



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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PUBLICATION

Cabinet meeting: 22 September 2022

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on 12 September 2022.

First published: 4 November 2022

Last updated: 4 November 2022

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Present

- Rt. Hon. Mark Drakeford MS
- Rebecca Evans MS
- Vaughan Gething MS
- Lesley Griffiths MS
- Jane Hutt MS
- Jeremy Miles MS
- Eluned Morgan MS
- Mick Antoniw MS

- Hannah Blythyn MS
- Dawn Bowden MS
- Julie Morgan MS
- Lynne Neagle MS
- Lee Waters MS

Apologies

- Julie James MS

Officials

- Des Clifford, Director Office of the First Minister
- Will Whiteley, Deputy Director Cabinet Division
- Toby Mason, Head of Strategic Communications
- Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser
- Madeleine Brindley, Special Adviser
- Alex Bevan, Special Adviser

- Daniel Butler, Special Adviser
- Ian Butler, Special Adviser
- Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser
- Sara Faye, Special Adviser
- Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser
- Owen John, Special Adviser
- Andrew Johnson, Special Adviser
- Mitch Theaker, Special Adviser
- Tom Woodward, Special Adviser
- Christopher W Morgan, Head of Cabinet Secretariat (minutes)
- Damian Roche, Cabinet Secretariat
- Catrin Sully, Cabinet Office
- Jo-Anne Daniels, Director General Education, Social Justice and Welsh Language
- Reg Kilpatrick, Director General, COVID-19 recovery and Local Government
- Tim Moss, Chief Operating Officer
- Judith Paget, Director General Health
- Andrew Slade, Director General, Economy, Treasury and Constitution

Item 1: Minutes of the previous meetings

1.1 Cymeradwyodd y Cabinet gofnodion 11 Gorffennaf a 12 Medi / Cabinet approved the minutes of 11 July and 12 September.

Item 2: COVID-19 Review and plans for autumn / winter

2.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services introduced the paper, which invited Cabinet to note the latest position with Coronavirus.

2.2 The latest ONS Coronavirus Infection Survey indicated the number of people in Wales testing positive for COVID-19 had decreased to one in 95 people. Hospital admissions relating to the virus had reduced from 25 per day in mid-July to around 6 per day.

2.3 However, pressure on the NHS remained, with 6.2% of staff being off ill including 1.4% with coronavirus related issues. GP sickness absence was around 10-11%. In addition, the NHS was expecting a challenging winter as seasonal flu and COVID-19 had the potential to add substantially to pressures, particularly if infection waves from both viruses coincide.

2.4 Through the Winter Respiratory Vaccination Programme, 1.6 million of the most vulnerable people would be offered a COVID-19 and Influenza vaccine. Up to 400 sites across Wales would be utilised, including vaccination centres, community pharmacies and GP surgeries with the required capacity. The strategy had set a target of 75% uptake of both vaccines, with some thought being given to co-administering the vaccines.

2.5 The surveillance system would be strengthened to identify any deterioration in the situation, such as the emergence of harmful variants or mutations and other respiratory viruses. A major purpose of the system would be to determine whether Wales had moved from COVID-Stable to COVID-Urgent.

2.6 Cabinet welcomed the update and agreed there was a need to encourage people to take up the vaccinations.

2.7 Cabinet approved the paper and noted that a further update would be provided in November.

Item 3: Electoral Administration and Reform White Paper

3.1 The Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution introduced the paper, which asked Cabinet to agree to the publication of the White Paper on proposals for electoral reform and ambition to modernise electoral administration.

3.2 The White Paper set out the long-term agenda for modernising electoral administration and wider electoral reform. Specifically, in the current Senedd, to reduce democratic deficit in Local Government and support delivery of commitments to modernise the administration of the Senedd elections, scheduled to take place in 2026.

3.3 The consultation would reference the 6 principles of equity, accessibility, participation, improving citizen experience, simplicity and integrity, which would be used to benchmark electoral reform and guide work to support democratic engagement and participation.

3.4 The White Paper included a mixture of non-legislative propositions to promote engagement in elections and make standing for election safer and simpler. There were also proposals for legislation to consolidate and modernise electoral law, alongside longer-term plans for electoral reform to support Welsh democracy in the future.

3.5 Cabinet approved the paper.

Item 4: Qatar World Cup

4.1 The Minister for Economy introduced the paper, which invited Cabinet to agree the latest position in relation to the Welsh Government's support for activities towards the FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

4.2 The participation of the men's football team in the 2022 football world cup was the most significant marketing and sports diplomacy opportunity ever presented to the Welsh Government, given the high profile of the event.

4.3 With a global audience of 5 billion, the World Cup offered a platform to take Wales to the world and build on previous activity to reconnect with existing audiences, including the global diaspora. It also provided an opportunity to introduce Wales to new audiences, in particular the USA, given Wales's first game was scheduled to be against its soccer team on 21st November.

4.4 The government's objectives around the World Cup included the promotion of Wales, while projecting its values and ensuring the safety of Welsh citizens during the tournament. There would also be a need to secure a positive and lasting legacy.

4.5 Since the men's football team qualified for the World Cup in early June a programme of activity was underway to maximise opportunities focusing around three core strands. There would be an enhanced marketing campaign, along with a World Cup partner support fund, which aimed to add value to a small number of exceptional projects that would deliver the Government's core objectives. There would also be a series of Ministerial visits and engagement supported by the Government's overseas offices.

4.6 Cabinet welcomed the paper and agreed this would be an opportunity to demonstrate that Wales was a nation of values and sanctuary.

4.7 Cabinet approved the paper.

Item 5: Equality Evidence Strategy and Priorities for the Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units CAB(22-23)04

5.1 The Minister for Social Justice introduced the paper, which asked Cabinet to agree the Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units' Strategy and emerging priorities.

5.2 In response to the need for strengthened evidence to address inequality in Wales, as highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units had been established. Since January, a diverse, multi-discipline team had been recruited that had the necessary experience and interest in equalities evidence.

5.3 The Equality Evidence Strategy, which had been developed with the Units' stakeholders, described their role scope, remit and ways of working. The priorities document articulated how they would achieve their aims in the short, medium and longer term. Both were intended to be live documents. The units would also support the wider public sector in Wales and stakeholders.

5.4 Cabinet approved the paper and noted the aim was to publish the documents on 26 September 2022.

5.5 Cabinet approved the paper.

Cabinet Secretariat
September 2022

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