Welsh Parliament
Senedd Research

Constitutional matters

Monitoring Report

November 2026



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Commonly known as the Senedd, it makes laws for Wales, agrees Welsh taxes and holds the Welsh Government to account.

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This monitoring report is intended to provide Members of the Senedd and interested stakeholders with an update on key policy developments related to constitutional matters.

The report covers the period from **2 September 2026 to 4 November 2026.**

Find out more:
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1. Constitution: Wales

The Welsh Government's Programme of Government includes several commitments relating to the constitution.

These include:

- Establishing a new National Commission for Wales to provide independent advice to the Welsh Government on Wales's constitutional future, building on the work of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales;
- Formally requesting the devolution of the right to decide on the timeline, question, and process for an independence referendum; and
- Pursuing the devolution of further powers including over justice, policing, water, the Crown Estate, and welfare.

On 1 October 2026, the First Minister wrote to the Prime Minister to outline his priorities for further devolution.

The letter, reported on social media but not published on the Welsh Government website, set out the rationale for devolving powers relating to:

- Policing and justice;
- Rail infrastructure; and
- The Crown Estate.

It also called for reform of Wales' funding arrangements and suggested the need for a new Wales Bill.

On 1 October 2026, the Constitution, Justice and External Affairs Committee held an oral evidence session with the Cabinet Minister for Government Effectiveness and the Constitution, Dafydd Trystan Davies MS.

The session covered areas including intergovernmental relations, the Welsh Government's proposed standing commission on the constitution, and the work of the Commission on Justice in Wales.

In the context of discussions around the Prime Minister's commitment to further devolution of powers to English regions, the leader of the Welsh Local Government Association, said Welsh councils should not be "left behind".

Councillor Anthony Hunt was reported as saying he "would not want the prime minister to circumvent the Welsh government, but devolution to Wales should not just be about Welsh government".

The Constitution, Justice and External Affairs Committee has invited the Prime Minister, Andy Burnham MP, to give evidence.

The Committee wishes to discuss how the UK Government is responding to "the recommendations of the Independent Commission on the Constitutional Future of Wales as well as other Commissions, Inquiries and Reviews that have been concluded into constitutional matters in recent years".

2. Constitution: UK

The House of Lords Constitution Committee has continued with its inquiry into the UK's constitutional safeguards.

The Committee has recently taken oral evidence from:

- **Former senior public servants**;
- **Former Chief Adviser to the Prime Minister, Dominic Cummings**;
- **Academics from the universities of Sydney and Ottawa**; and
- **Danny Kruger MP**.

The House of Lords (Alternative Second Chamber) Bill had its second reading in the House of Lords.

This **Private Members' Bill**, introduced by Baroness Smith of Llanfaes, seeks to establish a framework for the Secretary of State to consult stakeholders on the replacement of the House of Lords with an alternative second chamber.

Earlier in October, a Westminster Hall **debate on House of Lords reform** was led by Dr Simon Opher MP.

The House of Lords held a debate on proposals for a written constitution for the United Kingdom.

Lord Murphy of Torfaen, a former Secretary of State for Wales, highlighted how devolution has "changed the nature of our constitution" over the last 30 years.

Lord Macintosh of Eastwood asked an oral question in the House of Lords about joint working between the UK Government and devolved governments in the delivery of public services.

In response, the Minister noted that whilst the majority of public services are devolved, the UK Government is "committed to a collaborative relationship" with the devolved governments. She noted that the Prime Minister will chair a meeting on the National Economic Council for further talks on "empowering the regions across the UK through deeper devolution".

3. Intergovernmental and interparliamentary relations

In September 2026, the First Ministers of Wales and Scotland signed the Cytundeb Caerdydd - Cardiff Agreement, which sets out a shared purpose and vision to work together on matters of common interest to both nations.

The agreement includes a commitment to work together in relation to constitutional and governance arrangements.

On the same day, the First Minister of Wales, Rhun ap Iorwerth MS, met with the leaders of the Scottish National Party and Sinn Fein **in their capacity as party leaders** to discuss constitutional reform and sign a memorandum of understanding.

The Constitution, Justice and External Affairs Committee is undertaking an inquiry into the Inter-Institutional Relations Agreement.

Under the agreement, the Welsh Government is required to notify Senedd committees of its involvement in formal intergovernmental meetings, and of its intention to consent to the UK Government exercising a delegated legislative power in a devolved area in relation to Wales.

The Committee intends to use evidence from the sessions in its negotiations with the Welsh Government on a new agreement.

The National Economic Council for the nations met in Glasgow on 30 October.

The Prime Minister, Andy Burnham MP, convened the meeting with the First Ministers of Wales and Scotland, and representatives from Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister offered to work with the devolved governments to look at "**a model of deeper devolution**" in Scotland and Wales.

The First Minister of Wales met with the Prime Minister following the meeting of the National Economic Council.

The Prime Minister welcomed the "**positive discussions**" at the Council and noted the First Minister's commitment to explore how each government could "contribute to regional empowerment, reindustrialisation and achieving good

growth in every postcode". The First Minister said there was an "**encouraging consensus**" that the fiscal and borrowing powers of the Welsh Government must be "revised as a matter of urgency".

4. Elections and engagement

The Electoral Commission published its report on the 2026 Senedd election.

The report considers how the election was run, how voters and campaigners found taking part, and what lessons can be learned for the future. It states that, overall, the election was well run.

Among its conclusions are that “abuse and intimidation of candidates remain serious and growing concerns”, and that voters “remain concerned about the accuracy of election information”.

The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru announced that it will review the Senedd constituencies, as required by the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru etc. Act 2013.

The Commission will publish its initial proposals in early 2027, which will then trigger an 8-week consultation period. Final determinations must be submitted to Welsh Ministers before 1 December 2028.

The Commission has published a guide to the review.

The Senedd approved regulations to introduce automatic voter registration (AVR) for Senedd and local government elections.

The Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee published its report on the regulations, where a majority of Committee Members recommended that the regulations be approved without material amendment.

The Electoral Commission has published guidance for Electoral Registration Officers relating to Automatic Voter Registration.

The Commission has also updated its guidance on running electoral registration in Wales, to reflect these changes.

The Representation of the People Bill is at Committee Stage in the House of Lords.

The Bill will make several changes to elections in Wales, including reducing the voting age to 16 for UK Parliament elections and extending the Electoral Commission's enforcement functions.

5. UK Internal Market Act and common frameworks

On 22 September 2026, the Welsh Government delivered an oral statement on its proposed deposit-return scheme.

The Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Llyr Gruffydd MS, confirmed that the scheme will include glass containers "from day 1", but there will be a four-year transition period during which no deposit will apply and no DRS-specific labelling will be required.

The Welsh Government has written to the UK and other devolved governments to seek an exclusion from the UK Internal Market Act to commence the second phase of bans on single-use plastics.

The **Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023** make it a criminal offence to supply or offer to supply certain single-use plastic products. The first phase of bans began in October 2023. The second phase covers single-use plastic carrier bags, polystyrene lids for cups and takeaway food containers and oxo-degradable plastic products.

The Scottish Government launched a consultation on its proposals to introduce price caps on essential food items.

The consultation document acknowledges that the non-discrimination principle for goods will potentially apply to any future legislative provisions and that the final design of any scheme would take into account the "potential impacts on trade within the UK".

6. Legislative consent and lawmaking

On 21 September 2026, the Legislation Committee held an evidence session with the Counsel General, Elfyn Llwyd, and the Cabinet Minister for Government Effectiveness and the Constitution, Dafydd Trystan Davies MS.

Speaking about the proposed memorandum of understanding on the Sewel Convention, the Cabinet Minister **said he expected** the UK Government to "bring forward proposals in a matter of months" on the MoU. He added that it was not clear what this meant precisely.

The Business Committee has agreed to undertake a review of the legislative consent process in the Senedd.

As part of this review, it has requested that the Legislation Committee undertake a review of the procedure used for the Senedd to consider and give its consent to relevant UK Parliament Bills. The Committee has issued a **targeted call for evidence** to inform its review.

The Welsh Government published its Programme to Improve the Accessibility of Welsh Law.

The Programme includes commitments for further consolidation and codification of Welsh law, to promote the use of the Welsh language and to explore how technology can support the preparation, maintenance and understanding of legislation.

The Welsh Government has closed the Law Wales website with selected content being transferred to the Welsh Government's website.

This is part of the Welsh Government's programme to improve the accessibility of the law.