



Ein cyf/Our ref

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS
Chair of Finance Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA
SeneddFinance@senedd.wales

15 January 2024

Dear Peredur,

Thank you for your letter dated 11th December regarding a review of the current Budget Protocol.

I welcome the ongoing constructive engagement on the Protocol, including at official level, and have been pleased to agree several of your previous proposals for changes to the Protocol, some of which recognise changes to our practices that have been adopted informally. However, I note from your letter that there are other proposals where we have not been able to agree a way forward. Your letter also included further proposals by the Finance Committee for changes to the Protocol.

As I indicated in my letter dated 20th July 2023, I would suggest that we should seek to make the changes to the Protocol and Standing Orders on which we can agree as a single, consolidated package of changes rather than seeking Senedd approval in a more piecemeal manner. I believe it would be helpful if we were to continue to consider each other's proposals in the expectation that we can agree a unified approach to revising the Protocol before the Summer recess.

I think it would be helpful if I were to comment at this stage on your proposal that the debate on Welsh Government priorities should be scheduled to take place at a time other than before the summer recess each year. I recognise there are reasons why a later debate would be desirable, and this highlights the challenge of our budget timetable being impacted by, and linked to, the timing of UK government fiscal events. However, scheduling the debate in advance of summer recess provides the optimal opportunity for the Senedd to help shape the Government's priorities on the Budget at an early stage in our preparations, whereas leaving it until the autumn term would mean we would be further advanced in our preparations.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I can confirm that following further consideration of the existing arrangements recognising the importance of Senedd consideration for setting income tax rates alongside consideration of the Annual Budget Motion, we are not currently proposing to put forward any further proposals in relation at this time.

Our discussions during the Summer indicated we are working towards a common goal and that any proposals made by either the Committee or the Welsh Government are made with positive intentions. I will ask my officials to contact the Committee's clerk to take these discussions forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Rebecca" and the last name "Evans" clearly distinguishable.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Minister for Finance and Local Government