

Jeremy Miles MS, Minister for Education and Welsh Language

CC Delyth Jewell MS, Chair of the Culture, Communications, Welsh
Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

CC Paul Davies MS, Chair of the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs
Committee

Date: 9 November 2021

Subject: Welsh Government Draft Budget 2022-23

Dear Jeremy,

We would like written information to support our scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2022-23. The annex to this letter sets out in detail the information that we would like to receive.

As you will know, my clerk has arranged with your officials for you to attend a meeting of the Committee on 20 January 2022 to give oral evidence on the Draft Budget. I would be grateful to receive the written information no later than 20 December 2021.

I note that the Welsh Government intends to publish the Draft Budget on 20 December. Please contact my clerk if you are concerned about meeting our proposed deadline in light of the budget timetable.

Given the shared interest across committees in some of the areas listed in the annex to this letter, I have copied in the chairs of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee and the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Yours sincerely,



Jayne Bryant MS

Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

Annex: Request to the Minister for Education and Welsh Language regarding CYPE Draft Budget scrutiny 2022-23

Our approach to scrutiny of the Draft Budget

Our financial scrutiny aims to ensure accountability, promote better decision making and improve value for money. It will follow four key principles, as recommended by the Finance Committee:

- **Affordability:** to look at the big picture of total revenue and expenditure, and whether these are appropriately balanced.
- **Prioritisation:** whether the division of allocations between different sectors/programmes is justifiable and coherent.
- **Value for money:** essentially, are public bodies spending their allocations well – economy, efficiency and effectiveness (i.e.) outcomes.
- **Budget processes:** are they effective and accessible and whether there is integration between corporate and service planning and performance and financial management.

Cross-cutting areas

Transparency of budget presentation

Throughout the previous Senedd, our predecessor committee emphasised the importance of presenting the Draft Budget transparently to enable full and thorough scrutiny. To continue this approach, we request a transparent narrative explanation (and numeric depiction) of the following:

- reductions/removal or increases/additions relating to specific areas of the Education and Welsh Language Main Expenditure Group (MEG) compared to previous financial years (e.g. grants being reduced or ceasing to exist altogether/being increased or introduced);
- what proportion any such changes to the overall amount previously allocated represent; and
- where exactly this change is being made in the Draft Budget, and whether money will be returned to/taken from central reserves or allocated to/from other budget lines either within or outside the MEG.

Commentary on Actions and detail of Budget Expenditure Line (BEL) allocations

- We request commentary on each of the Actions within the Education and Welsh Language MEG, including an analysis and explanation of significant changes since the 2021-22 First Supplementary Budget (June 2021).
- We also request a breakdown of the 2022-23 and indicative 2023-24 (if available) Education and Welsh Language MEG by Spending Programme Area (if applicable), Action, and Budget Expenditure Line (BEL), with 2021-22 First Supplementary Budget allocations, forecast 2021-22 outturns, and 2020-21 final outturns all included.
- If the Welsh Government uses a revised baseline budget for comparative purposes, we request that the actual 2021-22 First Supplementary Budget allocations are also presented as well as an explanation of the reasons for the re-calculation of the baseline.

Education priorities and other strategic priorities

- Information on how the Education and Welsh Language MEG aligns with, and is prioritised according to, the Welsh Government's relevant priorities and key objectives, including:
 - An assessment from the Minister on the extent to which he believes the Education and Welsh Language MEG contains the resources necessary to deliver Welsh Government priorities and key objectives,
 - Information on any ongoing negotiations with the Minister for Finance and Local Government to maximise the level of resources available for education, including funding for schools' core budgets through the Local Government Settlement.
 - Details of how allocations to and within the Education and Welsh Language MEG align with the Programme for Government.
 - Whether, and if so how, the Minister intends to target resources at addressing any cross-cutting themes or priorities across the MEG as a whole, for example management of and recovery from the pandemic, tackling the negative impact of disadvantage on learners' outcomes, giving effect to children's rights and supporting learners with their physical, emotional and mental health (these are all priorities for our Committee).
 - Details of the assessment made of the value for money and affordability of delivering key priorities and objectives and how their cost-effectiveness will be monitored.
 - Details of any opportunity cost exercises undertaken in respect of activities prioritised in budget allocations.

Children's rights and other cross-cutting considerations

As recommended in our predecessor's reports regarding budget scrutiny and children's rights, we believe a Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) should be undertaken for the Draft Budget as a whole. In terms of the Education and Welsh Language MEG specifically, we request:

- Information on how children's rights, equalities, sustainability and the Welsh language have been considered in budget allocations.
- A copy of the CRIA undertaken by the Department for Education to inform the allocations in the draft Education and Welsh Language MEG for 2022-23. If a specific CRIA has not been undertaken, the reasons for this and a copy of any alternative integrated impact assessment as well as assurances that this assessment demonstrates that the duty of "due regard" to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has been exercised.
- Information on the account taken of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 in making allocations to budget lines within the Education and Welsh Language MEG.
- Details and/or examples of any changes made to initial allocations within the Education and Welsh Language MEG following considerations of children's rights, equalities, sustainability, the Welsh language, or the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 as a result of impact assessments, or where these assessments have had a direct influence on the setting of budgets.

Costs of legislation

- Details of any allocations within the 2022-23 budget intended for the implementation of the Curriculum and Assessment (Wales) Act 2021 and associated qualifications reform..
- Details of any allocations within the 2022-23 budget intended for the implementation of the PCET reforms, including any costs associated with the Tertiary Education and Research Bill.
- An update on any ongoing costs to the Education and Welsh Language MEG of implementing previous legislation from the Fourth and Fifth Senedd, and any financial implications for the 2022-23 budget.
- Budget provision for implementing the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018 and the wider ALN Transformation Programme.
- Information on the financial impact of any relevant UK Parliament legislation.
- Financial implications in 2022-23 of any relevant subordinate legislation.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Information on the impact of the pandemic on the Education and Welsh Language MEG in both 2021-22 and 2022-23, including movements in and out of budget lines, the gross contribution to -and receipt from - the Welsh Government's COVID-19 budgetary response, as well as the net effect of this.
- Details and breakdown of the funding allocated for the education sector's response to the pandemic, quoted as £220 million in 2020-21 and £150 million in 2021-22, plus any allocation in 2022-23.
- Information on the availability and use of the COVID Local Government Hardship Fund for education purposes.
- Details of the allocations in 2021-22 and 2022-23 to further education institutions to support provision for learners whose course completion has been delayed, and the number of unique learners impacted.

Impact of Brexit

- Information on any implications for the Education and Welsh Language MEG following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.
- Information on the amount of EU funding the 2021-22 Education MEG has drawn on and the amount it is forecast to rely on in 2022-23 and the purposes to which it is put.

Budget monitoring

- Information on the processes in place for monitoring budgets throughout the year, identifying potential deficits and surpluses, and taking remedial action or allocating additional funds to cover any shortfalls, particularly in the continuing circumstances of the pandemic.
- Details of any changes to the 2021-22 Education and Welsh Language MEG that are already anticipated in the Second Supplementary Budget.

Specific areas

Funding for school budgets

- An explanation of how the Welsh Government has prioritised funding for schools in the 2022-23 Draft Budget (in both the Finance and Local Government MEG and the Education and Welsh Language MEG) and taken account of the Sibieta review of school spending.

An update on how the Welsh Government intends to respond to the Sibieta review.

Funding for school improvement

- An explanation of how the Draft Budget 2022-23 supports school improvement and raising standards of education.
- Details of the Regional Consortia School Improvement Grant (RCSIG) allocations in 2021-22- and previous years, as well as any available indicative allocations for 2022-23, broken down by consortium and 'objective' (or other heading whichever is applicable).
- Information on the Education Improvement Grant element of the RCSIG and an update on how the Welsh Government is ensuring this is strategically used and its impact evaluated.

Reducing the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes

- Information on how resources within the Education and Welsh Language MEG are being used to meet the Welsh Government's long-term commitment to reduce the impact of deprivation on educational outcomes.
- Details of budget provision for the Pupil Development Grant (PDG) and the PDG Access fund.
- What discussions has the Minister for Education and Welsh Language had with the Minister for Finance and Local Government about reviewing the Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility criteria with a view to extending entitlement "as far as resources allow" (as set out in the 2021 Programme for Government).
- Estimated costs of different free school meal (FSM) eligibility models, which the Welsh Government may be considering as part of its review of FSM eligibility, and how these are reflected in either the Education and Welsh Language MEG or the Finance and Local Government MEG..
- Any other funding within the Education and Welsh Language MEG for initiatives to tackle the deprivation/attainment negative correlation, for example holiday hunger and school holiday enrichment projects.

Education workforce

- Details of budget allocations to finance Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and professional learning for current teachers.
- Information on any funding provided by the Welsh Government to the Education Workforce Council.

Details of funding for local authorities towards meeting the costs of the teachers' pay award for academic year 2021/22, including a breakdown between the 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years and the respective mechanisms used (whether direct grant or incorporated into the local government settlement).

Curriculum reform

- Information on funding to support preparations for, and implementation of, the Curriculum for Wales, including professional learning for the workforce.

Emotional and mental health of children and young people

- Information on the financial implications for the Education and Welsh Language MEG in 2022-23 of the work to embed a whole-school/system approach to emotional and mental health, including any funding to support the statutory guidance.
- Details of how any funding from the Health and Social Services MEG is being used to complement work in schools on this area.
- Details of funding for any additional or tailored initiatives to support children and young people's mental health in education settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Support for Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners

- Details of funding to support the education of Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller learners in 2022-23 and how this is being distributed.

Additional Learning Needs

- An updated assessment of the pressures facing local authorities, schools, and colleges in delivering current SEN/ALN provision, the impact of additional funding in previous years and whether further additional funding will be provided in 2022-23.
- Information on funding provision for the ALN Transformation Programme and the implementation of the 2018 Act.

- The latest position on funding for the training of educational psychologists in Wales and the grant funding arrangement with Cardiff University.

Infant class sizes

- Confirmation of whether the Reducing Infant Class Sizes is continuing in 2022-23 and an evaluation of the impact of funding for this in the previous Senedd.

Small and Rural schools grant

Confirmation of whether the Small and Rural Schools Grant is continuing in 2022-23 and an evaluation of the impact of funding for this in the previous Senedd

Estyn

- Details of Estyn's budget allocation for 2022-23 from the Finance and Local Government MEG, including what recent discussions have been held with the inspectorate on its required levels of funding and how this compares with previous years.

Qualifications

- Details of the budget allocation to Qualifications Wales in 2022-23, including what recent discussions have been held with the regulator on its required levels of funding and how this compares with previous years.
- An update on any additional funding Qualifications Wales is receiving to support its work on qualifications reform in the context of the new Curriculum for Wales and its programme of sector reviews of vocational qualifications.
- Information on any financial implications for Qualifications Wales, or any Welsh Government budgets, from the impact of the pandemic on the awarding of qualifications.

Welsh-medium education

Details of budget provision to support the Welsh Government's Welsh-medium education strategy and local authorities' Welsh in Education Strategic Plans (WESPs), as well as the education sector's contribution to meeting the Cymraeg 2050 target of one million Welsh speakers.

- Information on any funding allocated to support the realisation of the single continuum for the teaching and learning of Welsh, for example increasing the capacity of the Welsh-speaking education workforce in both English and Welsh-medium schools.

- An update on the work being undertaken to review the relationship between funding rates for childcare for three and four year olds (under the Childcare offer) and early years education (the Foundation Phase) for three and four year olds.
- An updated assessment of the financial position of the funded non-maintained nursery sector as it relates to the Education and Welsh Language MEG and the Minister for Education and Welsh Language's portfolio, including in the context of delivering the new curriculum.

Youth work

- Details of the budget provision to support youth service provision including in the context of the Interim Youth Work Board's report.

Offender learning

- Details of provision in 2022-23 and how this compares to previous years.

Further education, sixth forms and adult community learning

- Details of the complete 2021/22 allocations to further education colleges, to include the amounts of all components of the allocation (i.e. full-time, part-time, part-time allowance, deprivation, sparsity and Welsh-medium allowances, maintenance allowance and the Adult Learning Wales adjustment).
- Details of further changes to the further education funding model (if any) from the model provided to the Committee in the previous Government's paper dated 08 Jan 2020 (and updated by the paper from then then Minister for Education for the CYPE Committee meeting of 21 Jan 2021), and the reason for any changes.
- Details of any hypothecated funding to further education institutions or Sixth Forms beyond their usual core grants.
- Details of any funding provided in the 2022-23 budget for achieving pay parity and/or to meet any pay award to further education institutions and Sixth Forms, including an explanation as to the sufficiency of the funding to meet in full any agreed pay award / pay equivalency over the period of this budget.
- Details of the complete 2022-23 Sixth Form allocation broken down by each local authority.

- A copy of the most recent Further Education Financial Forecast Planning Assumptions guidance issued to FEIs.
- The allocation for Adult Community Learning broken down by the relevant bodies that directly receive the funding.
- The complete 2021-22 and 2022-23 programme values used in the calculation of FE and Sixth Form funding.

Higher education, and post-16 student financial support

- Details of the HEFCW allocation, including details of any hypothecated funding, or funding which is intended for specific activities including mental health and student well-being.
- Regarding the Diamond reforms: set out the expected level of student financial support saving for 2022-23 compared to 2021-22 and the proportion of this sum that will be reinvested back into the higher education sector as part of the “Diamond Dividend”.
- Details of any 2022-23 allocation intended for the delivery of degree apprenticeships and if it is intended to be used to recruit new apprentices or to just teach out existing apprentices.
- Details of any capital funding to be made available to HEFCW, including any restrictions to be placed on it by the Welsh Government.
- Details of any contingencies / reserves / non-allocated funds within any of the 2022-23 tertiary education related BELs, including the BELs within the post-16 Learner Support Action; details of how the funds are / can be deployed; and details of any deployment of them during 2021-22.
- **Grants:** A table showing the 2020-21 outturn, and forecast expenditure over the following four years (broken down by students studying in Wales and elsewhere in the UK) for:
 - Full-time undergraduate (FTUG) Tuition Fee Grant
 - FTUG Maintenance Grant
 - Part-time undergraduate (PTUG) Tuition Fee Grant
 - PTUG Maintenance Grant
 - Masters Finance grant element
 - Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

- Welsh Government Learning Grant (Further Education) (WGLG(FE))
- Targeted grants and allowances.
- **Loans provision:** A table showing the 2020-21 outturn, and forecast loan outlay over the following four years (broken down by students studying in Wales and elsewhere in the UK) for:
 - FTUG tuition fee and maintenance loan outlay and Resource Accounting and Budgeting (RAB) charge
 - PTUG tuition fee and maintenance loan outlay and RAB charge
 - Masters Finance loan element outlay and RAB charge
 - Doctoral loan outlay and RAB charge.

Apprenticeships

- What discussions has the Minister for Education & Welsh Language had with the Minister for Economy to liaise and work together on funding skills provision and coordinate apprenticeship delivery?

Other post-16 education provision

- Details of Personal Learning Account funding
- Details of the Welsh in Education budget including any allocation for the Coleg Cenedlaethol.
- Details of any EU funding expected to be utilised by Welsh Government during 2022-23 to secure tertiary education provision (i.e. within HE, FE, ACL, 6th Forms, and excluding apprenticeships).

Capital funding for school and college infrastructure

- Information on budget provision for the 21st Century Schools and Colleges programme and progress of the programme to date, including expenditure and numbers of projects completed/approved to date, broken down by:
 - A summary of expenditure and number of projects undertaken / completed within Band A.
 - The latest position regarding Band B of the programme.

- Any implications from the pandemic for the 21st Century Schools and Colleges programme, including any impact on the progress and costs of projects.
- The cost implications from the Welsh Government's commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of school construction projects (as outlined on 2 November 2021).

Capital funding for childcare

- An update on capital funding from the Education and Welsh Language MEG for the Childcare Offer and any information as to how these have been / will be impacted as a result of the review of entitlement to the offer.

Capital funding for the Community Focused Schools initiative

- Information on budget provision for the Community Hubs and Community Learning Centres grant and an update on progress in increasing the community focused nature of education estates.