

# Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026/27:

## Report of the Children, Young People and Education Committee

December 2025

### 1. The draft budget

**1.** The Welsh Government published its outline draft budget on 14 October 2025.<sup>1</sup> The detailed draft budget was published on 3 November 2025.<sup>2</sup> Ahead of publication, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language told the Senedd that the Cabinet was planning a “business-as-usual” budget. In practice this has meant restating the 2025-26 Main Expenditure Group (“MEG”) budget allocations in line with inflation.

**2.** The Outline Draft Budget states that an inflationary uplift was applied to each MEG so that “every part of the Welsh Government will start 2026-27 with at least the same level of funding in real terms as their revised baseline this year (2025-26).” A 2.2 per cent uplift is provided for public sector pay elements in each MEG. A 2 per cent uplift is provided for “non-pay fiscal resource, general capital and for Financial Transaction capital.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Welsh Government, Outline Draft Budget Report 2026-27, October 2025

<sup>2</sup> Welsh Government, Detailed Draft Budget Report 2026-27, November 2025

<sup>3</sup> Welsh Government, Outline Draft Budget Report 2026-27, October 2025



**3.** The Welsh Government has allocated the vast majority of the available funding (around 98 per cent), but there remains £380 million in reserves that could be allocated. This breaks down into £231 million of fiscal resource, £136 million of general capital and £13 million of financial transactions capital. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language has been clear this provides capacity for further negotiations with other political parties in the Senedd about where this resource could be allocated.<sup>4</sup>

**4.** Having a significant amount of budget unallocated at this stage of the budget process has made scrutiny more difficult. We note the significant inflationary pressures faced by our public services, and that the current draft budget does not meet these pressures. Such inflationary pressures could mean real term cuts to many important services and sectors. Making decisions late in the budget setting process is also challenging for both the Welsh Government and other critical public bodies, particularly local authorities.

**5.** After we had completed our budget scrutiny, the Welsh Government announced they had reached a budget agreement with Plaid Cymru. This agreement comprised of three elements:

- An extra £112.8 million for local government. The Welsh Government said this will mean all local authorities will receive funding increases above 4 per cent.
- An extra £180 million for health and social care.
- £120 million of capital funding for the next government after the Senedd election in May to allocate.<sup>5</sup>

## **Our scrutiny**

**6.** For our own scrutiny, we have drawn on the work undertaken by the Finance Committee, in particular their citizen engagement<sup>6</sup> and written consultation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [Welsh Government, Outline Draft Budget Report 2026-27, Foreword, October 2025](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Welsh Government, Written Statement, Budget Agreement, 9 December 2025](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Finance Committee Summary Engagement Report, Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27, July 2025](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Finance Committee, Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27 Consultation responses, October 2025](#)

- 7.** Ahead of our oral scrutiny sessions, we wrote to the Welsh Government highlighting areas of interest.<sup>8</sup> We are grateful to the Welsh Government for the detailed responses.<sup>9</sup>
- 8.** Following the publication of the outline Draft Budget, we wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care seeking an update on the Quality Statement for Children's Health.<sup>10</sup> We were interested in this because the Cabinet Secretary had indicated it would enable the Welsh Government to monitor spending and measure healthcare outcomes. A response was received before our evidence session.<sup>11</sup>
- 9.** We took oral evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Minister for Children and Social Care, and Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing on 19 November 2025. We took oral evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Minister for Further and Higher Education on 27 November 2025.
- 10.** We also scrutinised Medr in the context of the budget for the first time. We wrote to them ahead of the session<sup>12</sup>, which was held on 19 November 2025. We decided to include Medr as part of our budget scrutiny, because a significant proportion of the Welsh Government's education expenditure is now delegated to Medr.
- 11.** This year, we have decided to focus our report on our findings, rather than providing a detailed narrative on the budget, and the evidence we heard. The full detail of both is already in the public domain.

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<sup>8</sup> Letter from CYPE Committee Chair to Cabinet Secretary for Health; Minister for Children and Social Care and Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing, Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27, 23 July 2025; and Letter from CYPE Committee Chair to Cabinet Secretary for Education and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27, 23 July 2025

<sup>9</sup> Welsh Government, Evidence Paper on Draft Budget 2026-27 – Health and Social Care Main Expenditure Group (MEG), 19 November 2025; and Welsh Government, Evidence paper on Draft Budget 2026-27 – Education Main Expenditure Group (MEG), 27 November 2025

<sup>10</sup> Letter from CYPE Committee Chair to Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Quality Statement for Children's Health and the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026/27, 28 October 2025

<sup>11</sup> Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to CYPE Committee Chair, 12 November 2025

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Chair, CYPE Committee to Chief Executive, Medr, Scrutiny of Medr's principles of funding for 2026-27, 22 September 2025

## 2. Children's Rights Impact Assessment

**12.** Throughout budget scrutiny in this Senedd, we have recommended that the Welsh Government publish a standalone Children's Rights Impact Assessment ("CRIA") on the draft budget. This built on similar recommendations made by our predecessor committees with the aim of improving transparency about the impact of the Welsh Government's spending decisions on children. All were rejected.

**13.** Last year, we changed our approach slightly, recognising that a call for a CRIA on the whole budget would be rejected again. Instead, we recommended that the Welsh Government trialled publishing a CRIA on the budget allocations of the Health and Social Care MEG. But even this was rejected.

**14.** In rejecting these repeated recommendations, the Welsh Government have pointed to their Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment ("SIIA"). They said this enables a more holistic approach to considering the impact of the Draft Budget on different groups of people. This view has been restated in the Welsh Government's evidence this year.<sup>13</sup>

**15.** We have consistently made these recommendations because it remains unclear how the Welsh Government is discharging its duties set out in Article 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("UNCRC").<sup>14</sup> This lack of clarity has remained the case in this year's budget scrutiny.

**16.** The majority of the Committee continues to believe a separate CRIA should be completed and published as part of the Draft Budget. As we highlighted in last year's report, it is the Welsh Government's own legislation which places a duty on Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the UNCRC when making decisions. It is also the Welsh Government's own Children's Right Scheme that makes the CRIA the tool of choice to demonstrate compliance with the due regard duty.

**17.** Budgetary decisions have a significant and real impact on children's lives, their rights and their well-being. They have both short and long term impacts, both now and in the future. A CRIA that meaningfully shapes and informs budget decisions would give us assurances that a preventative and future

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<sup>13</sup> Welsh Government, Evidence Paper on Draft Budget 2026-27 – Health and Social Care Main Expenditure Group (MEG), section 2, 19 November 2025

<sup>14</sup> This Article says that countries should use the maximum extent of their available resources to implement children's rights.

generations approach is being taken to these important decisions. We note that the Scottish Government published a Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment for their last budget round.<sup>15</sup>

**18.** We acknowledge that a CRIA is focused solely on children and young people. We do not comment on the effectiveness of the SIIA to look at the impact of the budget on different groups. But we can say that the SIIA does not demonstrate to us compliance with the UNCRC due regard duty, as it gives very little attention to children and young people.

**19.** The Interim SIIA has limited reference to children and young people, and children's rights. It states that there will be further "targeted analysis" on a number of different areas, including children's rights. This analysis will "feed into advice to all Cabinet Secretaries". It states that as well as informing individual Cabinet Secretaries, the full Cabinet will also "consider the outcome of the full impact assessment when discussing the Final Budget package ahead of publication in January 2026."<sup>16</sup> It is unclear to what extent that analysis will be shared with the Senedd or more widely and why it hasn't been produced in advance of decisions on allocations and to inform scrutiny of those decisions. It is important that this is made available to the Senedd to inform its consideration on whether to pass the final budget.

**Recommendation 1.** The Welsh Government shares with the Senedd as a matter of priority the outcomes of the further impact analysis which is being used to inform budget decisions. At the latest this should be provided before the publication of the Final Budget.

**20.** We are returning to calling for a CRIA to be done on the Draft Budget for 2026-27. This will be a matter for whoever forms the next Welsh Government. We believe we, along with others, have consistently made a clear and robust case for over a decade on the need for the production and publication of a CRIA on the Draft Budget.

**21.** We will be making this case again in our Legacy report, and highlighting that our successor should continue to call for this simple way to deliver on the Welsh Government's own legislative requirements. We hope that our successor committee is not having to make a similar recommendation in any future

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<sup>15</sup> Scottish Government, Scottish Budget 2025-26: Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment, December 2024

<sup>16</sup> Welsh Government, Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment, Interim Assessment, Next Steps, November 2025

budget report, but is commending the Welsh Government for publishing a quality CRIA, which has meaningfully informed decision making.

**Recommendation 2.** The Welsh Government must produce and publish a standalone Children's Rights Impact Assessment of its Draft Budget 2027-28 to demonstrate its compliance with the Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011, as set out in the Welsh Government's own Children's Rights Scheme.

### 3. Health and Social Care

**22.** The Draft Budget for 2026–27 allocates £12.748 billion total revenue to the Health and Social Services MEG, representing 55 per cent of the total resource budget. Of this, £11.865bn (or 93 per cent of the MEG) has been allocated for the 'Delivery of Core NHS Services'.

**23.** Whilst there are some Budget Expenditure Lines specifically for children in the Health and Social Care MEG, the majority of public expenditure for children's social care and safeguarding is from the Revenue Support Grant, which sits in the Local Government MEG. However, the policy responsibility for children's social care and safeguarding sits with the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and Ministers. This can make scrutiny difficult.

**24.** During our oral scrutiny of the Health and Social Care MEG, we covered a range of different policy areas including:

- Child Health workforce;
- Child poverty and childcare;
- Childhood obesity;
- Children's mental health;
- Children's Oral Health;
- Local authorities children's services;
- Neurodevelopmental services;
- Paediatric waiting times; and
- Quality Statement on children's health.

- System transformation

**25.** Policy and budget are indivisible. But it can be difficult to understand budget decisions and how they deliver policy priorities within the Health and Social Care MEG because the bulk of the spend is not broken down. This is a perennial challenge for Senedd committees.

**26.** However, for children's health, it becomes even more difficult with no dedicated budget lines. We struggle to assess whether children and young people are receiving a fair share of health investment, as well as tracking progress and evaluating how Welsh Government budgetary decisions are prioritising children and young people's health and wellbeing. It is also very difficult to link spending to outcomes. This is compounded with the lack of a CRIA. We would therefore like more information from the Welsh Government about what it wants to see delivered for the particular areas we highlighted in our questions.

**27.** Often in discussions around the Welsh Government's Draft Budget there can be a reluctance to be up front about the budgetary trade-offs. We contrasted this with some of the discussions that happen in local authorities. Often in local authorities a decision to fund a service is often discussed and made in the context of the knock-on effect on other services. For example "funding x service means we can't fund y service." This is not a feature of scrutiny of the Welsh Government's draft budget, but should be.

**28.** One of the areas we explored was how performance on children's health is managed and measured. We know that the NHS measures activity in detail, but are the right things being measured? Do we have enough performance information on outcomes as well as activity? We felt more information should have been provided about the specific metrics that are being used to hold Health Boards to account for delivering the Welsh Government's priorities.

**Recommendation 3.** The Welsh Government should set out the key measures that best show improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing. These indicators should be accompanied by an explanation of how they inform budget decisions and how they ensure that outcomes, rather than just activities, are being effectively managed and delivered.

**29.** It remains unclear to us what the Welsh Government's priorities are for children's health, aside from a reduction in waiting times. We would like to see a clearer "golden thread" from the Welsh Government which starts with the child

health policy priorities, and service demand, linking to resource allocation which meets these, and a clear performance management framework where progress can be effectively monitored.

**Recommendation 4.** Before the vote on the Final Budget, the Welsh Government provides more information on how the budget allocations will specifically deliver its policy objectives in relation to:

- Safeguarding children and the children's statutory social care workforce;
- Supporting local authorities with the escalating placement costs prior to the full commencement of the law on restricting profit from children's care;
- Its commitment to expand Flying Start childcare to all two-year olds, as opposed to the current 66 per cent;
- Paediatric waiting times;
- Developing a sustainable child health workforce;
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services and wider mental health support for children and young people;
- Neurodevelopmental services and in particular work to reduce the waiting times for assessment.
- Designed to Smile.

This should also include information on how they will monitor the outcomes from this expenditure and assess if it is delivering on the policy intent.

**30.** During scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2025-26, when we were exploring transparency of spend on children, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care pointed to the development of a Quality Statement for Children's Health and the appointment of a clinical lead for child health. In February 2025 he indicated that stakeholder engagement would happen over the summer, with the statement itself published "by the end of 2025."<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to Chair, CYPE Committee, 3 February 2025

**31.** Ahead of this budget scrutiny round we sought an update on this work.<sup>18</sup> The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, in his response, emphasised that the Quality Statement “will set out clear expectations for health boards to deliver high-quality, equitable and effective health services for children in Wales.”<sup>19</sup>

**32.** During the oral evidence session, we explored this further. We were told that the Quality Statement would be published by Spring 2026. We were told this timeframe was because of the need to do thorough stakeholder engagement. Although we note that we had previously been told that stakeholder engagement would happen over the summer.<sup>20</sup> In subsequent correspondence, the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care said he anticipated it would be published during March 2026.<sup>21</sup>

**33.** It is disappointing that the Quality Plan was not ready ahead of budget scrutiny. It would have informed our scrutiny, and given us greater clarity on the Welsh Government’s priorities for child health. It is also unclear to us why there has been slippage when the letter in February had already identified the need for stakeholder engagement.

**34.** The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care has been consistent about the need for greater health service transformation. He highlighted to us the impact of the Child Health Network, which was “had very significant success in terms of paediatric waiting times.”<sup>22</sup> We are pleased to hear of this example. But we want more detail on how children’s health services are being prioritised within the wider transformation programme. In providing this information, we want to know which areas require service redesign, and which need targeted investment to deliver transformation. We appreciate that they can often go hand in hand, but sometimes service improvement is not about more money.

**35.** We, therefore, would welcome more information from the Welsh Government on which child health services they believe need service transformation to unlock improved services, generate greater efficiencies, reduce waiting times and costs, and improve outcomes. We also want more information

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<sup>18</sup> Letter from Chair, CYPE Committee to Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Quality Statement for Children’s Health and the Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27, 28 October 2025

<sup>19</sup> Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to Chair, CYPE Committee, 12 November 2025

<sup>20</sup> CYPE Committee, 19 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 113

<sup>21</sup> Letter from Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care to Chair, CYPE Committee, 9 December 2025

<sup>22</sup> CYPE Committee, 19 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 102

on which child health service areas need investment to support service transformation.

**Recommendation 5.** That the Welsh Government identifies the areas within Children's Health where service transformation is needed to improve service quality, reduce waiting times, generate service efficiencies and improve outcomes. This should include an explanation of how these priorities align with the wider NHS transformation programme.

**Recommendation 6.** In providing the information outlined in Recommendation 5, the Welsh Government should identify clearly and concisely the service areas which require additional financial investment to support service transformation. This should include details of the level of financial investment needed, and the expected timeframe for achieving a sustainable funding position. In doing this, we would like clear information on the impact for children and young people accessing or seeking to access these services, and how outcomes will be measured.

**36.** We know a key part of transformation in the health services relates to ALN support. Over the course of this Senedd, we have done significant work in this area. Our views and concerns about implementation of the ALN reforms have been clearly set out in both our implementation of education reforms<sup>23</sup>, and disabled children and young people's access to education and childcare<sup>24</sup> work.

**37.** The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care told us he was due to meet with the Cabinet Secretary for Education to discuss the interface between health and education.<sup>25</sup> We acknowledge that some of the changes needed are much wider than the budget, and relate to policy and cultural changes. But, the budget is still an important jigsaw piece. We therefore would like an update on the outcomes from these discussions.

**Recommendation 7.** The Welsh Government provides an update on the outcomes from the meeting between the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care and the Cabinet Secretary for Education on the health and education interface and support for ALN. This update should include information on any of the budgetary, policy or cultural issues that are now being dealt with as a result of the discussions.

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<sup>23</sup> CYPE webpage. Implementation of education reforms [accessed 4 December 2025]

<sup>24</sup> CYPE webpage. Do disabled children and young people have equal access to education and childcare? [accessed 4 December 2025]

<sup>25</sup> CYPE Committee. 19 November 2025. Record of Proceedings. paragraph 166

## 4. Education

**38.** The Education MEG includes £2.119 billion of resource funding and when non-fiscal resource (primarily student loan financing) is discounted, this budget comes to £1.852 billion. It includes £380 million of capital funding. Around two thirds of this funding is for post-16 education, and one third for pre-16 education.

**39.** Core funding for schools is not in the Education budget, but the Local Government budget. This is because funding for schools' core budgets is provided through the un-hypothecated Revenue Support Grant ("RSG") within the Local Government Settlement. Core funding for further and higher education sectors does come from the education budget, although much of this funding is allocated via Medr. Medr have an indicative budget of £1.005 billion (resource and capital funding).

**40.** During our oral scrutiny sessions with Medr, and the Cabinet Secretary for Education and the Minister for Further and Higher Education, we covered the following policy areas:

- Collaboration between providers;
- Degree apprenticeships;
- Eligibility for free school meals;
- Financial challenges facing the higher education sector;
- Funding for pay awards;
- Inflationary pressures;
- Junior Apprenticeships;
- Medr's funding;
- Pressures on schools' core budgets;
- School reserves;
- Capital Repairs and Maintenance Grant;
- Sustainable Communities for Learning;
- Taith;

- The Seren Academy; and
- Welsh language education.

**41.** The inflationary pressures faced by local authorities and schools are very real. The current budget does not fully fund these pressures, and leaves both with some very difficult decisions to make.

**42.** We appreciated the Cabinet Secretary for Education's very honest statements about the pressures faced by local authorities, and her calls for additional funding to go directly to local authorities.<sup>26</sup> There will be significant consequences for local authorities and schools if they do not receive sufficient funding.

**43.** It is perhaps unsurprising that we are calling for schools to receive their fair share of funding. We echo the Cabinet Secretary for Education's statement that core funding for schools should be broadly prioritised.<sup>27</sup> We hope that when the Final Budget is published, there is a sufficient funding in the local government settlement which local authorities can then direct partly to schools.

**Recommendation 8.** The Welsh Government should ensure that an amount of sufficient resources are directed to local authorities, and support local authorities to ensure that they are able to direct some of this additional funding to schools.

**44.** It is not clear from the Draft Budget documentation how much of the additional funding Wales received following the UK Government's Spending Review in June has been allocated to education – whether in the Education MEG or via the Local Government Settlement for schools' core budgets. We appreciate that decisions on how consequential funding is allocated is a matter for the Welsh Government, and that this should not be automatically spent in the same way. However, we would like more information from the Welsh Government as to whether the consequential arising from the UK Government's Spending Review have been spent on the matters that they were consequential for.

**45.** Similarly, following the UK Government's Autumn Budget, the Welsh Government will receive £508 million in resource and capital consequential funding. This funding is for the full Spending Review period, and not just for

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<sup>26</sup> [CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 34](#)

<sup>27</sup> [CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 35](#)

2026-27.<sup>28</sup> Again, greater clarity would be helpful on the policy areas that consequential funding derives from and how the Welsh Government will use this in the 2026-27 Final Budget.

**46.** Some education stakeholders have indicated that a portion of the consequential funding from the UK Government's Spending Review earlier this year and its recent Autumn Budget is the result of an increase in education spending in England. They are calling for the resulting funding to be directed towards local authorities and schools.

**47.** We think there should be a clearer line of sight between the amount of consequential funding and where it is has been allocated in the Welsh Government Draft Budget and will be so in the Final Budget. In those instances where it is being allocated to local authorities, what intention the Welsh Government has for that spend, and how it is then spent in local authorities. If some of the consequential funding is intended by the Welsh Government to be directed at schools, we hope that local authorities will ensure this money is directed for this purpose.

**Recommendation 9.** Ahead of publication of the Final Budget, the Welsh Government should set out details of all the consequential funding resulting from the UK Government's Spending Review in June and its Autumn Budget, where this funding will be allocated and provide clear reasons for these decisions. If money is going to the Local Government Revenue Support Grant, the Welsh Government should set out what it would like to see that funding used for or at least what it is notionally allocated for, while respecting that those are ultimately decisions for local authorities. The Welsh Government should also explain any instances where consequential funding is allocated to different areas than those for which it is a consequential.

**48.** Moving onto post-16 funding. This was the first year in which we also scrutinised Medr as part of budget scrutiny. Clearly, the timelines are very tight for Medr from receiving their outline funding allocations from the Welsh Government, to then having to draw up their own outline allocations. Medr is responsible for the single largest amount of funding in the Welsh public sector outside of the NHS. It is therefore important that the relevant committees in the next Senedd have robust arrangements to scrutinise both the Welsh Government and Medr. We will reflect on this in our legacy report.

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<sup>28</sup> [Welsh Government, Written Statement: Welsh Government response to the UK Autumn Budget 2025, 26 November 2025](#)

**49.** In the context of our recent report into routes into post-16 education and training, we were particularly interested in the comments made by both Medr and the Cabinet Secretary for Education, and the Minister for Further and Higher Education on the post-16 sector. The increased numbers of learners going into further education is to be applauded and welcomed, but it is important that colleges have the funding to accommodate these increases. We note the Cabinet Secretary for Education's comments that she would have liked to recognise these student increases in the budget, but hadn't been able to because of the "constraints of the 2 per cent roll-over budget."<sup>29</sup>

**50.** We are concerned about the risks that there may not be sufficient funding for colleges to provide places to all potential students. We are therefore writing to Medr separately on this issue.<sup>30</sup>

**51.** The Minister for Further and Higher Education told us that the funding model has been adjusted, so that £21 million of funding will be allocated based on actual numbers as opposed to the previous approach when funding was allocated on predicted student numbers. We welcome this, but it is possible that this is an issue a successor committee may want to keep a close eye on.<sup>31</sup>

**52.** Medr's indicative budget shows there is funding of £1.97 million for "Culture – Performance based music and drama conservatoire provision."<sup>32</sup> £1.97 million was also provided in-year in 2025-26. This funding is ring-fenced. We were curious. When we asked about this, the Cabinet Secretary for Education pointed us to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language and the economy team.<sup>33</sup> The Minister for Further and Higher Education pointed us to the 2016 Murphy Review which found that funding for conservatoire provision in Wales was lower than in England. She believed this funding was "trying to address that disparity."<sup>34</sup>

**53.** During the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport and International Relations Committee's scrutiny of the Draft Budget, the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership said the funding was for the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama "so they can continue providing that quality student

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<sup>29</sup> CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 15

<sup>30</sup> Letter from Chair, CYPE Committee to Chief Executive, Medr, Welsh Government Draft Budget 2026-27, 10 December 2025

<sup>31</sup> CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 216

<sup>32</sup> Medr, Funding assumptions for academic year 2026/27, 19 November 2025

<sup>33</sup> CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 96

<sup>34</sup> CYPE Committee, 28 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 102

experience, particularly the high-quality training that they provide for creating the arts".<sup>35</sup>

**54.** The background to this decision is unclear to us. We cannot seem to trace any record of when and how this decision was made. We are very aware of the higher costs of running some post-16 courses, and the pressures this can place on providers. But we are surprised to see one higher education institution being treated differently to others. We want greater clarity and transparency around this specific funding decision. We are not necessarily questioning the decision itself, but want more information why this decision has been made, who made it, when it was made, and what considerations were given to supporting other high cost courses.

**55.** We note that Medr is responsible for funding in the post-16 sector, so we are surprised that specific funding for a single institution would be ring-fenced in this way by the Welsh Government. We want to ensure that Medr's arms-length independence is not being undermined by this type of decision.

**Recommendation 10.** The Welsh Government provide more information on the reasons for the £1.97 million funding for conservatoire provision, including whether this decision was made by the Welsh Government or Medr, what the funding will deliver and how this links to the Welsh Government's priorities.

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<sup>35</sup> CCWLSIR Committee, 19 November 2025, Record of Proceedings, paragraph 197.