

# National Assembly for Wales

## Committee and Legislation Newsletter

January 2017

This newsletter provides an update on the work of the Assembly's Committees and the progress of Bills currently being considered by the Assembly

We would be grateful for your [feedback](#).

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# Legislation

## 01. Legislation: the story so far

Since summer 2016, the Welsh Government has proposed five laws for the Assembly's consideration. These are:

- the [Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes \(Wales\) Bill](#), introduced on 12 September 2016;
- the [Public Health \(Wales\) Bill](#), introduced on 7 November 2016;
- the [Landfill Disposals Tax \(Wales\) Bill](#), introduced on 28 November 2016;
- the [Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal \(Wales\) Bill](#), introduced on 12 December 2016; and
- the [Trade Union \(Wales\) Bill](#), introduced on 16 January 2017.

The Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes (Wales) Bill is currently at 'stage 2,' where committee members will vote on amendments to the Bill.

The other four Bills are at 'stage 1,' where committee members will gather public views on the general principles of the legislation, and report on the Bills.

No Member Bills, Committee Bills or Assembly Commission Bills have yet been introduced in the Fifth Assembly.

### First Member Bill Ballot

Dai Lloyd AM was successful in the first [Member Bill ballot](#) which was drawn on 25 January 2017. His proposal is the Development of the Protection of Welsh Historical Place Names Bill.

Each Assembly Member can enter one idea in a Member Bill ballot. Their idea can be on anything that they think the Assembly has the legal power to change, except for taxation. One Member's idea will then be selected, at random, from the Ballot.

If you have an idea for a change that you would like made to the law in Wales, you can speak to your Assembly Members.

Did you know that each person in Wales is represented by five Assembly Members? [Find out who your Assembly Members are.](#)



# Updates from Assembly Committees

## 02. Children, Young People and Education Committee

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This term the Committee is carrying out an inquiry into [Teachers' Professional Learning and Education](#). Formal oral evidence sessions will be held later in the term.



The Committee has also launched a consultation entitled the '[First 1000 days](#)' – this is to consider the extent to which Welsh Government policies and programmes support the early parent role, before birth and during the first two years of a child's life, and crucially how effective these are in supporting children's emotional and social capabilities and development. It is intended that the evidence received will inform future inquiries.

[The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal \(Wales\) Bill](#) has been remitted to the Committee. The Committee has launched a consultation and survey. Stage 1 scrutiny commenced on the 12 January when the Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language attended Committee to give evidence. Further oral evidence sessions are planned for March. As

part of the Committee's public engagement, a conference is being held on 26 January where over 80 delegates are attending and on the 9 February the Committee will be holding workshops in North and South Wales with parents and carers and meeting young people.

On the 18 January the Cabinet Secretary for Health, Well-being and Sport and the Minister for Social Services and Public Health attended for a general scrutiny session. On the 25 January the Chair will be making a statement in Plenary on the Committee's work in the Fifth Assembly to date, and on its future inquiries and engagement work.

On 1 February the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health are attending Committee to discuss their report into the State of Children's health, which is published on 26 January. The Chief Medical Officer will be attending a meeting to discuss their Annual report, this will be the first time that the Committee has scrutinised this report. On 15 February, Estyn will be attending to discuss their annual report.



Also this term the Committee will be publishing two reports - Statutory Advocacy Provision and Education Improvement Grant: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller, and Minority Ethnic Children.



### 03. Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

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 [Committee web page](#)

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The Climate change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee is looking forward to continuing our work on the future of rural and agricultural policy in Wales. We have heard from stakeholders about the ways in which rural development can be stimulated in future and are exploring these issues with a visit to the Burren Programme in Ireland. Our visit to Galway will give us a chance to learn about an innovative scheme which supports agricultural businesses to maintain biodiversity.

On the same visit the Committee will meet the Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine in Dublin and learn from the Chief Veterinary Officer about their approach to tackling Bovine tuberculosis.



We have started an inquiry into the management of Marine Protected Areas in Wales and will be hearing from leading experts on the issues which need to be balanced in maintaining these areas. We will build on this with a visit to Milford Haven to meet those working on the Pembrokeshire Marine Special Area of Conservation.

We will hold the first meeting of the Expert Reference Group on Climate Change in February. This group will provide support to the Committee to scrutinise the progress of the Welsh Government in meeting its targets on climate change mitigation. This includes post-legislative scrutiny of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

### 04. Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister

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The newly constituted Committee met in public for the first time on 18 November last year and focused their scrutiny session on the Programme for Government. Time was also set aside at the end of the meeting for Members to ask the First Minister a number of questions on topical issues.



Having previously agreed to hold two of their three meetings each year outside of Cardiff, the Committee is next due to meet on Friday 17 February in the Halliwell Centre, Carmarthen. Members will be asking the First Minister about the Welsh Government's strategic approach to tackling poverty. Again there will be an opportunity to ask topical questions at the end of the meeting.



## 05. Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee

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This term the Committee's work will focus on its '[A Stronger Voice for Wales: engaging with Wales and the devolved institutions](#)' inquiry which will consider the effectiveness of inter-institutional working. This will build and reflect on the work that has already been undertaken in other legislatures and the initial, informal discussions held with academics and the Speaker of the House of Commons.



The Committee launched its [consultation](#) in December and will take oral evidence over the coming term. The consultation will close on 17 February 2017. The Committee will establish a citizen panel to inform its work. This approach will help ensure the Committee hears a balance of views between those who have never engaged and those who regularly engage with the Assembly. When setting the terms of reference, the Committee also set out their objectives for the inquiry which include producing best practice principles for inter-institutional working.

The Committee will also be preparing to undertake [further work](#) on our [predecessor](#)

[Committee's recommendation](#) to ensure a consistent approach for the appointment and accountability of commissioners. The Committee met with experts in the field during the Autumn term to seek their views in order to help shape the Committee's work. Further details will be published in due course.

In addition the Committee will also:

- scrutinise all Bills which are introduced to the Assembly;
- scrutinise all subordinate legislation that is laid before the Assembly;
- monitor the impact of the UK Government's Wales Bill; and
- monitor any constitutional developments which will affect Wales.

## 06. Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

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Last term the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee began two inquiries, one into the Welsh Government's new Welsh Language Strategy – which will set out how the Welsh Government intends to achieve their stated aim of having a million Welsh speakers by 2050, the other – a preliminary look at broadcasting in Wales. This term will see the continuation and completion of these inquiries. We aim to publish each report before the end of term.





Additionally, we held a public poll to determine what its next inquiry would be. The Committee has resultantly embarked upon an inquiry into the funding for and access to music education, the winning entry of the poll. We are currently consulting on the terms of reference and are holding some preliminary evidence sessions. This initial consultation will close on 3 February; the inquiry will then start and will continue throughout the term.

Finally, the Committee has recently held a one off session on 'The Welsh Language Standards (No. 6) Regulations 2017'. We plan on laying our report on the regulations in time for the plenary debate on 31 January.

## 07. Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Committee

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EIS committee will be looking at digital infrastructure (broadband and mobile) during January, and holding a short inquiry in to the funding of the apprenticeship levy in February. We will also hold some seminar-style sessions looking at different perspectives on a new economic strategy for Wales.



Throughout March we will start taking oral evidence on the metro and rail franchise - our major piece of work for this term.

We will publish our report on the proposals for a National Infrastructure Commission for Wales later this month (January).

## 08. Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee

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The Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee has a varied work programme in the spring term. Much of the work is informed by the consultation held with stakeholders in summer 2016 into the Committee's priorities.

The Committee will be:

- Carrying out Stage 1 scrutiny of the Trade Union (Wales) Bill. The Committee will be publishing its report before Easter;
- Starting work looking at poverty in Wales, with a stakeholder event in late January. Following this, the Committee will take evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure, before deciding next steps. This will build on the work of the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee in the fourth Assembly;



- Taking oral evidence on the inquiry into Human Rights in Wales. The inquiry will look at the impact of; the UK's withdrawal from the EU on human rights in Wales; and the UK Government's proposals to repeal the Human Rights Act 1998 and replace it with a UK Bill of Rights. It will also consider public perceptions of human rights and how understandable and relevant they are to Welsh people. A written consultation will close 10 February;
- Holding a general scrutiny session with the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales on 2 February;
- Publishing its report on refugees and asylum seekers in Wales; and
- Holding a plenary debate on the Committee's Post legislative inquiry into the Violence against Woman, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015.

## 09. External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

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The Committee published its report on the implications of Brexit for Wales. Split into two parts, part one looks at the emerging issues for areas such as trade, education, health and the environment. Part two provides our view on how we will approach scrutiny of the Welsh and UK Governments as the article 50 negotiation process unfolds.

Looking ahead, we will hold regular scrutiny sessions with the First Minister, the Welsh Government's lead for the negotiations - Mark Drakeford AM, and other relevant Ministers to monitor progress and hold them to account. Key milestones will include scrutiny of the UK

Government's proposed 'Repeal Bill' and the triggering of Article 50. We will continue our dialogue with other parliamentary bodies across the United Kingdom including holding meetings with counterparts in the EC-UK Forum in March.

Building on our work on the implications of Brexit, we will also be conducting an inquiry into the future of regional policy in Wales throughout the spring term.

## 10. Finance Committee

 [Committee web page](#)

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The busy spring term started with the Committee scrutinising the Landfill Disposal Tax (Wales) Bill, which has a Stage 1 reporting date of 10 March. Evidence will be taken from a variety of organisations and the Committee will conduct a Landfill Site visit.



The Committee published its report on Land Transaction Tax and Anti-avoidance of Devolved Taxes (Wales) Bill: Stage 1 in December 2016. The Stage 1 debate took place on 10 January, the National Assembly for



Wales approved the general principles, Stage 2 proceedings began on 11 January, and the scheduled date for stage two proceedings is 16 February.

The Welsh Government Second Supplementary Budget 2016-17 will be laid by the Government on 7 February for the Committee to scrutinise and report on prior to the debate on the 7 March.

Additionally, the Committee will commence scrutiny of the financial implications of the other Bills introduced into the Assembly, such as the Public Health Bill and the Additional Learning Needs Bill.

The Committee has also invited the Secretary of State for Wales, Auditor General for Wales and Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government to attend Committee regarding the implementation of the Wales Act 2014.

## 11. Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

 [Committee web page](#)

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The Committee will continue to take evidence on the [Public Health \(Wales\) Bill](#) in order to complete its scrutiny and report on the general principles of the Bill (Stage 1) by 10 February 2017. Later in the term the Committee will undertake Stage 2 proceedings, where it will give detailed consideration to any amendments tabled to the Bill.

During this term the Committee will also be undertaking scrutiny of Welsh Government policy in several areas within its remit. In January, the first of these pieces of work will see the Committee take evidence from key

stakeholders on the Welsh Government's [Draft Dementia Strategic Action Plan for Wales](#).



As part of its on-going programme of work on the [sustainability of the health and social care workforce](#), in February, the Committee will begin taking oral evidence on its short Inquiry into [Medical Recruitment](#). The Committee has already received 23 [written consultation responses](#) setting out a range of stakeholder views on this issue.

There is still an opportunity to submit your views to the Committee's [Inquiry into Primary Care](#). The Committee's inquiry will focus on the role of clusters (groups of GPs working with other health and care professionals to plan and provide services locally) as a means of transforming primary care. Consultation responses can be [submitted](#) until 3 February 2017.



**Half a million people**  
over the age of 60 in the UK  
**usually spend each day alone.**

Join our **live discussion** on what  
Wales can do to tackle this.

📅 25 January  
🕒 17.00  
📍 /nationalassemblyforwales

 National Assembly for Wales  
Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

The Committee will also launch a consultation on its inquiry looking at the extent and impact of [loneliness and isolation](#) experienced by people in Wales, particularly older people. The inquiry will consider current policy solutions in



Wales and their cost effectiveness. The Committee will also look at the extent to which initiatives to combat loneliness and isolation experienced by other groups may help to address these issues for older people.

Later in the term, the Committee will also be launching a consultation for its Inquiry into the use of anti-psychotic medication. The Committee will be calling for evidence on issues arising from concerns from stakeholders about the inappropriate use of anti-psychotic drugs to control behavioural and psychological symptoms.

## 12. Petitions Committee

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The Committee are expected to consider 16 new petitions over the coming term, this is subject to any new admissible petitions that fall within the timeframe. Members will continue to consider updates to petitions that are currently under consideration.

The Committee is in the process of publishing its first report on [Support for Yearly Screening for Ovarian Cancer \(CA125 blood test\)](#). The report includes a number of recommendations to the Welsh Government.

The Committee will continue to consider its report on the review of petitions. Subject to the agreement of the Business Committee, this may include some future changes to the petitions process.

Members are also meeting with petitioners, Whizz-Kidz, to gather further evidence for the petition on [P-05-710 Ensure Disabled People can Access Public Transport As and When They Need it](#).

The Committee has meetings scheduled for 17 January; 31, January; 14 February; 7 March; 21 March and 4 April.

## 13. Public Accounts Committee

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The Committee published its report on its [Annual Scrutiny of the Accounts](#) of publicly funded organisations in December 2016. The Committee concluded that Accounts and Annual reports are becoming more transparent and accessible.

During the spring term the Committee will be taking evidence for its inquiry into [Regulatory Oversight of Housing Associations](#). A successful stakeholder event was held with Housing Association tenants last December to inform the inquiry involving over 50 participants from across Wales.

Later in the term the Committee will start an inquiry into Regional Education Consortia issuing a written consultation as well as using an online survey to gauge the views of stakeholders. A short inquiry will take place arising from the Auditor General's report on Local Authorities Income Generation and Charging.

Performance monitoring work will focus on the Welsh Government responses and updates on previous Committee work including NHS waiting times for elective care and Orthopaedic Services.



The Committee will also consider a number of reports of the Auditor General including reports on Medicines Management and the National Library for Wales.

## 14. Standards of Conduct Committee

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 [Committee web page](#)

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The Standards of Conduct Committee agreed to undertake an inquiry into lobbying, and issued a written consultation in December 2016. This closes at the end of January 2017.

Gerard Elias's term as Standards Commissioner ended on 30 November 2016, and the Committee held a valedictory session with him, to consider what he felt had been the main achievements during his time in post, and what the challenges would be going forward for the new Commissioner. Sir Roderick Evans took up post as the new Standards Commissioner on 1 December, and the Committee will be holding a session with him in early 2017 to discuss what his priorities for the role will be.

