skills** was undertaken by the Third Assembly's Enterprise and Learning Committee in 2011.

Inquiry into the Welsh Government's approach to the promotion of trade and inward investment

To conclude the evidence gathering, the Committee visited the Institute of Life Sciences (ILS) at Swansea University on 8 May. Committee Members met a number of business tenants at the ILS and sought their views and/or experiences with regard to exporting.





Above: Committee Members with Prof. Iwan Davies, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (second from left) and Prof Keith Lloyd, Head of Swansea Medical School (first on right).



Above: Committee Members meet business tenants at ILS.



Professor / Yr Athro Keith Lloyd
Swansea University / Prifysgol Abertawe

<http://ow.ly/Akern>

Video: Professor Keith Lloyd, Head of Swansea University Medical School discusses the work of the Institute of Life Sciences in relation to innovation and wealth creation.

The Committee is due to publish its report in the autumn and a Plenary debate will be scheduled once the Welsh Government has issued its response.

Inquiry into EU funding opportunities 2014-2020

The Committee invited key stakeholders to the launch of its [report on EU funding opportunities 2014-20](#) at Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff on 16 July.



Above: Committee Members discuss the report's findings with stakeholders.



<http://ow.ly/AjTqB>

Video: Eluned Haf and Hannah Van Den Bergh from Wales Arts International discuss the Committee report's findings.

The Welsh Government is due to respond to the Committee's report by 10 September and a Plenary debate has been provisionally scheduled for the 17 September. Committee Members will meet interested stakeholders ahead of the debate to gauge their views on the Government's response.

Committee activity for the autumn term 2014:

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

- The Committee will be commencing an inquiry into assisting young and older people into work. Scoping of the inquiry is currently in progress and the Committee is due to agree the terms of reference on 24 September.
- The Committee will hold a follow-up scrutiny session on Welsh ports with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on the morning of 2 October. The **Committee's initial report** was published in July 2012.
- The Committee will also hold a scrutiny session on the funding and delivery of rail electrification in South Wales with the Minister for Economy,

Science and Transport on the morning of 2 October.

- The Committee plans to scrutinise the authors of the **report of the Welsh Language and Economic Development Task and Finish Group** on 2 October in the afternoon.
- The Committee will hold Ministerial scrutiny sessions on the Welsh Government's draft budget proposals on 16 October. The Minister for Education and Skills and the Deputy Minister for Skills and Technology will both be in attendance for the morning session and the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport will be in attendance for the afternoon session.

You can help inform our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget proposals 2015-16 by responding to the **Finance Committee's consultation**. This closes on 10 September.

- The Committee is due to consider a **Legislative Consent Memorandum (LCM) on the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill** on 24 September.
- The Committee will hold a scrutiny session on the **Welsh Government's Economic Priority Sectors** on 8 October. The Minister for Economy, Science and Transport and the Sector Panel Chairs will be scrutinised.
- The Committee plans to hold a one-day inquiry on Enterprise Zones and City Regions with the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport on 4 December. The Committee had previously agreed to keep this topic under review and **scrutinised the Minister most recently** on 20 March.
- The Committee plans to hold a session on progress with the Welsh Government's Superfast Cymru rollout on 10 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.

Remit

The Enterprise and Business 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.



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