

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Newid Hinsawdd, yr Amgylchedd a Seilwaith](#) | [Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee](#)

[Bil yr Amgylchedd \(Ansawdd Aer a Seinweddau\) \(Cymru\)](#) | [The Environment \(Air Quality and Soundscapes\) \(Wales\) Bill](#)

Ymateb gan Unigolyn | Evidence from Individual

General principles

What are your views on the general principles of the Bill, and is there a need for legislation to deliver the stated policy intention?

The legislation proposed in this bill is largely already on the statute books or the proposals are within the gift of Wales already. The exception seems to be road user charging which is a regressive form of taxation. Unless this bill is cover solely for that section there is no reason the proposed legislation should have been put before the Senedd.

What are your views on the Bill's provisions (set out according to sections below), in particular are they workable and will they deliver the stated policy intention?

National air quality targets (sections 1 to 7)

Wales already has the power to set these targets and thankfully they are not proposing to put the WHO guidance levels on the face of the bill. If they did this would ruin the economy and cause major issues in coastal and areas where grass and trees are present.

Promoting awareness about air pollution (section 8)

Why place a duty on a Minister to do this? This is a health issue so if Welsh Government wished to put forward information on air quality it is within the scope of their remit to do so without this bill.

National air quality strategy (sections 9 to 11)

This is an obligation under a U.K. act already so what is rehashing this in the bill doing for Wales other than wasting Senedd and government time?

Air quality regulations (section 12)

Welsh government could already set these without additional powers.

Local air quality management (sections 13 to 15)

This has been operating for years and while welcome the proposed expansion is within the existing gift of Welsh government and did not require additional powers.

Smoke control (sections 16 to 18)

While simply aligning with England is reasonable these powers already exist in legislation and could have been amended at the same time as in England. This lack of working with England for political reasons seems to have only resulted in a two year delay for implementation.

Vehicle emissions (sections 19 to 21)

Again these powers broadly exist already with the exception of now allowing government intrusion on to private land.

National soundscapes strategy (sections 22 and 23)

This is reasonable and supported but again likely could have been made through regulations rather than primary legislation.

Strategic noise map and noise action plans (sections 24)

This is reasonable and supported but again likely could have been made through regulations rather than primary legislation.

General provisions (sections 25 to 28);

Broadly these powers already exist or could be made by regulation.

What are the potential barriers to the implementation of the Bill's provisions and how does the Bill take account of them?

The lack of new funding for this bill and the subsequent lack of enforcement really do make a mockery of the fact they are putting forward a bill largely made up of items which could have been implemented without primary legislation.

How appropriate are the powers in the Bill for Welsh Ministers to make subordinate legislation (as set out in Chapter 5 of Part 1 of the Explanatory Memorandum)?

This will allow ministers to make changes outside of scrutiny which is incorrect.

Are any unintended consequences likely to arise from the Bill?

Likely the regressive taxation of working people who need to drive to work through road user charging. While it is accepted that the bill doesn't introduce any such scheme it is likely money hungry local authorities will use this bill to penalise folk from rural areas entering cities. The same rural areas who do not have the public transport advantages of the urban areas nor the infrastructure to undertake 'active travel' when the shops, schools, doctors etc... are 10 plus miles from where they live.

What are your views on the Welsh Government's assessment of the financial implications of the Bill as set out in Part 2 of the Explanatory Memorandum?

Seriously under valued if they are going to make the monitoring service work they will need a lot more money.

Are there any other issues that you would like to raise about the Bill and the accompanying Explanatory Memorandum or any related matters?

Just that this bill is mainly a rehash of existing powers held by Welsh government and seems to be a sop for not actually doing very much new.

With the example of smoke control please work with U.K. government to implement these changes faster rather than hang around and not actually take action.