

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Conference Room 4B – Tŷ Hywel

Meeting date: 18 March 2020

Meeting time: 11.30 – 12.30

Private

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones AM, Llywydd (Chair) Rebecca Evans AM Darren Millar AM Siân Gwenllïan Caroline Jones AM
Committee Staff:	Aled Elwyn Jones (Clerk)
Others in attendance	Ann Jones AM, Deputy Presiding Officer Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly Siwan Davies, Director of Assembly Business Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber and Committee Service Anna Daniel, Head of Strategic Transformation Matthew Richards, Head of the Legal Service, Head of the Legal Service Gwion Evans, Head of the Llywydd's Private Office Elin Roberts, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd Helen Carey, Welsh Government



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1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

2 Assembly Business

2.1 Temporary Business Arrangements in response to Coronavirus Measures

The Business Committee met this morning and agreed the following:

Temporary Standing Order changes to be considered this afternoon

- (i) proposals for a temporary Standing Order relating to public access. Although the public are to be denied access to the public gallery, the proposed Standing Orders are clear that broadcasting means that plenary is taking place in public, and that broadcasting will continue, except where the Commission state it is impractical. Business Managers stressed the importance of continuing broadcasting for as long as possible. The Clerk offered to provide a note on plans to enable this to happen.
- (ii) proposals for a temporary Standing Order relating to the election of an Acting Chair for Plenary (in case the Llywydd and Deputy are unable to be present to chair) and the election of a Designated Temporary Presiding Officer (in case the Llywydd and Deputy are unable to act at all).
- (iii) to agree to suspend Standing Orders in Plenary this afternoon (18 March) in order to make these changes;
- (iv) to agree to the election of a temporary Chair and designated Llywydd this afternoon – David Melding.

Next Week's Business

- (i) that all Plenary business be taken on Wednesday, starting at 11am, with a half hour break for lunch and an estimated finish time of 8pm.
- (ii) FMQs and Topical Questions would take place on Wednesday morning. All OAQs to the other Ministers would be transferred for written answer. There will be no questions on the Business Statement. This will require a suspension of Standing Orders next Wednesday. The other business will be Ministerial statements in relation to Coronavirus [as per the current Business Statement for 24 March] and the LCM on the Coronavirus Bill.
- (iii) The time available for Stage 1 on the General Principles of the Local Government Bill will be shortened. There would be no debate as usual, only a vote. The Government agreed to publish its response to the Committee report in advance so Members could take an informed decision.

Recess arrangements and beyond

- (i) Business Managers agreed that scrutiny of the Government needed to continue during recess.
- (ii) Business Managers agreed to give further consideration at their next meeting to how best to:
- Minimise the number of Members attending plenary;
 - Facilitate the business of Government, including subordinate legislation, particularly in relation to Coronavirus;
 - Provide opportunities for scrutiny during recess, and possibly beyond, for all Groups and independent Members;

- (iii) Business Managers considered the option of creating a Committee to undertake Assembly functions, where appropriate.
- (iv) Officials will provide further advice to Business Managers ahead of the next meeting.

Next meeting – early next week (time and date TBC).

There will also be a virtual working test.