

PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 2021-2026 AND LEGISLATIVE PROGRAMME

Purpose

1. To update members on the publication of the new Welsh Government's Programme for Government and the Legislative Programme.

Background

2. The Welsh Government published its 2021-2026 Programme for Government on 17 June 2021. It is comprised of almost 100 specific areas of activity, some will rest with the First Minister and the full Cabinet, and some remain individual Ministerial responsibilities.
3. The Counsel General has also confirmed (6th July) the Welsh Government's Legislative Programme for the next 12 months, which includes:
 - Tertiary Education and Research Bill
 - Agriculture Bill
 - Social Partnership and Public Procurement Bill.
 - A Bill to enable changes to devolved taxes to respond quickly to unexpected events which could have a significant impact on Welsh revenues.
 - A Consolidation Bill, to simplify the law relating to listed buildings and the historic environment.
4. There will be wider secondary legislation during the next 12 months, including regulations around CJs and some electoral matters, as the Welsh Government is committed to improving participation in the 2022 local elections.
5. Introducing the new programme, the First Minister has said that "*it is founded on the distinctively Welsh values of community, equality and social justice. It puts collaboration ahead of competition, showing how we will act to maximise fairness for all and eliminate inequality at every level of society.*"
6. There are several areas in the Programme for Government the WLGA would support, and many reflect the priorities within the WLGA's Manifesto for Localism. These include:
 - Paying care workers the real minimum wage

- Strengthening the autonomy of local government
 - Introduction of an extended producer responsibility scheme
 - Improving building safety
 - Continued investment in the learning environment of community schools
 - The emphasis on building new social housing, decarbonisation and a green recovery.
7. Others however require further detail or clarification; some may impact on local government services or may have significant resource implications. Programme for Government priorities are subject to ongoing bilateral discussions between WLGA Spokespersons and Ministers and between officials.
8. Leaders have had an initial discussion about the Programme for Government with the Minister for Finance and Local Government at Partnership Council on 7th July. The Minister stated that local government would be key to shaping the delivery of the Programme, an approach which was welcomed by the Leader.
9. Many of the Programme's priorities will have an impact on or require involvement from local authorities, however, the some of the key priorities include:

Protect, re-build and develop our services for vulnerable people

- Reform primary care, bringing together GP services with pharmacy, therapy, housing, social care, mental health, community and third sector.
- Pay care workers the real living wage
- explore radical reform of current services for looked after children and care leavers
- Fund regional residential services for children with complex needs ensuring their needs are met as close to home as possible and in Wales wherever practicable.

Build an economy based on the principles of fair work, sustainability and the industries and services of the future

- Deliver the Young Persons Guarantee, giving everyone under 25 the offer of work, education, training, or self- employment.
- Create 125,000 all-age apprenticeships.
- Develop a Tidal Lagoon Challenge and support ideas that can make Wales a world centre of emerging tidal technologies.
- Launch a new 10-year Wales Infrastructure Investment Plan for a zero-carbon economy

- Create a modern legislative basis for transport in Wales and lift the ban on local authorities setting up new municipal bus companies.

Embed our response to the climate and nature emergency in everything we do

- Legislate to abolish the use of more commonly littered, single use plastics
- Introduce an extended producer responsibility scheme to incentivise waste reduction by businesses.
- Introduce legislation to deal with the legacy of centuries of mining and ensure coal tip safety; strengthening local authority powers to protect the public and the environment.

Continue our long-term programme of education reform, and ensure educational inequalities narrow and standards rise

- Explore reform of the school day and the school year.
- Invest in the learning environment of community schools, co-locating key services,
- Fund up to 1800 additional tutoring staff in our schools.
- Continue to meet the rise in demand for Free School Meals resulting from the pandemic and review the eligibility criteria, extending entitlement as far as resources allow.

Celebrate diversity and move to eliminate inequality in all its forms

- Pilot an approach to the Basic Income.
- Explore legislation to address pay gaps based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, and other forms of discrimination.
- Implement targets around Gender Budgeting.

Push forward towards 1m Welsh speakers, and enable our tourism, sports and arts industries to thrive

- Establish a National Music Service.
- Consult on legislation permitting local authorities to raise a tourism levy.
- Legislate to strengthen and increase our Welsh language education provision.

Make our cities, towns and villages even better places to live and work

- Build 20,000 new low carbon social homes for rent.
- Fundamentally reform homelessness services to focus on prevention and rapid rehousing.
- Improve building safety so that people feel safe and secure in their homes.

- Explore where services and contracts can sustainably and affordably be brought back into a strengthened public sector

Lead Wales in a national civic conversation about our constitutional future, and give our country the strongest possible presence on the world stage

- Establish an independent, standing commission to consider the constitutional future of Wales. – the First Minister confirmed at the AGM that this will cover local democracy and local government and that local government will be engaged in the process
- Seek to reform council tax to ensure a fairer system for all.
- Reform local government elections to reduce the democratic deficit.

Other matters from Manifesto

- Strengthen the autonomy and effectiveness of local government to make them more successful in delivering services.
- Reduce the administrative burden on local authorities.
- Change the performance framework for local government to better enable innovation, transparency, and local ownership.

10. Further analysis of the Programme for Government and its impact on local government will be undertaken as further detail becomes available.

Recommendation

11. Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Author: Dilwyn Jones
Communications and Public Affairs Manager (Interim)
Tel: 02920 468620
E-mail: dilwyn.jones@wlga.gov.uk

ANNEX A

WELSH GOVERNMENT AND SHADOW CABINETS

Welsh Labour Government

- First Minister - Mark Drakeford
- Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution - Mick Antoniw
- Minister for Finance and Local Government - Rebecca Evans
- Economy Minister - Vaughan Gething
- Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip - Dawn Bowden
- Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd - Lesley Griffiths
- Minister for Social Justice - Jane Hutt
- Deputy Minister for Social Partnership - Hannah Blythyn
- Minister for Climate Change - Julie James
- Deputy Minister for Climate Change - Lee Waters
- Minister for Education and the Welsh Language - Jeremy Miles
- Minister for Health and Social Services - Eluned Morgan
- Deputy Minister for Social Services - Julie Morgan
- Deputy Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing - Lynne Neagle

Welsh Conservatives

- Welsh Conservative leader – Andrew RT Davies
- The Constitution and North Wales – Darren Millar
- Equalities – Altaf Hussain
- Climate Change – Janet Finch-Saunders
- Culture, Tourism and Sport – Tom Giffard
- Economy – Paul Davies
- Education – Laura Jones
- Finance – Peter Fox
- Health – Russell George
- Local Government – Sam Rowlands

- Mental Health, Wellbeing and Mid Wales – James Evans
- Rural Affairs and Welsh Language – Samuel Kurtz
- Social Justice and Shadow Counsel General – Mark Isherwood
- Social Partnership – Joel James
- Social Services – Gareth Davies
- Transport and Technology – Natasha Asghar

Plaid Cymru

- Leader - Adam Price
- Education and the Welsh Language, Children and Young People - Sian Gwenllian
- Health and Social Care - Rhun ap Iorwerth
- Social Justice and Equalities - Sioned Williams
- Finance and Local Government - Llyr Huws Gruffydd
- Economy - Luke Fletcher
- Climate Change, Energy and Transport - Delyth Jewell
- Agriculture and Rural Affairs - Cefin Campbell
- Housing and Planning - Mabon ap Gwynfor
- Culture, Sport and International Affairs - Heledd Fychan
- Constitution and Justice - Rhys ab Owen
- Communities and Older People - Peredur Owen Griffiths

Welsh Liberal Democrats (Ungrouped)

- Jane Dodds

ANNEX B

SENEDD COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2021

Local Government and Housing

- John Griffiths (Welsh Labour) *Chair*
- Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
- Carolyn Thomas (Welsh Labour)
- Joel James (Welsh Conservatives)
- Sam Rowlands (Welsh Conservatives)
- Mabon ap Gwynfor (Plaid Cymru)

Finance

- Peredur Owen Griffiths (Plaid Cymru) *Chair*
- Mike Hedges (Welsh Labour)
- Rhianon Passmore (Welsh Labour)
- Peter Fox (Welsh Conservatives)

Legislation, Justice and Constitution

- Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour) *Chair*
- Jane Bryant (Welsh Labour)
- Peter Fox (Welsh Conservatives)
- Rhys ab Owen (Plaid Cymru)

Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs

- Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives) *Chair*
- Hefin David (Welsh Labour)
- Vikki Howells (Welsh Labour)
- Sarah Murphy (Welsh Labour)
- Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
- Luke Fletcher (Plaid Cymru)

Equality and Social Justice

- Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour) *Chair*
- Sarah Murphy (Welsh Labour)
- Ken Skates (Welsh Labour)
- Altaf Hussain (Welsh Conservatives)
- Sioned Williams (Plaid Cymru)
- Jane Dodds (Welsh Liberal Democrat)

Children, Young People and Education

- Jane Bryant (Welsh Labour) *Chair*
- Ken Skates (Welsh Labour)
- Buffy Williams (Welsh Labour)
- Laura Anne Jones (Welsh Conservatives)
- James Evans (Welsh Conservatives)
- Siân Gwenllïan (Plaid Cymru)

Health and Social Care

- Russell George (Welsh Conservatives) *Chair*
- Mike Hedges (Welsh Labour)
- Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
- Joyce Watson (Welsh Labour)
- Gareth Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
- Rhun ap Iorwerth (Plaid Cymru)

Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure

- Llyr Gruffydd (Plaid Cymru) *Chair*
- Huw Irranca-Davies (Welsh Labour)
- Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)
- Joyce Watson (Welsh Labour)
- Janet Finch-Saunders (Welsh Conservatives)
- Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)

Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations

- Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru) *Chair*
- Hefin David (Welsh Labour)
- Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
- Carolyn Thomas (Welsh Labour)
- Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
- Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)

Public Accounts and Public Administration

- Mark Isherwood (Welsh Conservatives) *Chair*
- Mike Hedges (Welsh Labour)
- Rhianon Passmore (Welsh Labour)
- Natasha Asghar (Welsh Conservatives)
- Cefin Campbell (Plaid Cymru)