Welsh Parliament

Reform Bill Committee

Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill: consultation

21 September to 3 November 2023

1. This document has been prepared in Microsoft Word. An explainer document is available in [Microsoft Word format](https://senedd.wales/media/qz5haotp/word-accessibility-options.docx) if you need any help to use the ‘Read aloud’ function, or to change the page background colours, text sizes or text colours.

# Introduction

The Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill has been referred to the [Reform Bill Committee](https://senedd.wales/seneddreform) for Stage 1 scrutiny of the general principles of the Bill. This document explains how you share your views with the Committee.

More information about the Bill is available on the [Bill’s webpage](https://business.senedd.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=41915). More information about the legislative process is available on the [Senedd’s website](https://senedd.wales/senedd-business/legislation/guide-to-the-legislative-process/).

# Terms of reference

The Committee is considering:

1. The general principles of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) (Wales) Bill and whether there is a need for legislation to deliver the Bill’s stated policy objectives (see below for further information about the Bill).
2. Any potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill’s provisions, and whether the Bill and accompanying Explanatory Memorandum and Regulatory Impact Assessment take adequate account of them.
3. Whether there are any unintended consequences arising from the Bill.
4. The Welsh Government’s assessment of the financial and other impacts of the Bill as set out in Parts 2 and 3 of the Explanatory Memorandum.
5. The appropriateness of the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Part 1: Chapter 5 of the Explanatory Memorandum).
6. Matters relating to the competence of the Senedd including compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights.
7. The balance between the information contained on the face of the Bill and what is left to subordinate legislation.
8. Any matter related to the quality of the legislation.
9. Any other matter related to the constitutional or other implications of the Bill.

# Information about the Bill

If passed, the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Bill will:

* Increase the size of the Senedd to 96 Members.
* Decrease the length of time between Senedd ordinary general elections from five to four years.
* Increase the maximum number of Deputy Presiding Officers from one to two.
* Increase the legislative limit on the size of the Welsh Government to 17 (plus the First Minister and Counsel General), with power to further increase the limit to 18 or 19.
* Require candidates to, and Members of, the Senedd to be resident in Wales (by disqualifying candidates and Members who are not registered to vote in a Senedd constituency).
* Provide a mechanism for the Seventh Senedd’s consideration of job-sharing of offices relating to the Senedd (by requiring the Llywydd in the Seventh Senedd to propose the establishment of a Senedd committee to review specified matters).
* Change the Senedd’s electoral system so that all Members are elected via closed list proportional representation, with votes translated into seats via the D’Hondt formula.
* Repurpose and rename the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales; provide the renamed Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC) with the functions needed to establish new Senedd constituencies and undertake ongoing reviews of Senedd constituency boundaries; and provide instructions for the DBCC to follow when undertaking boundary reviews.
* Provide for review of the operation and effect of the new legislative provisions following the 2026 and 2030 elections (by requiring the Llywydd after each relevant election to propose the establishment of a Senedd committee to review specified matters).

# How to share your views

## Evidence gathering

We want to make sure that our work is informed by experiences, needs, and views that reflect the diversity of the people and communities affected by these issues.

We encourage anyone with expertise or experience of these issues to share your views, with the full knowledge that your views will be welcomed and valued.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 3 November 2023.

To share your views electronically, please send to SeneddReform@senedd.wales or by post to Reform Bill Committee, Welsh Parliament, Cardiff, CF99 1SN.

1. We would encourage you to keep your response brief and focused on the key points you would like to draw to the Committee’s attention.

### Along with your submission, you should provide the following information:

* Your name and contact details as the person, or organisation, submitting the evidence.
* Whether your evidence is submitted as an individual, or on behalf of an organisation.
* If you are submitting evidence as an individual, confirmation that you are over 18 years old.
* If you are under 13 years old, your parent or guardian’s agreement that you can participate (this can be provided via email).
* Confirmation of whether you would prefer that your name is not published alongside your evidence (names of individuals under 18 years old will not be published).
* Confirmation of whether you would like the Committee to treat any or all of your written evidence as confidential, with reasons for the request.
* If you have referred to a third party in your evidence, such as a parent, spouse or relative, confirmation that they have agreed that you can share information that may be used to identify them and that they understand that it will be published.

## Providing Written Evidence

The Senedd has two official languages, Welsh and English.

In line with the [Senedd’s Official Languages Scheme](https://senedd.wales/commission/senedd-commission-policy/official-languages/), the Committee welcomes contributions in both or either of our official languages, and we ask organisations that are subject to Welsh Language standards or schemes to respond in line with their own obligations. Please inform the Committee when submitting responses if you intend to provide a translation at a later date.

Please see [guidance for those providing evidence for committees](https://senedd.wales/senedd-business/committees/getting-involved-with-committees/).

## Disclosure of information

Please ensure that you have considered the Senedd’s [policy on disclosure of information](https://senedd.wales/help/privacy/senedd-committee-privacy-notice/) before submitting information to the Committee.