

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS

Chair

Finance Committee

1 May 2024

Annwyl Peredur,

Scrutiny of the Draft Budget

Thank you for your letter of 22 March seeking views on the documentation provided by the Welsh Government to support scrutiny of the Draft Budget. The Committee considered this at its meeting on 24 April and would like to make the following points:

- It is vital that evidence is provided in a timely manner and Members would like to highlight the need for the Government to stick to the timings set out in the budget protocol;
- Information shared this budget round (Draft Budget 2024-25) was useful. There were a few gaps noted around specific outcomes, e.g. on the Export Action Plan, where a greater level of detail would have been useful. However in general Committees need as much specific information as possible to be able to properly understand and drill down into the draft budget;
- The narrative shared with Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) tables and on individual programmes was helpful, as were updates on topical issues, e.g. on costs related to Border Control Posts and implementing the Border Target Operating Model. The Committee would like to see this provided in future budget scrutiny rounds and if more detail is provided on each BEL Members would also appreciate further narrative explanations to accompany that detail;



- The Committee uses its regular scrutiny sessions with Ministers to cover budget issues in-year. However, ahead of the next Welsh Government Draft Budget 2025-26 we will write to the Cabinet Secretaries to ask them for progress against last year's Committee report recommendations as part of the budget scrutiny process; and
- The Committee will also highlight the Finance Committee's consultation to our stakeholders more clearly. Very useful responses were received from a small number of the Committee's key stakeholders, but we want to encourage more engagement from all our stakeholders with that coordinated consultation process.

Taken together, all these elements should serve to inform and enhance future budget scrutiny.

I hope this response is helpful to your Committee,

Cofion cynnes,



Paul Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English