
**WRITTEN STATEMENT
BY
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

TITLE **Update on the timetable for the 2020-21 Welsh Government Budget**

DATE **8 November 2019**

BY **Rebecca Evans AM, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd**

On 17 September I updated Members on the implications of the UK Government's Spending Round 2019 for Wales and our plans in relation to the timing of the Welsh Government's budget for 2020-21. At that time, we remained resolute in our commitment to do everything in our power to deliver the certainty and stability that Welsh public services, businesses and communities need. It is why we announced plans to bring forward and publish the Welsh Government's budget earlier to November.

Since then, the UK general election has been called and we are now in the pre-election period. I have discussed the implications of this for the timing of the Welsh Government's budget with the Business and Finance Committees and subject to the agreement of the Business Committee we will defer publication of the Welsh Government's budget until after the UK general election.

It is, however, always our ambition to publish our plans before Christmas to support delivery partners and stakeholders with their forward financial planning. Subject to the agreement of the Business Committee next Tuesday, on an exceptional basis we will publish the Welsh Government's draft Budget 2020-21 on 16 December in recess. I will then make a statement as soon as possible in plenary on the draft Budget - on 7 January 2020 - in line with Standing Orders. Given the implications of our budget process for local government, we will publish the provisional local government settlement for 2020-21 on the same day as the draft Budget in order to enable Authorities to engage with their communities and undertake their own democratic scrutiny before setting their budgets and council tax rates by 11 March.

As a consequence, following scrutiny of our plans by the National Assembly Committees, the debate on the draft Budget will be on 4 February. We will then publish the final Budget 2020-21 and the final local government settlement for 2020-21 on 25 February, with the debates in plenary on 3 March and 4 March respectively.

I am aware that these arrangements will impact on the period for scrutiny. The Budget Protocol agreed between the Welsh Government and the National Assembly

for Wales acknowledges that providing eight weeks of scrutiny may not be possible on all occasions. The proposed timetable will allow seven weeks of scrutiny.

I would like to place on record my gratitude for the support of the Business and Finance Committees in considering these changes which are influenced by external factors beyond our control.
