

Plain English



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Developing a Social Care Negotiating Body to make Fair Pay Agreements for social care workers

What do you think about our plans?

February 2026

About this document

This is a Plain English version of: **The development of a Social Care Negotiating Body for Wales to set Fair Pay Agreements for the social care workforce**

Where the document says **we**, this means **Welsh Government**. For more information contact:

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[Easy Read Wales](#) made this document into Plain English. [To tell us what you think about this easy read version, click here.](#)

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About this survey

We are the Welsh Government. This survey is about developing a new **Social Care Negotiating Body** who will agree fair pay for people who work in social care.

A **Negotiating Body** is a group who would represent the social care sector. They would try and make sure workers get fair pay and fair working conditions.

This group will be called the **Social Care Negotiating Body**. We will call it **SCNB** for short in this document.

Social care means giving support to people who need help. It helps people live well, stay safe, and do as much as they can for themselves.

We are thinking about new ways to improve pay for social care workers.

Please use this survey to tell us what you think about our plans. You can send us your answers by **Tuesday, 28 April 2026**.

Fair Pay and the Law

There is a new law in the UK about fair pay for social care workers.

The new law means that a group can be set up to look at fair pay for social care workers in Wales.

We want to know what you think of our plans for the **SCNB**.

Please read this document and answer the questions.

We are not asking about fair pay itself. We are asking about how the **SCNB** will work.

Why we need the SCNB

Social care workers provide important services to people and communities.

But many social care workers have low pay and different job conditions.

The **SCNB** would bring people together to look at these issues.

They would work with other groups already helping social care workers. For example, the Social Care Fair Work Forum and the Social Care Workforce Partnership.

These groups have already worked to help improve pay and conditions.

For example, helping us to implement the Real Living Wage for care workers in Wales.

The **SCNB** would make sure social care workers have a Fair Pay Agreement. A Fair Pay Agreement would:

- Set rules that employers must follow by law.
- Agree what changes need to happen.

The **SCNB** would talk about:

- Pay.
- Job conditions.
- Other work issues.

The **SCNB** will bring together a group of people who represent the social care workforce. For example:

- Trade unions. These are groups that represent workers and protect their rights.
- Employers.
- People who decide how care services are funded.

How the SCNB could be set up

The **SCNB** could be set up in 2 ways:

Option 1:

Non-departmental public body

It would:

- Give advice to Welsh Ministers about issues.
- Work separately from the Welsh Government and politics.

Option 2:

Expert committee

It would:

- Give independent advice.
- Work as part of a government department.

This is how other similar bodies are set up now.

Question 1. Which option do you think is better?

Option 1

Option 2

Please write your ideas here:

How the SCNB will be run

Chair

The **SCNB** will have a Chair. This person will lead meetings and guide the work.

The Chair must not take sides and will work fairly.

The Chair must:

- Know a lot about social care.
- Be good at leading meetings and discussing issues.
- Help the group reach its goals.

Secretariat

The **SCNB** will have a Secretariat. These people will do practical work, like:

- Taking notes.
- Arranging meetings.
- Writing reports.

Workers

Trade unions will represent workers in the **SCNB**. Their job will be to make sure workers' views are heard.

It is important that different trade unions are involved, to cover all workers.

Anything agreed by trade unions will also apply to care workers who are not in a trade union.

Unions could be included in 2 different ways.

Option 1:

Include trade unions TUC Cymru, Unison, GMB and Royal College of Nursing.

These unions already work on the Social Care Fair Work Forum.

TUC Cymru is the main body for all trade unions in Wales.

Option 2:

Include only independent membership-based trade unions. The TUC Cymru would only oversee the work.

Question 2. Which option do you think is better?

Option 1

Option 2

Please write your ideas here:

Employer representatives

Employers also need people to represent them in the **SCNB**. Organisations like **Care Forum Wales** and the **National Provider Forum** could do this.

Question 3. Do you agree with this?

Yes

No

Do not know

Please tell us your ideas here:

We think there should be the same number of seats for workers and employers in the group. So we will make sure that the employers can nominate other representatives.

This will bring their numbers up to the same level as the trade unions.

Other organisations

Other organisations who may play an important role in this work are local councils and the Association of Directors of Social Services.

There are 2 options here.

Option 1:

All the above organisations could be full members of the **SCNB**. This is how some other bodies are run in Wales.

Option 2:

Only employer and trade unions groups are full members. The other organisations would only give advice.

Question 4. Which option do you think is better?

Option 1

Option 2

Please write your ideas here:

Welsh Government

The trade unions and social care employers we already work with think we should be on the **SCNB** as well. But only to give advice. Not as full members.

Question 5. Do you agree with this?

Yes

No

If **No**, please tell us more here:

Other members

Other members could be added to give more experience from social care.

We think they should just be observers or advisors only. This will mean only workers and employers make decisions.

Question 6. Should any other organisations be members?

Yes

No

Do not know

If Yes, please tell us who:

People who pay for their own care

Question 7. Some people pay for their own care. How should their views be included?

How the SCNB will make decisions

When the **SCNB** has made decisions, each group will tell Welsh Ministers.

Ministers will review the decisions. If they agree, they can approve them to become law.

To become a member of the **SCNB** people can ask the Welsh Government. We will then discuss membership with other **SCNB** members.

Negotiation process

Negotiation means talking about different views. The goal is to reach an agreement.

Welsh Ministers will ask the **SCNB** to look at an issue.

The **SCNB** will then:

- Ask for views from the social care sector.
- Look at the issues and get more information if needed.

The workers group and employer group decide their positions.

The Chair will then give the negotiated agreement to Welsh Ministers.

Welsh Ministers then approve the agreement if they agree, and the changes can become law.

Question 8. Do you agree with how negotiations will happen?

Agree

Disagree

Do not know

Please tell us why you think this:

Question 9. Is 6 months is enough time to reach an agreement?

Yes

No

Do not know

Please tell us why you think this:

What the SCNB will cover

This section asks what pay and work issues the Body should cover.

Like if it should cover all social care roles and issues beyond pay and conditions. For example, things like training and health and safety.

The **SCNB** could include these services:

- Residential care
- Day services
- Home care
- Community care
- Health care

The **SCNB** could include these job roles:

- Care workers
- Senior care workers
- Personal assistants
- Agency workers
- Other direct care workers
- Managers
- Nurses
- Social workers
- Administrative staff

Question 10 a. Are there any services or job roles that should not be included in the SCNB?

Question 10 b. Are there any services or job roles that should be included that we have not mentioned?

Who is not included

The fair pay agreements will only cover **paid social care workers**.

They will not include unpaid carers. Unpaid carers are family members or friends who provide care without pay.

The agreements will not include people who are self-employed. This is because they do not work under employer's conditions.

We would also like views about NHS and local council staff. As these workers are usually covered by other national agreements.

Question 11. Should the SCNB cover staff that are already covered by another Body?

Yes

No

Do not know

Please tell us why you think this:

Different agreements in Wales and England

There will be a separate **SCNB** in Wales, England, and Scotland. This means workers who work in both England and Wales, could have 2 different Fair Pay Agreements.

The next 2 question are for social care organisations only.

Question 12. Do you manage a service that works across Wales and England?

Yes

No

If **Yes**, how do you manage differences in pay and conditions? Please tell us here:

Question 13. Would following different rules in each country make you stop running services as you do now?

Yes

No

Please tell us more here:

Question 14. If pay and conditions were different in Wales and England, would this effect where you chose to work or live?

Yes

No

Please tell us more here:

Question 15. If a worker had 2 different Fair Pay Agreements which of these do you think is better?

The worker follows the agreement for the country where they work those hours.

The worker follows 1 agreement based on where they work the most hours.

The worker follows the agreement for the country where they live.

Other

Do not know

Please tell us more here:

Pay and work issues to cover

We want to know what pay issues the **SCNB** should cover. For example:

- Setting minimum wages. This means the lowest amount of money an employer can pay a worker.
- Pay scales. These are steps showing how pay increases.
- Link pay to skills or qualifications.
- Pay supplements for things like working unsociable hours.

We also want to know which terms and conditions are important. Terms and conditions are the agreement between a worker and an employer. They explain:

- What the worker must do.
- What the employer must provide.

The goal of the **SCNB** is to improve pay and work conditions.

Question 16. What pay issues should the SCNB look at first?

Question 17. What issues to do with terms and conditions should the SCNB look at first?

Question 18. What training and career development should the SCNB cover?

Question 19. What other work policies should the SCNB cover?

Question 20. Are there any other areas the SCNB should cover?

What happens if there is no agreement

During negotiations it may be difficult to reach an agreement between the worker and employer groups in the **SCNB**.

This is called a **dispute**. A dispute is when people cannot reach an agreement.

In this situation, we the Welsh Government can start a **dispute resolution process**.

We think the Chair should first try to fix the disputes. They should also decide when discussions cannot continue because they cannot come to an agreement.

The group could then vote on if to say there is a dispute. An independent group could then help the **SCNB**.

For example, **ACAS** is a group that helps solve problems about pay and work conditions between employers and trade unions. And they are independent.

Question 21. Do you agree with our plans for dealing with disputes?

Yes

No

Please tell us more here:

What happens when the **SCNB** reaches an agreement

When the **SCNB** reaches an agreement, steps can be taken to make it legal.

Welsh Ministers will review what the **SCNB** has agreed. They must check it will work. They may speak to other Welsh Government or UK Government departments.

If the agreement will not work, it goes back to the **SCNB**. The **SCNB** may then need to make changes.

Ratification

Ratification is when an agreement is approved and becomes law.

If the **SCNB** cannot agree after a dispute, Welsh Ministers can decide instead.

When Welsh Ministers approve an agreement, they must tell the social care sector.

If the Welsh Ministers approve an agreement, it can then become law. But, they must first get agreement from the Secretary of State under the 2025 Act.

People have the right to know how decisions were made. We think the **SCNB** should publish reports about each agreement.

When changes are to happen, everyone must know their rights and what they need to do.

For example:

- Social care workers need to know what they can expect.
- Employers need to know what changes they must make.

We think we and the **SCNB** should publish guidance together.

Following the new rules

Employers will be responsible for making the agreed changes. The changes will become part of workers' contracts.

If employers do not make the changes, they could break the law.

Guides will be made to help employers know what they need to do.

If employers do not follow the rules, workers must be able to complain.

First, workers can raise the issue with their employer.

If this does not work, they could get advice from organisations like ACAS.

A new Fair Work Agency (FWA) will also be set up. They will make sure laws are followed.

They will have **enforcement powers**.

Enforcement powers mean having the power to take action when someone breaks the rules.

For example:

- They can tell employers to pay money owed to staff.
- They can make employers pay a fine.

There are already ways to **enforce** rights. For example, workers can use an **employment tribunal**.

An **employment tribunal** is a special court. It helps settle work problems between workers and employers. It is usually used as a last step.

Question 22. What are your views about dealing with complaints about pay and conditions?

Question 23. Should Welsh Government and the SCNB work together to make guidance about changes agreed?

Yes

No

Do not know

Please tell us more here:

Question 24. Do you have other ideas about support needed to make sure employers follow agreements?

Making sure this work is fair

We want this work to be fair for everyone. This includes people with different beliefs, needs, or backgrounds.

Question 25. Do you think this will have a good impact on any group of people?

Yes

No

If **Yes**, please tell us more here:

Question 26. Do you think this will have a bad impact on any group of people?

Yes

No

If **Yes**, please tell us more here:

Question 27. Do you think this work will affect the Welsh language?

Yes

No

If **Yes**, please tell us more here:

About you

You do not have to answer every question. Only answer the questions you want to answer.

Question 28. Are you:

A person sharing your own views

A person sharing your professional views. This includes people working in social care.

On behalf of an organisation

An employer of 1 or more personal assistants

Question 29. What is your age?

Question 30. What is your sex?

Question 31. Is your gender the same as when you were born?

Question 32. What is your ethnic group?

Question 33. Do you or a family member need any long-term care?

Yes

No

Question 34. Do you provide unpaid care for someone, like a family member or friend?

Yes

No

If Yes, how many hours per week?

Question 35. What area do you live in?

Question 36. Do you work in:

Health care

Social care

None of the above

If you work in health or social care:

Question 37. What is your job?

Question 38. Who is your employer?

Local council

NHS

Private company

Charity

Other

If Other, please tell us more:

Question 39. What type of care services do you provide? For example, care home, nursing, supported living, day services.

Question 40. How many hours a week do you work?

Question 41. What group do you provide care services for?

Children

Adults

Adults over 65

Other:

If other, Please tell us more:

Question 42. Do you have a visa or permission to study or work in the UK?

Yes

No

Please send us your answers by **Tuesday, 28 April 2026**.

You can email: FPA.Engagement@gov.wales

Or

Write to us at:

Social Care Workforce team
Cathays Park 2
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

We may share your answers in a report. We will not include your name in the report.

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