

Commissioned briefing

Welsh Rugby Union

What the Senedd has said about the WRU's governance, finances, leadership, and the future of professional and community rugby

Prepared for	Sample briefing
Reference	OS-SAMPLE-WRU
Date	27 October 2026
Covers	The Senedd record, September 2021 to 23 October 2026

In brief

Since 2023 the Senedd's attention to the WRU has moved from culture and governance to the professional game. After the BBC Wales allegations in January 2023 and an independent review, the live issue in the Seventh Senedd is the WRU's plan to cut professional regions from four to three. The Welsh Government says the WRU is independent and the decision is its own. On 7 October 2026 the Senedd rejected a Reform UK motion on the regions by 43 votes to 44. [13](#) [48](#) [134](#) [139](#)

Government loan

The Welsh Government lent the WRU £18 million on commercial terms to replace a UK loan. [54](#) [11](#)

New board

A board of eight appointed and four elected members took full effect from 1 January 2024. [58](#)

Regions plan

WRU plans three professional teams instead of four; Reform UK says from 2028. [98](#) [133](#)

Culture review

WRU accepted all 36 recommendations of the external culture review, Minister said in November 2023. [49](#) [48](#)

Refinancing

Richard Collier-Keywood (WRU) says refinancing gives £60 million over three years for Welsh rugby. [98](#)

Senedd vote

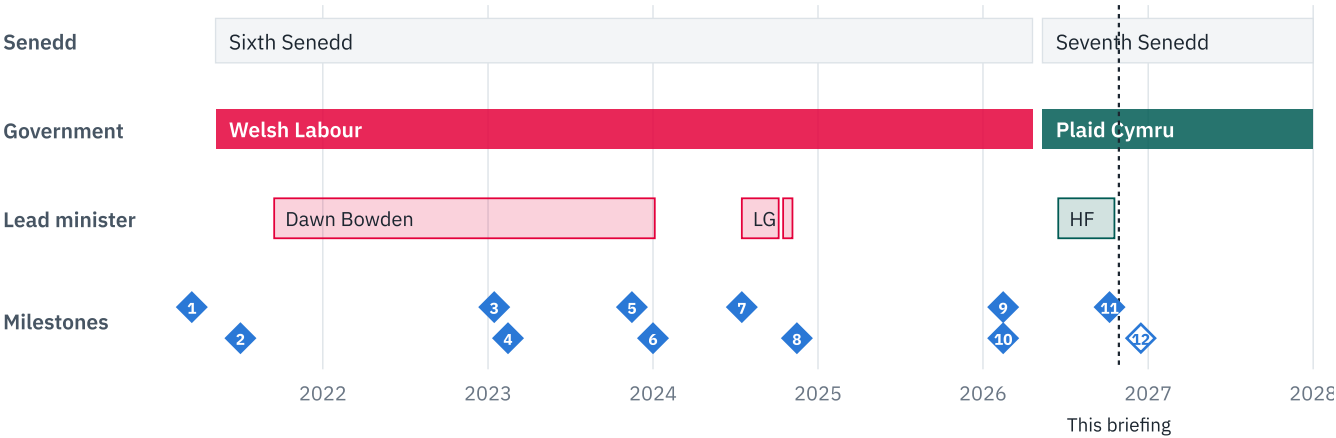
On 7 October 2026 the Senedd rejected the four-regions motion, 43 for and 44 against. [139](#)

State of play

- The WRU plans to move from four professional regions to three. The WRU's Richard Collier-Keywood told the committee in February 2026 that four teams cannot be funded alongside the wider game. Reform UK members say the plan means three teams from 2028. [102](#) [98](#) [133](#)
- On 7 October 2026 the Senedd rejected both Plaid Cymru's amendment (44 to 44) and Reform UK's motion (43 for, 44 against). Nothing was agreed. [140](#) [139](#)
- The Minister, recorded as Heledd Fychan, says the Government cannot direct the WRU. She says she has pressed it to be transparent, evidence-based and to consult communities. Written answers say no impact assessments of the cut have been made. [134](#) [135](#) [111](#) [112](#)
- Members across parties are asking for the WRU to publish its business case. Louise Emery (Reform UK) wants it before December. Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives) wants it published in full. [128](#) [131](#) [122](#)
- Nation.Cymru reported on 23 October 2026 that WRU losses more than doubled to £18.1m amid the row over axing a team. [141](#)

At a glance

The Senedd terms, the party in government and the lead minister, with the formal milestones set against them.



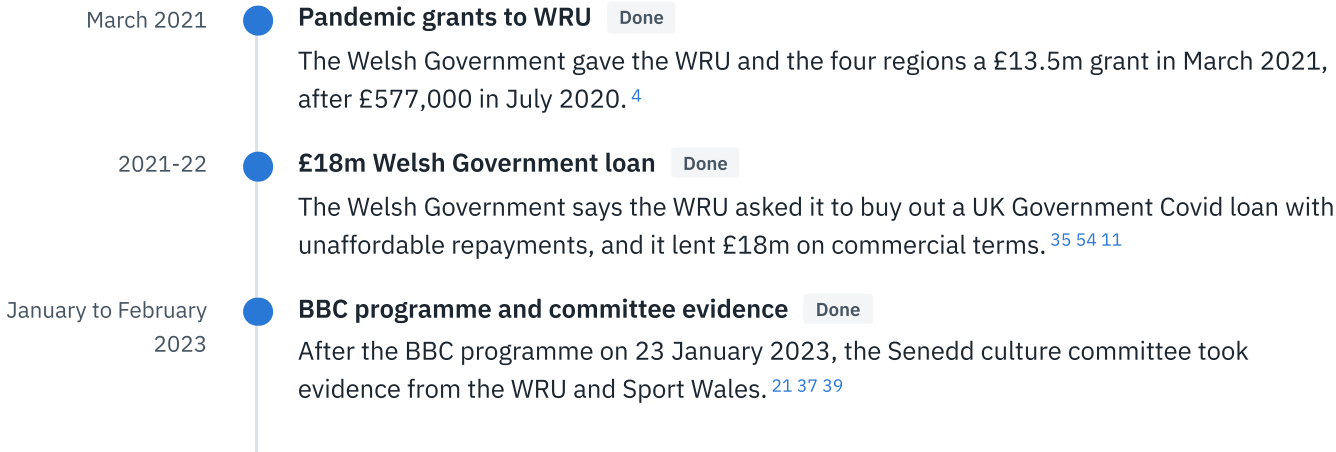
- 1 March 2021 Pandemic grants to WRU
- 2 2021-22 £18m Welsh Government loan
- 3 January to February 2023 BBC programme and committee evidence
- 4 February 2023 Independent review set up
- 5 November 2023 Review published and accepted
- 6 1 January 2024 New board in place
- 7 July 2024 Six Nations broadcasting debate
- 8 November 2024 Loan terms revisited
- 9 February 2026 WRU refinancing
- 10 February 2026 Move to three regions
- 11 7 October 2026 Senedd vote on regions
- 12 Before December 2026 Business case and December point
- 13 From 2028 Licensing and three teams

Lead minister: Dawn Bowden (Sep 2021 to Jan 2024); Lesley Griffiths (Jul 2024 to Oct 2024); Jack Sargeant (Oct 2024 to Nov 2024); Heledd Fychan (from Jun 2026)

Lead minister bars run from each minister's first appearance in the record to their successor's. Filled diamonds are steps completed; open diamonds are still ahead.

The path to law

Each formal step in making the law and putting it into effect, as recorded in the Senedd.



February 2023	●	Independent review set up Done	The WRU commissioned an independent review through Sport Resolutions on Sport Wales advice, with a commissioning panel including Sport Wales, the WRU and an independent member. 25 26 38
November 2023	●	Review published and accepted Done	The Minister said the WRU chair and interim chief executive accepted all 36 recommendations of the external review. 49 48
1 January 2024	●	New board in place Done	The WRU board moved to eight appointed and four elected members, and Dame Anne Rafferty was appointed to chair an oversight group. 58 59
July 2024	●	Six Nations broadcasting debate Done	The Senedd debated the committee's report on Six Nations rights, and the Cabinet Secretary said free-to-air coverage would help the WRU deliver its strategy. 75 78
November 2024	●	Loan terms revisited Done	Minister Jack Sargeant said the Government reminded the WRU of fair workplace practice during the renegotiation of its loan, after the WRU sought breathing space in January 2024. 88 60
February 2026	●	WRU refinancing Done	The WRU chair said refinancing gives £60 million over three years; the Welsh Government said it was not involved. 98 92
February 2026	●	Move to three regions Done	The WRU chair told the committee the board unanimously chose three professional teams, saying it cannot fund four and the wider game. 101 102
7 October 2026	●	Senedd vote on regions Done	The Senedd rejected Plaid Cymru's amendment 44 to 44 and Reform UK's motion on protecting four regions 43 to 44, so nothing was agreed. 140 139
Before December 2026	○	Business case and December point Still ahead	Reform UK wants the WRU to publish its full business case before December, and the Conservatives' Paul Davies wants it published in full; the Minister says the WRU must explain its evidence. 128 131 135
From 2028	○	Licensing and three teams Still ahead	Reform UK's Steve Bayliss says the WRU has fixed on three teams from 2028 before its licensing framework is set; Carmelo Colasanto questions who judges the licences. 133 132

How it unfolded

Sixth Senedd, 2021 to 2026

- Feb 2022** ● Sarah Murphy criticises the WRU's plan to stop girls playing mixed under-12 and under-13 rugby. Lesley Griffiths says the WRU should revisit its consultation responses. [5](#) [7](#)
- May 2022** ● Dawn Bowden says the WRU's regional structure is a matter for the WRU as governing body. [8](#)

- Dec 2022** ● Mark Drakeford says the Government lent the WRU £18m and cannot be a banker of last resort. Samuel Kurtz quotes Sam Warburton on WRU governance. [11](#) [10](#)
- Jan 2023** ● After a BBC Wales investigation into the WRU, Drakeford says the WRU needs urgent, transparent action. Dawn Bowden meets the WRU twice in two days. [13](#) [15](#)
- Feb 2023** ● The committee takes evidence from the WRU. Ieuan Evans says the WRU has disappointed the rugby family and promises change. Nigel Walker apologises. Sport Wales says no public funding goes to the WRU until a governance plan is in place. [22](#) [29](#) [40](#)
- Jun 2023** ● The Minister for Economy welcomes Richard Collier-Keywood's appointment as independent WRU chair. [46](#)
- Nov 2023** ● The independent review is published. Dawn Bowden says it found a culture that was misogynistic, racist and homophobic. The WRU accepts all 36 recommendations. [48](#) [49](#)
- Jan 2024** ● New chief executive Abi Tierney and a new board give evidence. The WRU asks for breathing space on its Welsh Government loan. [57](#) [58](#) [60](#)
- Jan 2024** ● Drakeford says the WRU has made a good start on culture change but has much to prove. Andrew RT Davies says the loan costs about £2m a year. [63](#) [64](#)
- Feb 2024** ● The committee takes evidence on Six Nations broadcasting. The WRU says media rights bring about £20m of roughly £90m revenue. [71](#) [70](#)
- Jul 2024** ● The Senedd debates the committee's Six Nations report. Lesley Griffiths says free-to-air broadcasting would help the WRU deliver its strategy. [78](#)
- Nov 2024** ● The WRU is in the headlines over women's player contracts. Jack Sargeant tells the WRU he is disappointed. [83](#) [86](#)
- Apr 2025** ● A Welsh Government answer says the WRU has taken control of Cardiff Rugby so that professional rugby continues in the capital. [89](#)
- Jan 2026** ● Mike Hedges raises serious problems in Welsh rugby, including the future of the Ospreys. Jane Hutt says the future of the game is a matter for the WRU. [90](#) [91](#)
- Feb 2026** ● The WRU gives evidence on the future of rugby in Wales. It defends cutting to three teams and says refinancing gives £60m over three years. An EGM has been called. [98](#) [101](#) [96](#)

Seventh Senedd, from May 2026

- Sep 2026** ● The Minister says she met the WRU in August. Members press her on the regions. [119](#) [118](#)
- 7 Oct 2026** ● The Senedd debates regional rugby and rejects the Reform UK motion and the Plaid Cymru amendment. [139](#) [140](#)

Who has led

For the Government

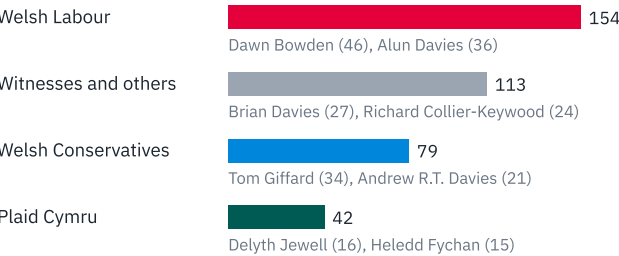
- **Lee Waters.** Deputy Minister for Climate Change in December 2021, when he criticised late-evening WRU matches that put pressure on train services. [3](#)

- **Dawn Bowden.** Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport, and Chief Whip, then Deputy Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism (May 2022 to November 2023). Led the Government response to the 2023 allegations, saying the Government does not run the WRU. [8](#) [17](#) [32](#) [51](#)
- **Mark Drakeford.** First Minister of Wales (December 2022 to February 2024). Said the Government cannot be a banker of last resort, and in January 2024 that the WRU had made a good start on change. [11](#) [13](#) [63](#)
- **Lesley Griffiths.** Answered business statements for the Government in 2022 to 2024. Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice in July 2024, when she backed free-to-air Six Nations coverage. [6](#) [72](#) [78](#)
- **Jack Sargeant.** Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership (November 2024), who met the WRU over women's contracts. [84](#) [88](#)
- **Heledd Fychan.** Plaid Cymru. Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport in the Seventh Senedd (from May 2026). Says the WRU is independent but she expects transparent, evidence-based decisions and met it in August 2026. [106](#) [119](#) [125](#) [135](#)

Across the parties

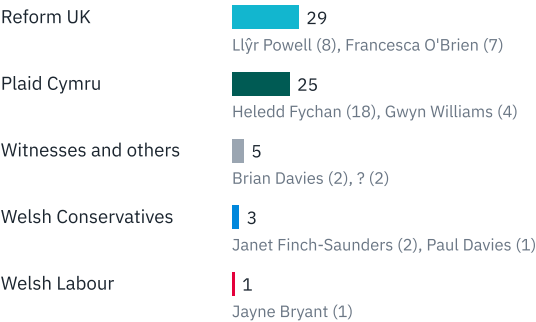
Sixth Senedd, 2021 to 2026

388 contributions



Seventh Senedd, from May 2026

63 contributions



Relevant contributions in the Senedd by party in each term, with the two most frequent voices.

- **Minister for Economy.** Answered written questions from January 2022 to March 2024 on grants, the £18m loan, and why the WRU should decide its regional structure. The name is not given in the sources. [4](#) [9](#) [12](#) [73](#)
- **Jane Hutt.** Answered business statements in January and February 2026, saying the future of the game is a matter for the WRU while the Government urges it to listen to clubs and players. [91](#) [95](#)
- **Other Cabinet Ministers.** In September 2026 the Ministers for Local Government, Housing and Planning, Finance, Health and Care, and Enterprise, Connectivity and Energy each said they had not assessed the effect of losing a region and that the WRU must. [112](#) [113](#) [114](#) [115](#)
- **Welsh Labour (Sixth Senedd).** Alun Davies (36 contributions) pressed the WRU on culture and NDAs (agreements that stop staff speaking out), then in 2026 said it had failed to win the argument on three teams. Jenny Rathbone (16) asked about conditions tied to Welsh Government funding. [27](#) [100](#) [30](#)
- **Welsh Conservatives (Sixth Senedd).** Tom Giffard (34) pressed on governance and conditions on public funding. Andrew RT Davies (21) asked about the loan. James Evans (7) led on grassroots rugby. [34](#) [64](#) [50](#)
- **Plaid Cymru (Sixth Senedd).** Delyth Jewell chaired the culture committee's WRU inquiry. Heledd Fychan asked what the Government knew and when, and Sioned Williams raised the Ospreys and St Helen's. [21](#) [36](#) [93](#)
- **Reform UK (Seventh Senedd).** The main questioner on regions: Llŷr Powell (8) moved the October 2026 motion, with Francesca O'Brien (7) and Steven Rodaway (6) asking about public money, evidence and local impact. [127](#) [126](#) [116](#)
- **Plaid Cymru and others (Seventh Senedd).** Gwyn Williams and John Davies pressed on the Ospreys and WRU transparency. Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives) called for the business case; Jayne Bryant (Welsh Labour) asked

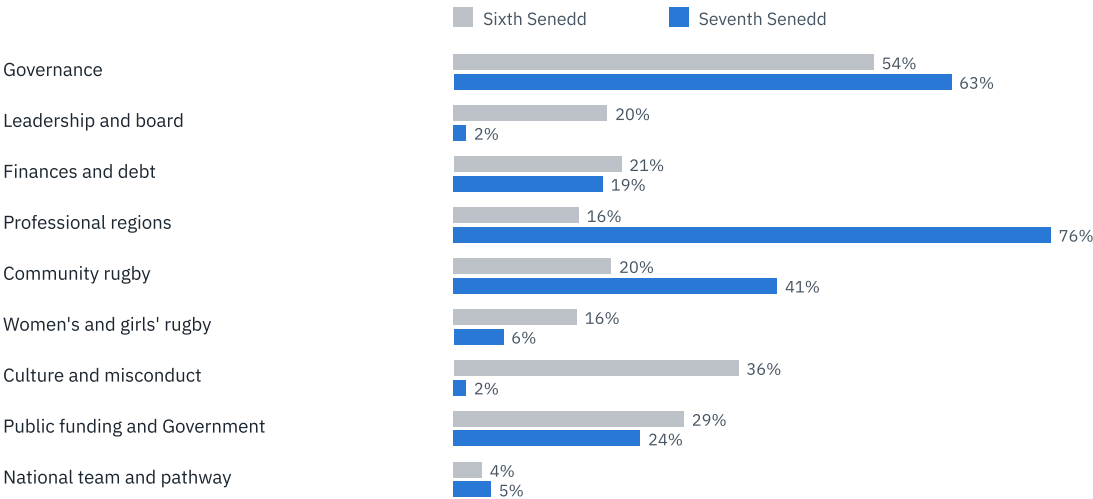
a written question. [120](#) [130](#) [131](#) [109](#)

- **WRU and Sport Wales witnesses.** Richard Collier-Keywood and Nigel Walker (WRU) and Brian Davies (Sport Wales) gave most of the evidence to Members. [98](#) [23](#) [40](#)

Between the two Senedd terms

- In the Sixth Senedd there were 388 relevant contributions, mostly about governance (208) and culture and misconduct (141), driven by the 2023 allegations. Labour's Dawn Bowden led for the Government. In the Seventh there were 63, with culture down to one. [13](#) [32](#) [48](#)
- Who asks has changed. In the Sixth, Labour, Conservatives and Plaid Cymru led. In the Seventh, Reform UK has 29 of 63 contributions and 16 critical in late 2026. Plaid Cymru's Heledd Fychan now answers as Minister, having been a questioner before. [107](#) [125](#) [127](#)
- The issue moved from conduct to the professional game. Professional game and regions was the top aspect in the Seventh Senedd (48), and finances and loans peaked in early 2024 (36). The cut from four regions to three now dominates. [101](#) [128](#) [61](#)
- The Government's line is similar across both terms: the WRU is independent. Dawn Bowden said in 2023 the Government does not run the WRU. In 2026 the Minister said decisions are for the WRU but expects transparency and evidence, and the Senedd could not agree a motion. [17](#) [135](#) [111](#) [139](#)
- Nation.Cymru reported in October 2026 that WRU losses more than doubled to £18.1m amid the row over plans to axe a team. The WRU chair told the committee in February 2026 that the union was on a stable footing and its profits had grown. [141](#) [97](#)

What is being discussed



Share of each term's relevant contributions touching each issue. A contribution can touch more than one.

Themes

- **WRU independence and the Government's limited role.** Ministers have repeatedly said the WRU is independent. Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour) said in January 2023 that the Government does not run or own it. In 2026 Jane Hutt (Welsh Labour) and Heledd Fychan, speaking as Minister, said the same on the professional game. Reform UK's Steven Rodaway said independence does not release the Government from responsibility. [17](#) [95](#) [124](#) [117](#)

- **2023 culture allegations and governance reform.** After a programme broadcast in January 2023, Members of all parties criticised the WRU. Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour, First Minister) asked for urgent, transparent action. Alun Davies (Welsh Labour) said governance and culture must change. In the Sixth Senedd, 141 contributions covered culture. In January 2024 Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour) said the signs were very positive in how the WRU was dealing with the issues. [13 16 56](#)
- **Loans, debt and WRU finances.** The Welsh Government lent the WRU £18m during COVID. In January 2024 Richard Collier-Keywood (WRU) said it takes about £2m a year from the regions and asked for breathing space. Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives) urged restructuring. Mark Drakeford said the Government was willing to talk. In February 2026 Collier-Keywood said a refinancing gives £60m over three years. [54 61 66 65 98](#)
- **Six Nations broadcasting.** In 2024 the Senedd debated whether Six Nations games should stay free to air. The WRU told the committee that media rights bring about £20m of £90m revenue. Members such as Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru) and Alun Davies (Welsh Labour) said they had sympathy with the WRU's finances. Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary, argued free-to-air would help the WRU's strategy. [71 76 77 78](#)
- **From four professional regions to three.** This dominates the Seventh Senedd: professional game contributions rose to 45 in the second half of 2026, with 16 critical Reform UK contributions. Reform UK and Conservative Members asked the WRU to publish its evidence. Collier-Keywood said four teams cannot be funded alongside wider infrastructure. Alun Davies said in February 2026 the WRU had failed to win the argument. [128 131 102 100](#)
- **Community and women's game.** Geraint John (WRU) said in 2026 that community growth was going exceptionally well. Dawn Bowden praised the WRU's Dysgu WRU programme in November 2023. Women's rugby returned to the headlines in November 2024 over players' contracts, with Hannah Blythyn (Welsh Labour) saying an apology was not enough. [103 52 85](#)

The arguments

For

- Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour) argued the Government cannot direct the WRU, an independent business, but engages because it matters to Wales. Heledd Fychan, as Minister in 2026, said she respects its independence and is ready to challenge it when needed. [33 17 125](#)
- Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour) said in January 2024 that the WRU had made a good start on culture change. Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives) said things were far better 12 months on. Brian Davies of Sport Wales reported significant governance change. [63 62 80](#)
- Richard Collier-Keywood (WRU chair) argued four professional teams struggle to compete and the WRU cannot fund them and the wider game. He said the board chose three teams unanimously and the refinancing gives stability. [102 101 98](#)
- Geraint John (WRU) and Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour) pointed to community work, including rising

Against and concerns

- Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives) said in May 2023 the Government may have been too keen to protect its relationship with the WRU. Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru) asked why it did not act on complaints given public funding. Dawn Bowden said she could only act on formal complaints. [45 31 32](#)
- Reform UK Members said the WRU's plan to cut to three regions lacks published evidence. Louise Emery asked for the business case to be published. Llŷr Powell said stakeholders felt unconsulted. Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives) also called for the full business case. [128 137 131](#)
- Steven Rodaway (Reform UK) said the Government's reliance on WRU independence does not release it from responsibility for affected businesses. Gwyn Williams (Plaid Cymru) said losing the Ospreys or the Scarlets would be devastating for south-west Wales. [117 120](#)
- Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives) said the Welsh Government could help by renegotiating the COVID

participation and the Dysgu WRU programme for clubs. [103 52](#)

loan, which he said is crippling the regions. Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives) asked why the loan carried 8.25 per cent interest. [67 74](#)

- In November 2024 Hannah Blythyn (Welsh Labour) and Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru) said the treatment of women players showed lessons had not been learnt. [85 87](#)

The moving pieces

- **Four regions to three.** The WRU says it cannot fund four competitive teams and a wider game. Reform UK and Plaid Cymru members say it has not published its evidence. The Ospreys and Scarlets are named as at risk. [102 120 133 130](#)
- **Transparency and evidence.** Members ask the WRU to publish its business case and the criteria behind the licensing process. The Minister has asked the WRU for transparent, evidence-based decisions. [128 131 122 123](#)
- **Government's role.** Written answers say the Government has not assessed the economic, fiscal or participation effects of a region closing. It says the WRU must assess them. Steven Rodaway says independence does not release the Government from responsibility. [113 114 117](#)
- **Finances and the Welsh Government loan.** In 2024 the WRU sought breathing space on loans costing the regions about £2m a year. In 2026 it reported refinancing with HSBC and Goldman Sachs. The Government says it was not involved in that refinancing. [61 98 92](#)
- **Culture and governance reform.** The WRU accepted all review recommendations and set up a new board and an oversight group chaired by Dame Anne Rafferty. Sport Wales said in October 2024 that it had met the conditions for funding to be reinstated. [49 59 80](#)
- **Women's game.** The 2023 allegations centred partly on the women's game. In November 2024 a row over women's player contracts led Minister Jack Sargeant to say Welsh rugby was in the headlines again. [24 85 86](#)
- **Six Nations broadcasting.** The WRU argued that media rights money funds the game. Committee chair Delyth Jewell called the WRU's economic arguments powerful. Cabinet Secretary Lesley Griffiths argued for free-to-air coverage, while calling it a fine balance against the money from exclusive contracts. [70 79 78](#)

Positions

- **Welsh Government.** In both terms it says the WRU is independent and decisions on the game are for the WRU. In 2023 Dawn Bowden said she would expect significant change. In 2026 the Minister says she expects transparency and collaboration with communities. [20 121 109](#)
- **WRU.** It admitted past failures in 2023. In 2026 it defends a three-team model as the way to fund both professional and community rugby, and accepts it struggled to bring the professional clubs with it. [29 99 102](#)
- **Reform UK.** It entered the Senedd in 2026 and is the most critical voice. It wants the WRU to protect four regions and publish its business case, and says stakeholders feel unconsulted. [127 128 137](#)
- **Plaid Cymru.** Its members scrutinised the WRU hard in the Sixth Senedd. In 2026 Heledd Fychan's amendment respected WRU independence but asked for full evidence and consultation. John Davies called the WRU's finances a black box. [18 129 130](#)
- **Welsh Conservatives.** Tom Giffard criticised the Government's handling in 2023. In 2024 Andrew RT Davies welcomed the WRU's progress and asked how the Government holds it to account. In 2026 Paul Davies and Tom

Giffard ask for full publication of the business case and transparency over the Ospreys. [45](#) [62](#) [131](#) [94](#)

- **Welsh Labour.** Members were sharply critical in early 2023. By January 2024 Jenny Rathbone congratulated the WRU leadership. In February 2026 Alun Davies said the WRU had failed to win the argument on three teams. [16](#) [55](#) [100](#)

Key votes

- 7 October 2026

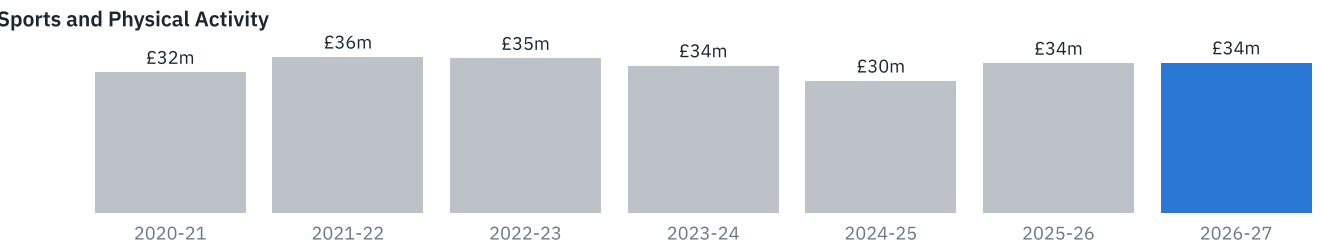
Rejected

Plaid Cymru's Heledd Fychan's amendment to the Reform UK regional rugby motion, which respected WRU independence and asked it to engage transparently, was rejected: 44 for, 44 against. [140](#)
- 7 October 2026

Agreed

Llyr Powell's Reform UK motion calling on the Welsh Government to ensure the WRU protects the future of Wales's four regions was rejected: 43 for, 44 against, 1 abstaining. Nothing was agreed. [139](#)

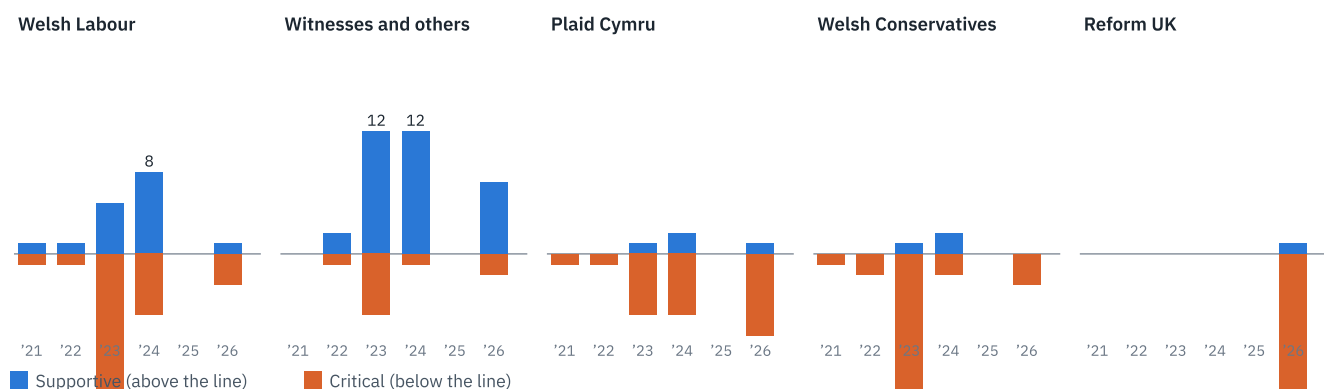
The money



Welsh Government final budgets, revenue and capital, in real terms at 2026-27 prices. The latest year is highlighted.

- The Welsh Government's Sports and Physical Activity budget line (general sport, not WRU-specific) rose from £25.8m in 2020-21 to £34.2m in 2026-27 in cash. In 2026-27 prices it peaked at £35.5m in 2021-22, fell to £30m in 2024-25 and is £34.2m in 2026-27. [142](#)
- Pandemic support included a £13.5m Spectator Sport Fund grant in March 2021, with £2.7m for the WRU. The WRU later asked the Government to buy out its UK Government COVID loan. The Government lent £18m on commercial terms. [4](#) [35](#) [54](#)
- Richard Collier-Keywood said in January 2024 the Welsh Government loan takes about £2m a year from the regions. Samuel Kurtz questioned an 8.25 per cent rate. Mark Drakeford said the Government was willing to discuss restructuring. [61](#) [74](#) [65](#)
- Brian Davies of Sport Wales said in February 2023 public money was under 1 per cent of WRU turnover and none was flowing until a governance plan existed. By October 2024 he said funding conditions had been met. Collier-Keywood said in February 2026 refinancing gives £60m over three years. [42](#) [40](#) [80](#) [98](#)

How the tone has shifted



Contributions in the Senedd judged supportive or critical of the Welsh Rugby Union and its governance, finances, leadership and stewardship of professional and community rugby in Wales, by party and year. Neutral questions and mixed views are not shown.

- In the Sixth Senedd, 86 of 388 relevant contributions were critical and 205 neutral. The peak was in early 2023, when Welsh Labour had 29 critical of 83 and culture was raised in 96 contributions. [16](#) [19](#)
- The tone warmed in 2024. In January 2024 Jenny Rathbone congratulated the WRU leadership, and Dawn Bowden said the signs were very positive. In December 2023 Drakeford said it had made a start but still had a lot to prove. [55](#) [56](#) [53](#)
- In the Seventh Senedd 27 of 63 contributions were critical, led by Reform UK with 16 critical in 2026 H2. Talk of the professional game rose to 45 contributions, while culture fell to none. [132](#) [136](#)

Organisations involved

- **Sport Wales.** Gives public funding to the WRU. It withheld funding until a governance plan was in place and says it is not a regulator. [40](#) [43](#) [80](#)
- **Sport Resolutions.** Independent body commissioned to run the 2023 review of WRU culture. [25](#) [38](#)
- **Rafferty oversight group.** Group chaired by Dame Anne Rafferty to check progress on the review's recommendations. [59](#) [81](#)
- **Regions, including the Ospreys and Scarlets.** The Ospreys and Scarlets are named as at risk from the cut to three regions. Members raised the effect on Swansea and west Wales. [93](#) [120](#)
- **Petitioners (e-petition).** A petition to ask the Welsh Government to review the plan to cut regions gained 8 signatures and was rejected. [1](#)
- **Oil4Wales.** Sponsor that, according to Tom Giffard, ended its relationship with the WRU in May 2023 citing governance concerns. [44](#)
- **Football Association of Wales.** Used by several members as a comparison on women's pay and broadcasting. [14](#) [68](#)

What to watch

- Whether the WRU publishes the business case for three teams against four, which Members want before December. [128](#) [131](#)
- How the WRU's licensing process for three teams from 2028 develops, and whether the Government holds the formal meeting with the WRU on regional rugby. [133](#) [110](#)
- Whether the committee holds further scrutiny of the WRU on its plans. Lis McLean said the WRU is coming before the committee again. [138](#)
- The WRU's finances after its reported losses of £18.1m, including the sale of Cardiff Rugby, which it has put on the market. [141](#) [104](#)

How this briefing was prepared. This briefing draws on everything in the Senedd record that relates to Welsh Rugby Union between September 2021 and 23 October 2026: 526 contributions in plenary and committee, 53 written questions and answers and 5 other documents, including statements, petitions, votes and Senedd Research. It was compiled with automated analysis, and every statement was checked against the full text of the sources it cites; statements the sources did not support were corrected or removed. Figures on stance (supportive, critical, mixed or neutral) are classifications of what was said and are indicative. It covers the Senedd record only: views expressed elsewhere appear only where they were raised in the Senedd.

Sources

1. Petition: To intervene in the WRU's proposals to reduce the number of professional rugby regions in Wales
2. 2021-09-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Ministerial scrutiny session: Minister for Economy and Deputy Minister for Arts and Sport and Chief Whip, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
3. 2021-12-08 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters (Welsh Labour)
4. 2022-01-07 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
5. 2022-02-15 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Sarah Murphy (Welsh Labour)
6. 2022-02-15 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
7. 2022-02-15 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
8. 2022-05-11 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Economy, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
9. 2022-06-24 Written question to Minister for Economy, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
10. 2022-12-06 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
11. 2022-12-06 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
12. 2023-01-06 Written question to Minister for Economy, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
13. 2023-01-24 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
14. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Social Justice, Altaf Hussain (Welsh Conservatives)
15. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
16. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
17. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
18. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
19. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Joyce Watson (Welsh Labour)
20. 2023-01-25 Plenary: Topical Questions, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
21. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
22. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Ieuan Evans
23. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Nigel Walker
24. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Nigel Walker
25. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Ieuan Evans
26. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Nigel Walker
27. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
28. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
29. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Nigel Walker

30. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)
31. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Government, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
32. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Government, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
33. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Government, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
34. 2023-02-02 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with the Welsh Government, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
35. 2023-02-03 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
36. 2023-02-07 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
37. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
38. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Brian Davies
39. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
40. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Brian Davies
41. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Brian Davies
42. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Brian Davies
43. 2023-02-15 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: Evidence session with Sport Wales, Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson
44. 2023-05-24 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Economy, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
45. 2023-05-24 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Economy, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
46. 2023-06-20 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
47. 2023-11-08 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Scrutiny of Sport Wales - Autumn 2023, Brian Davies
48. 2023-11-15 Plenary: Topical Questions, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
49. 2023-11-24 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
50. 2023-11-29 Plenary: Short Debate: The importance of grass-roots rugby in communities, James Evans (Welsh Conservatives)
51. 2023-11-29 Plenary: Short Debate: The importance of grass-roots rugby in communities, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
52. 2023-11-29 Plenary: Short Debate: The importance of grass-roots rugby in communities, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
53. 2023-12-12 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
54. 2023-12-14 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
55. 2024-01-10 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Economy, Jenny Rathbone (Welsh Labour)
56. 2024-01-10 Plenary: Questions to the Minister for Economy, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
57. 2024-01-24 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Abi Tierney
58. 2024-01-24 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
59. 2024-01-24 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
60. 2024-01-24 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
61. 2024-01-24 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Allegations surrounding the Welsh Rugby Union: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
62. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
63. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
64. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
65. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Mark Drakeford (Welsh Labour)
66. 2024-01-30 Plenary: Questions to the First Minister, Andrew RT Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
67. 2024-01-31 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Six Nations rugby broadcasting, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
68. 2024-01-31 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Six Nations rugby broadcasting, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
69. 2024-01-31 Plenary: Welsh Conservatives Debate: Six Nations rugby broadcasting, Dawn Bowden (Welsh Labour)
70. 2024-02-01 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union (1), Abi Tierney
71. 2024-02-01 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Six Nations rugby broadcasting rights: evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union (1), Abi Tierney
72. 2024-02-06 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)
73. 2024-03-14 Written question to Minister for Economy, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
74. 2024-04-05 Written question to Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice, Samuel Kurtz (Welsh Conservatives)
75. 2024-07-10 Plenary: Debate on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Report, 'Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcasting rights', Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
76. 2024-07-10 Plenary: Debate on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Report, 'Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcasting rights', Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
77. 2024-07-10 Plenary: Debate on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Report, 'Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcasting rights', Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
78. 2024-07-10 Plenary: Debate on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Report, 'Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcasting rights', Lesley Griffiths (Welsh Labour)

79. 2024-07-10 Plenary: Debate on the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Report, 'Six Nations Rugby Championship broadcasting rights', Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
80. 2024-10-09 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with Sport Wales (4), Brian Davies
81. 2024-10-09 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: Impact of funding reductions for culture and sport: Evidence session with Sport Wales (4), Brian Davies
82. 2024-10-23 Plenary: Questions to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
83. 2024-11-05 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
84. 2024-11-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
85. 2024-11-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Hannah Blythyn (Welsh Labour)
86. 2024-11-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
87. 2024-11-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
88. 2024-11-06 Plenary: Topical Questions, Jack Sargeant (Welsh Labour)
89. 2025-04-14 Written question to Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
90. 2026-01-27 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Mike Hedges (Welsh Labour)
91. 2026-01-27 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Jane Hutt (Welsh Labour)
92. 2026-01-27 Written question to Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning, Andrew R.T. Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
93. 2026-02-03 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Sioned Williams (Plaid Cymru)
94. 2026-02-10 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Tom Giffard (Welsh Conservatives)
95. 2026-02-10 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Jane Hutt (Welsh Labour)
96. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Delyth Jewell (Plaid Cymru)
97. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
98. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
99. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
100. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Alun Davies (Welsh Labour)
101. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
102. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
103. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Geraint John
104. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
105. 2026-02-26 Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee: The future of rugby in Wales: Evidence session with the Welsh Rugby Union, Richard Collier-Keywood
106. 2026-05-21 Written question to Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Gwyn Williams (Plaid Cymru)
107. 2026-06-24 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Carmelo Colasanto (Reform UK)
108. 2026-06-24 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
109. 2026-06-29 Written question to Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Jayne Bryant (Welsh Labour)
110. 2026-07-01 Written question to Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Llŷr Powell (Reform UK)
111. 2026-09-02 Written question to Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Steven Rodaway (Reform UK)
112. 2026-09-09 Written question to Cabinet Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning, Francesca O'Brien (Reform UK)
113. 2026-09-09 Written question to Cabinet Minister for Finance, Francesca O'Brien (Reform UK)
114. 2026-09-09 Written question to Cabinet Minister for Health and Care, Francesca O'Brien (Reform UK)
115. 2026-09-09 Written question to Cabinet Minister for Enterprise, Connectivity and Energy, Francesca O'Brien (Reform UK)
116. 2026-09-14 Culture, Communications, Cymraeg and Sport Committee: Ministerial scrutiny session, Steven Rodaway (Reform UK)
117. 2026-09-15 Plenary: Business Statement and Announcement, Steven Rodaway (Reform UK)
118. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Gwyn Williams (Plaid Cymru)
119. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
120. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Gwyn Williams (Plaid Cymru)
121. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
122. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Carmelo Colasanto (Reform UK)
123. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
124. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
125. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
126. 2026-09-16 Plenary: Questions to the Trefnydd, Chief Whip and Cabinet Minister for Culture and Sport, Francesca O'Brien (Reform UK)
127. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby
128. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Louise Emery (Reform UK)
129. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby
130. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, John Davies (Plaid Cymru)
131. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Paul Davies (Welsh Conservatives)
132. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Carmelo Colasanto (Reform UK)
133. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Steve Bayliss (Reform UK)
134. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
135. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Heledd Fychan (Plaid Cymru)
136. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Llŷr Powell (Reform UK)
137. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Llŷr Powell (Reform UK)
138. 2026-10-07 Plenary: Reform UK Debate: Regional rugby, Lis McLean (Plaid Cymru)
139. 2026-10-07 Senedd vote
140. 2026-10-07 Senedd vote
141. 2026-10-23 Nation.Cymru: WRU's losses more than double to £18.1m amid row over plans to axe a team, Nation.Cymru
142. 2026-04-01 Welsh Government final budgets, Welsh Government