



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE **The Government's approach to legislation in light of COVID-19**

DATE **1 April 2020**

BY **Mark Drakeford AM, First Minister**

Together with other Members of the Government, I have considered all existing activity on primary and subordinate legislation, and we have agreed an approach to our legislation in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Of the Bills in the legislative programme announced on 16 July 2019 (<https://gov.wales/oral-statement-legislative-programme-5>), the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill and the Bill on Curriculum and Assessment are the Government's top priorities.

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill is currently in Stage 1. We want to progress the key reforms in this Bill in a timely way. This is because implementation of the extension of the franchise to 16 and 17 year olds in local government elections is dependent on subordinate legislation being in place no later than six months before the May 2022 elections.

Curriculum and assessment reform is a key priority for the Government. The sector has been preparing for some years to roll out the changes, which can only be achieved if a Bill is passed by the Senedd.

The remainder of our legislative programme remains under continual review.

The Government has also considered its approach to subordinate legislation. There will be a need for priority subordinate legislation to respond to COVID-19. In addition, there will be a need for a significant volume of priority subordinate legislation to respond to European transition. And some legislation will be a legal necessity that would need to be made under any circumstances, or essential for another reason.

On Legislative Consent Motions (LCMs), the government still intends to ensure the Senedd has the opportunity to consider and vote on these, and to recommend the usual scrutiny periods where the UK Parliamentary timetable permits.

I hope the Senedd will now work with the Government to establish a flexible approach to scrutiny of legislation, including the exploration of novel approaches to scrutiny, in order to allow the Government to progress its legislative programme under current circumstances.