

Amending Standing Orders: Standing Order Thresholds

February 2026

In accordance with Standing Order 11.7(iv), the Business Committee is responsible for making recommendations on the general practice and procedures of the Senedd, including any proposals for the re-making or revision of Standing Orders.

This report recommends amendments to a number of Standing Orders that specify a threshold of Members that must be met for a specific purpose. The changes proposed reflect the Business Committee's consideration of the recommendations made by the Future Senedd Committee, in its '[Review of Standing Order Thresholds](#)' report.

These changes are proposed in anticipation of the forthcoming increase in the number of Members who sit in the Senedd, from 60 (currently) to 96 (from the Senedd election scheduled for May 2026). If agreed, the proposed changes will come into effect at the beginning of the next Senedd.

The Senedd is invited to approve the proposals to amend the Standing Orders as at Annex A. The amended Standing Orders, if approved, are at Annex B.



Contents

1. Background	3
2. The Business Committee’s consideration	3
3. Timing	4
4. Decision.....	4
Annex A: Proposed changes to Standing Orders and explanatory notes	6
Annex B: Standing Orders as amended	10

1. Background

1. Section 1 of the Senedd Cymru (Members and Elections) Act 2024 (“the 2024 Act”) amends the Government of Wales Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”) to provide for 16 Senedd constituencies, each with six seats. This means that the Senedd will have 96 Members, except in circumstances where one or more seats in the Senedd are vacant.

2. On 16 October 2024, in anticipation of these changes, the Senedd established the Future Senedd Committee¹ to consider and report on (amongst other things):

[...] the thresholds currently set in Standing Orders for the number of Members required for various purposes, including (but not restricted to) the formation of political groups, removal of office holders, and quorum.²

3. The Future Senedd Committee published its ‘Review of Standing Order Thresholds’ report on 28 February 2025, making 14 recommendations addressing matters such as the number of Members required to: table motions to remove officeholders, request the ringing of the bell before plenary votes are held, determine the nomination and seconding arrangements for committee chair elections, and request that the Business Committee considers changes to Standing Orders.

2. The Business Committee’s consideration

4. The Business Committee considered the issues arising from the Future Senedd Committee’s report and its recommendations at its meetings on 19 June and 18 September 2025.

5. The Business Committee grouped the recommendations into three categories:

¹ The Future Senedd Committee was chaired by the Deputy Presiding Officer, and included representatives of the Welsh Government and of each political group in the Senedd. Members who were not members of political groups were offered the opportunity to attend Committee meetings in accordance with Standing Order 17.49.

² Information about the Future Senedd Committee is available on the [Committee’s webpage](#).

- Recommendations that proposed an existing threshold should not be changed.³ The Business Committee accepted these recommendations and agreed not to propose any changes.
- Recommendations that proposed a specific change to an existing thresholds. The Business Committee accepted these recommendations and agreed to propose changes as set out in the decision section of this report and Annex A.
- Recommendations regarding political groups and groupings, in respect of which the Future Senedd Committee had recommended that there should be change, but had not specified what that change should be. The Business Committee agreed that it would consider these thresholds separately within the context of its consideration of broader issues relating to the organisation of parliamentary business.

3. Timing

6. As the proposed changes are intended to reflect the increase in the number of Members, the Business Committee agreed to propose that they should come into effect at start of the Seventh Senedd.

4. Decision

7. As noted above, the Business Committee agreed to propose changes to Standing Orders to reflect recommendations made by the Future Senedd Committee. The proposed changes are shown in Annex A, and relate to:

- Standing Orders 6.26, 8.7 and 10.8 which currently require that motions to remove the Presiding Officer or Deputy Presiding Officer, the Welsh Ministers, or relevant office holders from office are tabled by at least six Members in order to be debated. The Business Committee proposes an increase in each case to at least ten Members to retain a threshold of around ten per cent of the Senedd's membership;
- Standing Order 12.44, which requires that if at least three Members request it, the bell must be rung before a plenary vote is taken. The

³ Recommendations 6, 8, 11, 12 and 13.

Business Committee proposes an increase to at least five Members to retain a threshold of around five per cent of the Senedd's membership;

- Standing Order 17.2G, which provides that nominations for the election of committee chairs only require a seconder if the chair has been allocated to a political group with more than 20 Members. The Business Committee proposes that the reference to the size of the political group is removed, with the result that all nominations for the election of committee chairs will require a seconder; In addition, the Business Committee proposes removing the requirement that a seconder must belong to the same political group as the Member whose nomination they are seconding.
- Standing Order 33.1, which requires that the Business Committee must, within a reasonable time, consider and report on any proposal made to it by at least six Members to remake the Standing Orders or revise Standing Orders. The Business Committee proposes an increase to ten Members to retain a threshold of around ten per cent of the Senedd's membership.

8. To note, the Future Senedd Committee made a number of recommendations which suggested that the existing Standing Order/threshold remain as currently drafted. As a result, in accepting those recommendations, the Business Committee makes no corresponding proposal.

9. On 18 September 2025, the Business Committee formally agreed to propose the changes to Standing Orders outlined in this report. The Senedd is invited to approve the proposed new Standing Orders at Annex B.

Annex A: Proposed changes to Standing Orders and explanatory notes

STANDING ORDER 6 – Presiding Officer and Deputy	
Resignation or Removal from Office of Presiding Officer or Deputy	Retain sub-heading
<p>6.26 If a motion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that the Presiding Officer be removed from office; or (ii) that the Deputy be removed from office, <p>is tabled by at least ten <u>six</u> Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.</p>	<p>Amend Standing Order</p> <p>The proposed change would increase the minimum number of Members required to table a motion to remove the Presiding Officer or Deputy Presiding Officer from office in order to trigger the requirement that time must be made available for the motion to be debated. The proposed increase from six to ten is broadly proportional to the increase in the to Senedd's membership.</p>
STANDING ORDER 8 – Welsh Ministers and Deputy Welsh Ministers	
Resignation etc. of First Minister or another Member of the Government	Retain sub-heading
<p>8.7 If a motion that the Welsh Ministers no longer enjoy the confidence of the Senedd is tabled by at least ten <u>six</u> Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any</p>	Amend Standing Order



<p>event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.</p>	<p>The proposed change would increase the minimum number of Members required to table a motion to remove the Welsh Ministers from office in order to trigger the requirement that time must be made available for the motion to be debated. The proposed increase from six to ten is broadly proportional to the increase in the Senedd's membership.</p>
<p>STANDING ORDER 10 – Appointments etc. to Public Office</p>	
<p>Removal from Office</p>	<p>Retain sub-heading</p>
<p>10.8 If a motion to remove from office the holder of a relevant office is tabled by at least <u>ten</u> six Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.</p>	<p>Amend Standing Order</p> <p>The proposed change would increase the minimum number of Members required to table a motion to remove from office a relevant office holder in order to trigger the requirement that time must be made available for the motion to be debated. The proposed increase from six to ten is broadly proportional to the increase in the Senedd's membership.</p>
<p>STANDING ORDER 12 – Business in Plenary Meetings</p>	

Decisions on Motions and Amendments	Retain sub-heading
<p>12.44 Before a vote is taken, when at least five <u>three</u> Members so request, the bell must be rung. If votes are to be taken immediately after one another, the bell need not be rung more than once. Five minutes after the bell began ringing, the vote or votes must be taken.</p>	<p>Amend Standing Order The proposed change would increase the minimum number of Members required to request that the bell must be rung before a plenary vote is taken to require that such a request must be granted. The proposed increase from three to five Members is broadly proportional to the increase in the Senedd's membership.</p>
STANDING ORDER 17 – Operation of Committees	
Election of committee Chairs	Retain sub-heading
<p>17.2G A nomination must be seconded by another member from a political group with more than 20 members must be seconded by a member of that group.</p>	<p>Amend Standing Order The proposed change would remove the threshold which requires committee chair nominations for Members from political groups with more than 20 members to be seconded. The result would be that all committee chair nominations will be required to be seconded. It would also remove the requirement that Members who are seconding nominations must belong to the same political group</p>

	<p>as the Member being nominated. The result would be that a nomination may be seconded by a Member who is a member of any political group, or who is not a member of a political group.</p>
<p>STANDING ORDER 33 – Remaking, Revision and Suspension of Standing Orders</p>	
<p>Re-making and Revision</p>	<p>Retain sub-heading</p>
<p>33.1 The Business Committee must, within a reasonable time, consider and report on any proposal made to it by at least <u>ten</u> six Members to remake the Standing Orders or revise Standing Orders (and any such revision may be of any Standing Order or part of a Standing Order).</p>	<p>Amend Standing Order The proposed change would increase the minimum number of Members required to make a proposal to remake or revise Standing Orders that triggers the requirement that the Business Committee must consider and report on the proposal. The proposed increase from six to ten Members is broadly proportional to the increase in the Senedd’s membership.</p>

Annex B: Standing Orders as amended

STANDING ORDER 6 – Presiding Officer and Deputy

Resignation or Removal from Office of Presiding Officer or Deputy

6.26 If a motion:

- (i) that the Presiding Officer be removed from office; or
- (ii) that the Deputy be removed from office,

is tabled by at least ten Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.

STANDING ORDER 8 – Welsh Ministers and Deputy Welsh Ministers

Resignation etc. of First Minister or another Member of the Government

8.7 If a motion that the Welsh Ministers no longer enjoy the confidence of the Senedd is tabled by at least ten Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.

STANDING ORDER 10 – Appointments etc. to Public Office

Removal from Office

10.8 If a motion to remove from office the holder of a relevant office is tabled by at least ten Members, time must be made available as soon as possible for the motion to be debated; and in any event such a debate must take place within five working days of the motion having been tabled.

STANDING ORDER 12 – Business in Plenary Meetings

Decisions on Motions and Amendments

12.44 Before a vote is taken, when at least five Members so request, the bell must be rung. If votes are to be taken immediately after one another, the bell need not be rung more than once. Five minutes after the bell began ringing, the vote or votes must be taken.

STANDING ORDER 17 – Operation of Committees

Election of committee Chairs

17.2G A nomination must be seconded by another member.

STANDING ORDER 33 – Remaking, Revision and Suspension of Standing Orders

Re-making and Revision

33.1 The Business Committee must, within a reasonable time, consider and report on any proposal made to it by at least ten Members to remake the Standing Orders or revise Standing Orders (and any such revision may be of any Standing Order or part of a Standing Order).