

Annex A

From: Special Adviser 1

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 10:22 AM

To: Hannah Blythyn Deputy Minister – Social Partnership >; Special Adviser 2>; Special Adviser 3 < Special Adviser 4 < >; Special Adviser 5>; Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Cc: Welsh Government Official 31>; Welsh Government Official 32 >; Welsh Government Official 33 >; Welsh Government Official 1>; Welsh Government Official 29>; Special Adviser 6 >

Subject: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Please see below a line for clearance about the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: “We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.”

We will cancel the technical briefing, which is due to be held on Thursday at 9.30am, this afternoon.

We intend to issue this line, once cleared, to the journalists which have signed up to attend. It will then be issued in response to queries.

If asked further questions about the nature of the work, we intend to say “development work on the Bill”

Thanks very much

Special Adviser 1

Special Adviser 1

Special Adviser / Cynghorwr Arbennig



Welsh Government | Llywodraeth Cymru

Dylai unrhyw ddatganiadau neu sylwadau uchod gael eu trin fel rhai personol ac nid o reidrwydd fel datganiadau neu sylwadau gan y Llywodraeth Cymru, unrhyw ran ohono, neu unrhyw gorff sy'n gysylltiedig ag ef.

Any of the statements or comments made above should be regarded as personal and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government, any constituent part or connected body.

From: Hannah Blythyn -Deputy Minister -Social Partnership

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 11:18 AM

To: Special Adviser 1.>; Special Adviser 2 < >; Special Adviser 3 <>; Special Adviser 4 < >; Special Adviser 5 < Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Cc: Welsh Government Official 31>; Welsh Government Official 32>; Welsh Government Official 33>; Welsh Government Official 1>; Welsh Government Official 29>; Special Adviser 6) <>

Subject: RE: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Looks good to me – thanks Special Adviser 1.

From: Special Adviser 1 >

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 11:19 AM

To: Hannah Blythyn -Deputy Minister Social Partnership, Special Adviser 2 <>; Special Adviser 3 <>; Special Adviser 4 <>; Special Adviser 5 <>; Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation) <>

Cc: Welsh Government Official 31>; Welsh Government Official 32>; Welsh Government Official 33>; Welsh Government Official 1>; Welsh Government Official 29>; Special Adviser 6 <>

Subject: RE: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Thanks very much Hannah

Special Adviser 1

Special Adviser / Cyngorwr Arbennig



Welsh Government | Llywodraeth Cymru

Dylai unrhyw ddatganiadau neu sylwadau uchod gael eu trin fel rhai personol ac nid o reidrwydd fel datganiadau neu sylwadau gan y Llywodraeth Cymru, unrhyw ran ohono, neu unrhyw gorff sy'n gysylltiedig ag ef.

Any of the statements or comments made above should be regarded as personal and not necessarily those of the Welsh Government, any constituent part or connected body.

From: Welsh Government Official 10

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 11:07 AM

To: Welsh Government Official 21; Welsh Government Official 22; Welsh Government Official 1

Subject: FW: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Fyi all, will cancel the tech briefing after 3pm today and issue the line to those who said they were attending ([Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information – Journalists from BBC, Nation.Cymru, WalesOnline]).

From: Welsh Government Official 5

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 1:47 PM

To: Welsh Government Official 8; Welsh Government Official 20

Cc: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation); Welsh Government Official 1

Subject: Communication with stakeholders

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information] – thanks for agreeing to issue emails later today to key stakeholders. Subject to the official line being cleared (shortly we hope but expecting by 3pm at latest), I thought our email could read as follows:

Dear [X]

Thank you very much for your support and engagement to date on work relating to gender quotas and the forthcoming legislation. By way of an update, we are doing further work on the Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.

We will be in touch in due course when we are able to provide more information on next steps.

Kind regards,

Annwyl [x]

Diolch yn fawr i chi am eich cefnogaeth cyn belled o ran ein gwaith ar gwotau rhywedd a'r ddeddfwriaeth arfaethedig. I'ch diweddarau, rydym yn gwneud gwaith pellach ar y Bil sy'n golygu na fyddwn ni yn ei gyhoeddi ar 4 Rhagfyr, fel y bwriadwyd yn wreiddiol.

Byddwn mewn cysylltiad maes o law pan rydym mewn sefyllfa i ddarparu rhagor o wybodaeth ar y camau nesaf.

Dymuniadau gorau,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 10

Sent: Wednesday, 29 November 2023 15:10

To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information- Various Journalists]

Subject: Welsh Government News: *CANCELLED* Welsh Government technical briefing: Senedd Reform of Electoral Candidate Lists | *CANSLO* Cyfarfod briffio technegol Llywodraeth Cymru: Diwygio'r Senedd – Rhestrau Ymgeiswyr Etholiadol

****Not for publication, broadcast or use on social media****

On Thursday 30th November Welsh Government officials will be providing an off-the-record technical briefing on the draft Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill.

The draft Bill will be published the following Monday (4th December).

The briefing will be held virtually via Teams.

Date: Thursday, 30 November 2023

Time: 09:30-10:30

If you would like to join please contact [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information] and we will send you a link to join the briefing.

Contact Information

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 10
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:13 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information Various Journalists – BBC, ITV, Nation.Cymru, WalesOnline]
Subject: CANCELLED: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Just to let you know we're cancelling tomorrow's tech briefing. We're still working on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, but we won't be publishing it on December 4 as anticipated.

Many thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 20
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:44 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information Stakeholder – academic]
Subject: Senedd Reform - Gender Quotas Update

Dear [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

Thank you very much for your support and engagement to date, on our work relating to gender quotas and the forthcoming legislation.

By way of an update, we are doing further work on the Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.

We will be in touch in due course when we are able to provide more information on next steps.

Kind regards

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 5
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:46 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales]
Cc: Welsh Government Official 1; Welsh Government Official 20; Welsh Government Official 8
Subject: RE: Senedd (Candidates List) Bil

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

Many thanks for your email and for your support and engagement to date on work relating to gender quotas and the forthcoming legislation. We are particularly grateful for your work in preparing ahead of next week.

However – by way of an update, we are doing further work on the Bill which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.

We will be in touch in due course when we are able to provide more information on next steps – and hopefully we can continue to work together in this important area.

Kind regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

On 29 Nov 2023, at 15:49, Welsh Government Official 20 wrote:

Dear [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

I hope you're well.

Thank you very much for your support and engagement to date on our work relating to gender quotas and the forthcoming legislation.

By way of an update, we are doing further work on the Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.

We will be in touch in due course when we are able to provide more information on next steps - and hopefully we can continue to work together in this important area.

Kind regards

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - BBC Journalist]

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:53 PM

To: Welsh Government Official 10

Subject: RE: Welsh Government News: *CANCELLED* Welsh Government technical briefing: Senedd Reform of Electoral Candidate Lists | *CANSLO* Cyfarfod briffio technegol Llywodraeth Cymru: Diwygio'r Senedd – Rhestrau Ymgeiswyr Etholiadol

Hiya [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

I might be a bit late to the party here, but is there a re-scheduled date?

From: Welsh Government Official 10

Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:58 PM

To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal - Information BBC Journalist]

Subject: RE: Welsh Government News: *CANCELLED* Welsh Government technical briefing: Senedd Reform of Electoral Candidate Lists | *CANSLO* Cyfarfod briffio technegol Llywodraeth Cymru: Diwygio'r Senedd – Rhestrau Ymgeiswyr Etholiadol

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Nothing more to add to the below.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: “We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.”

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal - Information ERS Cymru]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 3:56 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 20
Cc: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - ERS Cymru]
Subject: Re: Senedd Cymru (Candidates List) Bill

Dear [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Thank you for your email. We really appreciate the update as we were planning (supportive) comms work around it.

I really hope the Bill is published soon and look forward to hearing from you again.

Best wishes,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 8
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:07 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Stakeholders – Various academics]
Cc: Welsh Government Official 5; Welsh Government Official 20;
Subject: Senedd Reform - Gender Quota Update

Hi all

Thank you very much for your support and engagement to date on work relating to gender quotas and the forthcoming legislation. By way of an update, we are doing further work on the Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.

We will be in touch in due course when we are able to provide more information on next steps.

Kind regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 10
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:11 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 28; Welsh Government Official 27
Subject: FW: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Here's the line below about the Senedd Electoral Candidates Bill. We've cancelled the tech briefing that was planned for tomorrow and the Bill will no longer be published on Monday.

If asked anything further, just say we're still working on the Bill. I've sent the below line to [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information – Journalists from BBC, ITV, NationCymru, WalesOnline].

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 27
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:12 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 10; Welsh Government Official 28
Subject: RE: FOR CLEARANCE: Line about Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Great, thanks [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]!

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]



From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:13 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 5
Cc: Welsh Government Official 1; Welsh Government Official 20; Welsh Government Official 8
Subject: RE: Senedd (Candidates List) Bil

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Many thanks for letting me know. Would you be able to give us any indication of what timescales we are looking at for the new publication date?

Best wishes,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 1
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:24 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 6
Cc: Welsh Government Official 7; Welsh Government Official 8; Welsh Government Official 4; Welsh Government Official 9
Subject: RE: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

Following on from [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]'s email, just to confirm we will not be updating the Senedd Reform landing page on Monday.

Many thanks

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal - Information BBC Journalist]
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:39 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 10
Subject: RE: CANCELLED: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Thanks. Can you comment specifically on whether this is because the Senedd has told WG the bill is not in competence?

From: Welsh Government Official 10
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 4:55 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - BBC Journalist]
Subject: RE: CANCELLED: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Nothing further to add to our line.

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 1
Sent: Wednesday, November 29, 2023 6:12 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 2; Welsh Government Official 3
Cc: Welsh Government Official 4; Welsh Government Official 5; Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)
Subject: OFFICIAL SENSITIVE: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill film

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

Thanks for your work on the film for the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, that was scheduled to go out on social media on Monday (4 December).

As discussed earlier [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information], the Bill is not being published on Monday (4 Dec), therefore please hold on to the film for now.

Apologies again for the short notice, I will update you when we have more information to share.

Many thanks

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 8:03 AM
To: Welsh Government Official 15

Cc: Special Adviser 6); Welsh Government Official 16; Legislative Programme and Governance Unit
Subject: Gender Quotas Bill
Importance: High

Hi,

Just seen this: [Welsh government: Senedd gender quota plan postponed - BBC News](#). I'm assuming you are pulling the Legislative Statement on Tuesday and want it removed from the agenda?

Regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 17 **On Behalf Of** Legislative Programme and Governance Unit
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 8:15 AM
To: Welsh Government Official 11; Welsh Government Official 18
Cc: Legislative Programme and Governance Unit
Subject: FW: Gender Quotas Bill
Importance: High

See below.

Kind regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Private Office of Deputy Minister for Social Partnership
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:21 AM
To: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business
Subject: RE: Plenary Grid - 5th & 6th December 2023

Good morning [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

After discussions between the First Minister and DMSP yesterday afternoon it has been decided that the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill requires further work and will not be published on the 4 December. Can we therefore remove the DMSP OS on Tuesday please.

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:26 AM
To: Private Office of Deputy Minister for Social Partnership
Subject: RE: Plenary Grid - 5th & 6th December 2023

Thanks for confirming [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information], I had seen the BBC News article so was seeking confirmation from LPGU.

Regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:49 AM

To: Government Plenary Business

Cc: Welsh Government Official 4 >; Welsh Government Official 11>; Legislative Programme and Governance Unit <>; Welsh Government Official 5>; Special Adviser 4 <>; Special Adviser 3 <>; Special Adviser 6 <>

Subject: Business Statement - 5 October

Hi Welsh Government Official 14,

As you may have heard, the decision has been taken not to introduce the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill on the 4 December. A decision has not yet been taken about next steps, so this shouldn't be taken as a decision to not introduce the Bill at all.

The Business Statement will need to be amended to remove the DMSP's oral statement on the Bill on 5 December. I'd be grateful if you could do that.

The line that has been issued to media queries is: **“We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.”**

Can we include this in the Trefnydd's briefing please. Discussions, including on comms and media handling, will be ongoing over the coming days and we are mindful of FMQs etc next week, so we may be able to provide further lines for the Trefnydd closer to the time.

Let me know if you need anything else.

Best wishes,

Will

Will Whiteley

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd | Senedd Reform Division
Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

Rhagenwau: ef/iddo | Pronouns: he/him

From: Welsh Government Official 14<> **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business

Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:51 AM

To: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation) <>; Government Plenary Business <>

Cc: Welsh Government Official 4>; Welsh Government Official 11>; Legislative Programme and

Governance Unit >; Welsh Government Official 5>; Special Adviser 4 <>; Special Adviser 3 <>;
Special Adviser 6 <>

Subject: RE: Business Statement - 5 December

Thanks Will,

I've already requested the published plenary agenda be updated and I'll add the line to the Business Committee briefing.

Regards,
Welsh Government Official 14

Welsh Government Official 14
Ysgrifenyddiaeth y Cabinet / **Cabinet Secretariat**
Is-adran y Cabinet/**Cabinet Division**

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Wales Online Journalist]
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:01 AM
To: Welsh Government Official 10
Subject: Line

Hiya,

Can you send the line about the gender quota postponement this way please?

Ta

From: Welsh Government Official 10
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:06 AM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Wales Online Journalist]
Subject: RE: Line

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

Line below.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: "We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated."

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:28 AM

To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Senedd Commission Officials]

Subject: Legislative Statement withdrawn

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

As you may have earned, the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill will not be published on Monday, so please remove the Legislative Statement from Tuesday's agenda.

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business

Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 9:32 AM

To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Welsh Government Officials]

Subject: Update: Plenary Grid - 5th & 6th December 2023

All,

Please find attached an updated plenary grid with changes to Tuesday's agenda. The Legislative Statement on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill has been removed.

Regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 5>

Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 10:00 AM

To: Welsh Government Official 1 >; Welsh Government Official 20>

Cc: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)>; Welsh Government Official 4> Welsh Government Official 8 >

Subject: Hot topics draft.....for development

Hi Welsh Government Official 1, Welsh Government Official 20

Here is a draft template of a "hot topics" doc to cover off the current situation with the Bill.

As discussed, grateful if Welsh Government Official 1 you could summarise media coverage?

There isn't anything further we can do on lines at the moment – I've left some in there which I think we will probably be able to retain – some others will come out and new ones may need to go in over the next day or so.

But this is a starting point which hopefully means we will be able to provide quickly when the time comes.

Diolch

Welsh Government Official 5

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd / Senedd Reform Division

Grwp yr Economi, y Trysorlys a'r Cyfansoddiad / Economy, Treasury and Constitution Group

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government

Senedd Reform – Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidates Lists) Bill

NB. This is a live issue and therefore a further update may be provided early next week.

Background

A decision has been made to not introduce the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill on 4 December, as originally planned.

As a result, technical briefings and other planned stakeholder engagement activities were cancelled on Wednesday 29 November.

As the media technical briefing was due to take place on Thursday 30 November, an invitation had already been issued to journalists and therefore a cancellation notice was sent around 3.30pm on 29 November.

The following line was agreed by Ministers to be used in immediate response to media and stakeholder queries following the news that introduction of the Bill would be postponed.

“We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.”

Lines to take

Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

- Further work on the Bill is being undertaken.
- The Special Purpose Committee on Senedd Reform recommended that *‘the Senedd should be elected with integrated statutory gender quotas.’*
- In June 2022, the Senedd voted in favour by a two thirds majority of endorsing the SPC’s report – including its recommendation to introduce legislative gender quotas.

- In July 2022, the Welsh Government formally responded to the Committee's report, stating it would prepare and introduce Senedd Reform legislation to take forward the Committee's recommendations.
- The Co-operation Agreement between the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru commits the two partners to working together on Senedd reform, including gender quotas.
- We are doing further work on this piece of legislation. We will update Members on next steps in due course.
- We have also kept stakeholders informed of the latest position regarding the Bill and would like to thank everyone who has supported our work on the Bill to date.

If pressed on the leaked version of the Bill:

- We do not comment on leaked documents.

Purpose of the legislation

- The Bill is part of our commitment to make the Senedd a more effective legislature for, and on behalf of, the people in Wales.
- Our track record in terms of gender equality in this Senedd is better than many other parliaments could claim, but there is still more we would like to do. Currently 26 (or 43%) of the 60 Senedd Members are women. In 2003 we had a 50/50 split amongst our Members but in recent years that figure has been in decline.
- More women in the Senedd will better reflect the gender make-up of Wales, which is good for politics, good for representation, and good for policy making.
- Several committees and panels over recent years have concluded that gender quotas integrated within the electoral system could make a real difference and in our Co-operation Agreement with Plaid Cymru and in our Programme for Government we set out our vision of seeing gender quotas in law.

[Redacted – Section 35 – Formulation of Government Policy]

Introduction before Christmas:

- As I have said we are doing further work on the Bill.
- We remain committed to our overall purpose of making this Senedd more effective and representative of the people it serves.
- I will not be commenting on the specifics of the legislation at this stage.
- As I have said previously, we are doing further work on the Bill and we will update Members in due course.
- I am not in a position to provide a date for introduction today but will update Members in due course.

Background

[Redacted – Section 35 – Formulation of Government Policy] the Welsh Government put out a statement to the media and relevant stakeholders to say ‘we are doing further work on the Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated.’ In light of this, scheduled meetings and briefings with the media, opposition Senedd Members (Darren Miller – Conservative MS and member of the Senedd Reform Bill Committee) and other interested stakeholders were cancelled.

Following the cancellation of the scheduled media briefing, Welsh Media have published stories online and also reported on radio. A summary of these are provided below:

Media coverage so far:

29 November

BBC and Nation Cymru immediately ran with stories online speculating on reason for delay. BBC also contacted Senedd Commission for comment.

Senedd Commission did not issue a formal comment but said that any advice would be issued with the Bill.

Nation.Cymru: [Controversial Bill that would allow biological males to stand as women in Senedd elections is postponed \(nation.cymru\)](#)

- Synopsis: *The Welsh Government has unexpectedly postponed publication of a controversial Bill that would allow biological men to identify as women for the purpose of standing as candidates for the Senedd. The move has led to speculation that serious legal difficulties have become apparent during the drafting of the Bill.*
- Lines from WG used.
- Previously published text from leaked draft used and fresh quote from Women’s Rights Network who received a leaked draft.

BBC Wales: [Welsh government: Senedd gender quota plan postponed - BBC News](#)

- Synopsis: *Plans to create a gender-equal Senedd have been postponed days before they were due to be published. The Welsh government said it was "doing*

further work" on a law to make parties nominate the same number of male and female election candidates. There have been questions over whether the Senedd has the power to pass the law.

- Reused comments from Darren Millar last year that ‘MSs were told by lawyers they lacked the required powers.’. Later updated to include a new line from Darren Millar which said it had been *"abundantly clear from legal advice from previous Senedd committees that the Senedd does not have the competence to introduce this bill. So I hope that this is the beginning of gender quotas being ditched. I have always believed that people should be elected on the basis of merit and not by gender."*
- Stated no comment from Senedd until Bill is published.

30 November

BBC Wales lunchtime bulletin 2nd item and 4th item on Wales Today, synopsis: *Plans to create a gender equal Senedd have been postponed days before they were due to be published... There have been questions whether the Senedd has the powers needed to pass the law.*

BBC Radio Wales 3rd item, synopsis: *Plans have been postponed for gender quotas in Senedd have been postponed at 11th hour... Questions whether the Senedd has the powers to introduce the law.*

S4C Newyddion 4th item, synopsis: *Plans to create a gender equal Senedd have been postponed days before they were due to be published.*

Walescast the delay in introduction is discussed at the end of this podcast with questions around competence (24:19).

[Walescast - Airing Differences - BBC Sounds](#)

Social media so far

29 & 30 November

BBC Wales News, Nation Cymru, and Wales Women’s Rights Network tweeted about the delay as did Welsh Conservatives following day.

Highest reach for a social media message around the Bill being delayed was circa 15.3m for messages via BBC Wales News (this was also highest reach for a message including Welsh Government on 29 and 30 November). The message was:

- Welsh government: Senedd gender quota plan postponed.

Messages with most engagement on this topic also negatively mentioned ‘self-ID’. These were two of the top five messages, in terms of engagement, mentioning Welsh Government on 30 November:

- Lets (sic) hope that this isn't just a temporary hitch but the end of @WelshGovernment's attempts to sneak self ID onto the statute books. They know that @SeneddWales does not have the legal competence and that the majority of the public would not support them...2 Replies, 48 Retweets, 135 Likes.

- This article acknowledges there are questions around whether Welsh Government have the legal authority (they don't). But barely mentions the elephant in the room; They are trying to introduce gender self-ID in Wales by stealth. 27 Replies, 141 Retweets, 510 Likes.

Last updated: 1 December 2023 **Updated by:** Senedd Reform Division

From: Welsh Government Official 5
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 12:06 PM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - The Information Commissioner's Office]
Cc: Welsh Government Official 20; Welsh Government Official 8
Subject: RE: OFFICIAL - SENSITIVE: DPIA - Senedd Reform - ICO closure email and DPIA comments

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information], thanks for your time earlier in the week.

You will possibly have seen (from very recent media reports) that we will not be publishing the Bill on Monday, as originally anticipated. We will be in touch as soon as we are able to update you on next steps and look forward to continuing to work together on elements of Senedd reform.

Diolch

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Stakeholder – academic]
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 1:09 PM
To: Welsh Government Official 8
Subject: Re: [EXT] Senedd Reform - Gender Quota Update

Dear [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information].

Thank you for taking the time to email this update. If I can support in any way, please do let me know.

Take care,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information].

From: Martin, Neil (ETC - Legislative Counsel - OLC)
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 8:54 AM
To: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation); Welsh Government Official 4; Welsh Government Official 11; Welsh Government Official 12; Welsh Government Official 13
Subject: Senedd Reform (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill - not being send to Senedd today

Will, [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

For the benefit of the audit trail, I wanted to confirm that as things stand we are not planning on sending the Senedd Reform (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill to the Senedd today. Please let us know as soon as possible if we have misunderstood the situation.

Please note that OLC has not had any discussion with the Clerks about this – have they been informed that the Bill will not be sent to them today?

Best wishes,

Neil

From: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 8:58 AM

To: Martin, Neil (ETC - Legislative Counsel - OLC); Welsh Government Official 4; Welsh Government Official 11; Welsh Government Official 12; Welsh Government Official 13

Subject: RE: Senedd Reform (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill - not being send to Senedd today

Diolch Neil. You haven't misunderstood the situation – the Bill won't be introduced on Monday.

The clerks are aware, so they should not be expecting it.

Thanks again for everyone's efforts around this, and I'm grateful for your patience too. The situation is likely to remain fluid for the next few days at least while we work this through.

Will

From: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information - Stakeholder – academic]

Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 3:58 PM

To: Welsh Government Official 8

Subject: Re: Senedd Reform - Gender Quota Update

Thank you, [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information].

I look forward to hearing about the new proposed timeline.

best wishes,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 5:25 PM

To: Special Adviser 4 <Special Adviser 2

Cc: Bisson, Piers (ETC - Constitution and Justice) Welsh Government Official 5>; Welsh Government Official 20>; Welsh Government Official 8>; Welsh Government Official 1>

Subject: Official - Sensitive: GQs - developed lines to take

Special Adviser 4, Special Adviser 2

As mentioned earlier, attached are some further lines to take that the team have developed in anticipation of the postponement of the introduction of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill being raised in FMQs or in other Senedd business (BQs/TQ etc).

I'd be grateful for your thoughts. Once you're content I'd suggest I share it slightly wider on Monday with Special Adviser 3, Special Adviser 1 and Special Adviser 5 with a view to it being with the FM and Trefnydd by close on Monday.

Happy to discuss.

Thanks

Will

Will Whiteley

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd | Senedd Reform Division
Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

Rhagenwau: ef/iddo | Pronouns: he/him

From: Welsh Government Official 10
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 11:10 AM
To: Welsh Government Official 30
Subject: FW: CANCELLED: Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill

Hey mate,

Has died down now and most media have covered it already, but below is our line about the Senedd Electoral Candidates Bill.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said: "We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means we will not be publishing on 4 December, as originally anticipated."

Thanks,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 5
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 9:19 AM
To: [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information- Stakeholder]
Cc: Welsh Government Official 8; Welsh Government Official 20
Subject: Update

Hi [Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information],

I'm conscious that you had given your apologies for the Senedd reform Delivery Group meeting last Thursday, and therefore will have missed Will's update on the gender quotas legislation. [Redacted-

Section 40 Personal Information] was at the Delivery Board so may well have fed back to you and others. However feel free to share this email with the rest of the group if helpful.

As I'm sure you will have now picked up from the media coverage towards the end of last week, we are doing further work on the Bill which means we will not be publishing today, as originally anticipated.

The team and I would very much like to thank you and others in the group who have supported us to date on this legislation – it has been incredibly helpful for us to be able to sense-check our thinking for deliverability and integration with existing practices - and hopefully we can continue to work together in this important area.

We will of course be in touch when we are able to share more information on next steps.

Best wishes, a diolch

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

From: Welsh Government Official 5

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:13 PM

To: Special Adviser 1; Special Adviser 5

Cc: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation), Special Adviser 2 >; Special Adviser 4

Subject: Official - Sensitive: GQs - developed lines to take on SC(ECL) Bill

Importance: High

Hi Special Adviser 1/Special Adviser 5

Attached are some lines to take that we have developed in anticipation of the postponement of the introduction of the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill being raised in FMQs or in other Senedd business (BQs/TQ etc).

We would very much like to be in a position to share with the FM and Trefnydd (cc Deputy Minister for Social Partnership) by close today.

Could I please have any comments/thoughts by 3pm?

Diolch

Welsh Government Official 5

Welsh Government Official 5

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd / Senedd Reform Division

Grwp yr Economi, y Trysorlys a'r Cyfansoddiad / Economy, Treasury and Constitution Group

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government



Hapus i gyfathrebu'n Saesneg neu yn y Gymraeg/Happy to communicate in English or Welsh.

From: Welsh Government Official 14 **On Behalf Of** Government Plenary Business
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 12:47 PM
To: Government Plenary Business <>; Private Office of the Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd;
Cc: Special Adviser 6); Welsh Government Official 16; Special Adviser 4
Subject: Updated: Business Committee briefing

Please find attached updated Business Committee briefing following the pre-meet. Additions highlighted in yellow.

Regards,

[Redacted- Section 40 Personal Information]

Excerpt from attachment to Document 22

3.1 – This Week's Business

- There is one change to this week's business as set out in the paper.

If needed:

- We are doing further work on the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which means it was not published yesterday, as originally anticipated. Therefore, the Legislative Statement on the Bill has been withdrawn from today's agenda.
-

From: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)
Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 4:44 PM
To: Private Office of the First Minister >; Private Officer of the Deputy Minister – Social Partnership >; Private Office of the Counsel General & Minister for the Constitution >; Private Office of Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd >
Cc: Special Adviser 4 >; Special Adviser 3 >; Special Adviser 1 >; Special Adviser 2 >; Bisson, Piers (ETC - Constitution and Justice) >; Welsh Government Official 5>; Welsh Government Official 4>; Welsh Government Official 20>; Welsh Government Official 8>; Dunning, Diane (ETC - Legal Services Department) >; Welsh Government Official 26>
Subject: Official-Sensitive - Hot Topics - Senedd Reform Gender Quotas

Dear Private offices

Please find attached a hot issues brief, including lines to take, in relation to the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which was scheduled to be introduced today.

We're sharing this in advance of FMQs and Business Questions in the Senedd tomorrow.

Welsh Government Official 34 – if the FM is content, we would also seek to share these lines with Rhun ap Iorwerth via the Agreement Unit.

Best wishes,

Will

Will Whiteley

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd | Senedd Reform Division
Llywodraeth Cymru | Welsh Government

Rhagenwau: ef/iddo | Pronouns: he/him

From: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation)

Sent: Monday, December 4, 2023 4:50 PM

To: Welsh Government Official 1

Subject: FW: Official-Sensitive - Hot Topics - Senedd Reform Gender Quotas

Welsh Government Official 1, sincere apologies, I meant to copy you in! These lines were cleared by Special Adviser 1 and other Spads. You'll spot the media coverage has come out as Special Adviser 1 suggested focusing on the lines for this hot issues brief.

Thanks

W

Will Whiteley

From: Welsh Government Official 5

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 9:38 PM

To: Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation) Dunning, Diane (ETC - Legal Services Department) <>; Welsh Government Official 26 >

Cc: Welsh Government Official 8>; Welsh Government Official 20 >

Subject: WAQ - for CG - on gender quotas - due noon Wednesday

Importance: High

Hi all,

With apologies for the short notice, there is a written question which is due by noon tomorrow. Having briefly discussed with Will, we think a short answer along the lines we provided to Ministers yesterday is the best approach.

For information, I've included by way of comment the answer provided to Andrew R T Davies by the CG to a similar question about gender quotas and legal issues in September.

When we send this back to SQ Mail, we will suggest that it is copied to the Deputy Minister for Social Partnership for information.

It would be helpful if any changes could be tracked in the ishare doc by 11am tomorrow at the latest please – it is only short so hopefully it won't take anyone very long.

Thanks

Welsh Government Official 5

Welsh Government Official 5

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd / Senedd Reform Division

Grŵp yr Economi, y Trysorlys a'r Cyfansoddiad / Economy, Treasury and Constitution Group

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government

[Link to published written question and answer]

<https://record.assembly.wales/WrittenQuestion/90006>

.....
From: Welsh Government Official 20 >

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 10:01 AM

To: Welsh Government Official 23>;Welsh Government Official 24 >; Welsh Government Official 25

Cc: Hall, Lorna (ESJWL - Communities & Tackling Poverty) >; John, Amelia (ESJWL - Communities & Tackling Poverty) Whiteley, William (ETC - Senedd Reform & Legislation) Welsh Government Official 5>; Welsh Government Official 8>

Subject: Official-Sensitive - Hot Topics - Senedd Reform Gender Quotas - NOT for onward sharing

Hi All

We committed to keeping you updated on our position with regards to Gender Quotas.

Please find attached a hot issues brief, including lines to take, in relation to the Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill, which was scheduled to be introduced yesterday.

We've shared this with relevant private offices ahead of FMQs and BQs today.

If we make any revisions to these lines over the next few weeks, we'll let you know. We'll likely be revisiting them ahead of SJQs and CGQs next Wednesday and potentially FMQs depending on what if anything is asked today.

BW

Welsh Government Official 20

Welsh Government Official 20

Is-adran Diwygio'r Senedd / Senedd Reform Division

Grŵp yr Economi, y Trysorlys a'r Cyfansoddiad / Economy, Treasury and Constitution Group

Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government

.....
From: Welsh Government Official 18

Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 12:00 PM

To: Private Office of the First Minister

Cc: Private Office of the Counsel General & Minister for the Constitution; Welsh Government Official

19; Special Adviser 4

Subject: CSC-LP(23-24)01 - DRAFT Legislative Programme Mid-Year Review Paper

Hi all,

Ahead of next week's Cabinet Sub-Committee on the Legislative Programme, please find attached a draft paper for the First Minister's consideration.

Thanks,

Welsh Government Official 18

Excerpt from attachment

Mid-year review of the Legislative Programme

Year Three Bills introduced

The time critical **Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill** was introduced on 18 September and the **Elections and Elected Bodies Bill**, which is the next step in our commitment to modernise and reform Welsh elections, was introduced on 3 October. The **Senedd Cymru (Electoral Candidate Lists) Bill**, which will introduce gender quotas for candidates elected to the Welsh Parliament, was due to be introduced on Monday 4 December. In conjunction with Plaid Cymru, a decision was taken to not proceed with introduction and discussions are ongoing regarding next steps.