



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

# Cabinet meeting: 13 February 2023

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet on 13 February 2023.

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# Present

- Lesley Griffiths MS (Chair)
  - Rebecca Evans MS
  - Vaughan Gething MS (items 1-3)
  - Jane Hutt MS
  - Julie James MS
  - Jeremy Miles MS
  - Eluned Morgan MS
  - Mick Antoniw MS
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- Hannah Blythyn MS
  - Dawn Bowden MS
  - Lynne Neagle MS
  - Julie Morgan MS (items 1-2)

# Apologies

- Lee Waters MS

# Officials

- Andrew Goodall, Permanent Secretary
- Des Clifford, Director Office of the First Minister
- Rebecca Dunn, Head of Cabinet Division
- Jane Runeckles, Special Adviser
- Alex Bevan, Special Adviser
- Daniel Butler, Special Adviser
- Ian Butler, Special Adviser
- David Davies, Special Adviser

- Kate Edmunds, Special Adviser
  - Sara Faye, Special Adviser
  - Sam Hadley, Special Adviser
  - Clare Jenkins, Special Adviser
  - Owen John, Special Adviser
  - Phillipa Marsden, 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
  - Tracey Burke, Director General Climate Change & Rural Affairs
  - 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 and Social Services
  - Andrew Slade, Director General, Economy, Treasury and Constitution
  - Helen Lentle, Director Legal Services
  - Duncan Hamer, Director of Operations, Business & Regions (item 2)
  - Abi Phillips, Head of Innovation (item 2)
  - Steffan Bryn, Special Adviser (item 2)
  - Rhian Griffiths, Co-operation Agreement Unit (item 2)
  - Andrew Jeffreys, Director Treasury (item 3)
  - Emma Watkins, Deputy Director Budget and Government Business (item 3)
  - Vivienne Lewis, Head of Budget Delivery (item 3)
  - Stephen Thomas, Head of Sexual Health and Antimicrobial Resistance (item 4)
  - Marion Lyons, Adviser, Health Protection (item 4)

## Item 1: Minutes of the previous meeting

1.1 Cymeradwyodd y Cabinet gofnodion y 6 Chwefror / Cabinet approved the minutes of 6 February.

## Item 2: Innovation Strategy

2.1 The Minister for Economy introduced the paper, which invited Cabinet to approve the new **Innovation Strategy for Wales** and endorse the development of an action plan.

2.2 The Strategy took an integrated, cross-government approach, while setting out a vision of how innovation could support the delivery of the Programme for Government commitments across all portfolios. Departments were aware of the task ahead and were committed to continue working together on the Action Plan.

2.3 The Strategy was a result of extensive consultation across Government. It had been developed by engagement with stakeholders, the public and in alignment with the Co-operation Agreement, with the leader of Plaid Cymru attending one of the roundtable events.

2.4 It had four mission themes, Economy, Education, Health and Wellbeing, while having an emphasis throughout on equality, a culture of innovation, collaboration and impact. The aim would be to support more people to participate in innovation, and to benefit from its effects, regardless of their demographic or where they live in Wales.

2.5 Given that much of the funding for innovation originated from EU Structural Funds, it was imperative that the Government leveraged UK funds and made the very best use of resources within Departments. UK funding would be

competitive, and it would not be needs based. The Government was only a small part of the innovation ecosystem in Wales and it was important that all efforts were co-ordinated. As such the Welsh Government would need to be a convener in a collaborative endeavour.

2.6 An Action Plan would be developed, setting out a small number of goals in each mission area, which would be delivered with partners, with short, medium and long-term milestones and measures. There would be a need to respond to a changing political and economic landscape, to identify different and better opportunities. Progress would be evaluated at years one, three and five to determine the impact of the Strategy.

2.7 Cabinet welcomed the Strategy and the fact that the supporting Equality Impact Assessment cited equality as a key theme. It had a vision to ensure there was equitable access to the support available to innovate, while having the ability to influence innovation and to feel the benefits.

2.8 Cabinet approved the paper and noted that the Strategy would be launched on 27<sup>th</sup> February.

## **Item 3: Final Budget Package 2023-24**

3.1 The Minister for Finance and Local Government introduced the paper which asked Cabinet to approve the Final Budget package of 2023-24.

3.2 There were minimal changes between the Draft Budget published in December and the Final Budget, as the Senedd scrutiny period did not raise any substantial arguments to change the original investment proposals. Senedd Members did outline a number of additional areas to be funded, as well as expressing concern where funding had been reduced or commitments scaled back. The Government was not in a position to allocate additional funding given

the lack of resources.

3.3 The changes related to some minor administrative and accounting amendments, including MEG to MEG transfers.

3.4 As previously agreed, there would be no changes to the Welsh Rates of Income Tax beyond those outlined at Draft Budget, despite the pressures from some quarters.

3.5 Cabinet welcomed the paper and put on record its thanks to all those involved in finalising the Budget in what had been an incredibly difficult settlement.

3.6 It was reported that the Minister for Finance and Local Government has continued to engage with Plaid Cymru under the terms of the Co-operation Agreement and would be meeting Sian Gwenllian, the Designated Member, again later that afternoon to discuss Plaid Cymru's budget priorities. Cabinet would be briefed on the outcome of the ongoing discussions.

3.7 Cabinet approved the recommendations within the paper.

## **Item 4: HIV Action Plan for Wales CAB(22-23)48**

4.1 The Minister for Health and Social Services introduced the paper, which asked Cabinet to agree the HIV Action Plan for Wales. This helped to deliver the Programme for Government commitment to tackle stigma experienced by those living with HIV.

4.2 This plan had been developed collaboratively by an HIV Action Plan working group, chaired by Dr Marion Lyons, Senior Medical Officer within the Welsh Government. The group consisted of a diverse range of stakeholders including those from the community and voluntary sector, healthcare professionals,

academics and, importantly, those living with HIV.

4.3 The draft plan, which was published in June 2022, was the subject of a 12-week consultation period to ensure all stakeholders, including the public, had an opportunity to influence its development.

4.4 The plan had been well received with the overwhelming majority of the 55 responses supportive of the proposed actions. The responses did, however, highlight certain gaps and areas for improvement. As a result of the consultation, the plan had been amended to include four additional actions, and sections within the plan strengthened to reflect the feedback.

4.5 Health officials had worked closely with their colleagues in the Equality Branch and Education Directorate who were key members of the working group.

4.6 The final plan contained five priority areas for action. These were: prevention; testing; clinical care; living well with HIV; and tackling HIV related stigma.

4.7 In response to stakeholders, the final plan now contained 30 ambitious, but achievable, actions for implementation by 2026, which would go a long way to helping Wales achieve the World Health Organisations target of no new HIV infections by 2030 and, crucially, adopting a zero-tolerance approach to HIV related stigma. This would be complemented by the Government's approach, the first in the UK, to offering Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis to all individuals for whom it was clinically appropriate.

4.8 The Plan would be published early in March and would include details of a package of over £600k new funding for key actions, such as the establishment of Fast Track Cymru, which would provide capacity and strategic focus for stakeholders, community groups and decision makers.

4.9 An Implementation Oversight Group would be established, which would have



responsibility for ensuring the actions were delivered. In addition, workstreams would be set up for a number of the key actions to ensure that the commitment and momentum generated through the development of the plan, continued. Tackling HIV-related stigma and adopting a zero-tolerance approach towards it, would be a cross-cutting theme across the workstreams.

4.10 Cabinet welcomed the paper and the direct links to the recently published LGBTQ+ Action Plan, which sought to overcome barriers to people accessing sexual health services.

4.11 It was important to work with stakeholders to promote the HIV Action Plan and develop communications to help reduce stigma, while highlighting that those living with HIV, in receipt of effective treatment, presented no risk to others and could live long and healthy lives.

4.12 Ministers noted that the £600,000 for Health Boards to deliver the Action Plan would be ringfenced.

4.13 Cabinet approved the paper.

## Item 5: Senedd Business

5.1 Cabinet considered the Plenary grid and noted that voting time would be around 6pm on Tuesday and approximately 6:25pm on Wednesday.

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