

Finance Committee

Welsh Government Draft Budget Proposals 2017-18

I refer to the Committees of the National Assembly seeking information to inform their scrutiny of the Welsh Government's 2017-18 Draft Budget proposals.

On Behalf of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE Wales Cymru) I believe that as our quality of life depends on infrastructure; that there would be little economic activity without energy generation and distribution, water supply and disposal, transportation by rail, road, sea & air and waste management that Wales needs a clear 'Vision for Infrastructure'. The next steps in the development of the Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan (WIIP) are crucial to the delivery of sustainable and effective infrastructure in Wales.

The focus for the budget should be on:

Resilience:

I consider that the lack of overview of the vulnerabilities of Wales' infrastructure networks has created gaps in our approach to defending critical infrastructure. The interdependence of our infrastructure assets must be recognised with increased levels of information sharing and joint forward planning.

Transport.

The Committee should consider if Wales has a safe, affordable, integrated and accessible transport network that supports local and regional economic growth, productivity and a vibrant society:

and establish the budget for this area.

Energy:

Energy security is one of the key issues facing Wales and the UK today. The Committee should consider if Wales:

- Has sufficient supply of electricity to avoid interruptions.
- Is reducing the production of harmful emissions.
- Is promoting energy efficiency measures:

and establish the budget for this area.

Water and waste water:

Wales has great potential to harness and benefit from its invaluable supply of water. Water is not only essential for communities, but for business and industry alike. The Committee should consider:

- How to produce innovative low carbon ways to transfer water across river catchments.
- How to Invest in and improve the existing water network – improving efficiency and security of service. Reservoirs must be upgraded to meet future water demand with a long term strategic plan for water resources in Wales.
- How to promote Wales' plentiful water supplies linked to inward development – domestic and commercial opportunities. Availability of water can be a business differentiator in some sectors.
- How to help the public to view water as a valuable resource to improve water:

and establish the budget for this area

Flood Risk management:

Effective flood risk management requires collaboration across a range of stakeholders. The Committee should consider:

- The development of a long term capital and maintenance programme.
- Strategies to improve property and building resilience and create flood resilient communities:

and establish the budget for this area.

Waste management:

There must be a fundamental shift in the way waste is addressed. The Committee should examine how:

- Waste can be treated as a resource
- Wales can shift to a circular economy

and establish the budget for this area.

Skills:

The committee should examine if Wales has the right skills in place to address the current productivity lag, to improve infrastructure delivery and yield economic growth:

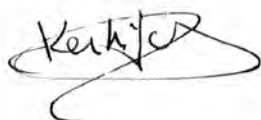
and establish the budget for this area.

Infrastructure Pipeline:

Wales needs a joined up infrastructure vision for Wales, looking forward twenty five years and developed through engagement with governments, clients, investors, operators and delivery teams.

I consider that effective engagement takes place with the construction sector and others involved in the development and delivery of infrastructure in Wales, as indicated by the establishment of an Infrastructure Commission for Wales and that its initial focus should be on development of infrastructure vision and pipeline (WIIP) together with a supporting understanding of skills/resources required. It would be useful for the committee to review work to date around the WIIP and engagement with the sector with a view to determining best practice and improvements for the future.

See attached specific responses to the consultation questions.



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Notes:

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) was founded in 1818 to ensure professionalism in civil engineering.

It represents 86,500 qualified and student civil engineers in the UK and across the globe and has over 3,600 members in Wales

ICE has long worked with governments of the day to help it to achieve its objectives, and has worked with industry to ensure that construction and civil engineering remain major contributors to the UK economy and UK exports

For further information visit www.ice.org.uk and www.ice.org.uk/wales