

Dame Rosemary Butler AM
Presiding Officer

15 December 2015

Dear Presiding Officer

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Business Committee's legacy report consultation. The Committee has considered the consultation questions and wishes to make the following points.

Remit of CELG Committee

The Committee's remit is very broad, covering a large number of significant policy areas including housing and homelessness, local government, public service improvement, community cohesion, culture, heritage, sport, the Welsh language and broadcasting. This has meant that, over the past five years, the Committee has been responsible for scrutinising up to six Ministers at any one time.

Further, it has been responsible for the consideration of 10 Bills; around 30% of the primary legislative output of this Assembly. This has had implications for the Committee's ability to undertake policy inquiries.

We believe that consideration should be given to splitting the Committee's remit, and that this would better enable scrutiny of Welsh Government policy and legislation. We appreciate that the creation of additional committees will have implications for Members' workloads.



Weekly meeting slots

We recognise the timetabling pressures in arranging weekly meetings for all Assembly's committees. To mitigate this, we believe that more use could be made of the Tuesday morning slot for committee meetings. We note that this has already been done to a limited extent.

Consideration of Bills – report stage and financial resolution

As outlined above, we have had considerable experience of scrutinising Bills over the course of this Assembly.

We support the views of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee, as expressed in its *Making Laws in Wales* report, that a Report Stage for every Bill would add value to the scrutiny process and lead to improvements in the quality of law produced by the Assembly. We agree that a Report Stage should be compulsory for every Bill, unless the Assembly resolves otherwise on a two-thirds majority.

Further, we believe that standing orders should be amended to enable the Member in charge of a Bill to move the motion for a financial resolution on that Bill. Currently, in relation to Members' Bills, this is a matter reserved to the Welsh Government. The agreement, or otherwise, of the motion would remain a matter for the Assembly.

I hope this is a useful contribution to your considerations.

Yours sincerely,



Christine Chapman AM

Chair

