# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 – commencement arrangements** |
| **DATE** | **28 June 2023** |
| **BY** | **Hannah Blythyn, Deputy Minister for Social Partnership** |

The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 (“the Act”) received Royal Assent on 24 May, fulfilling a Programme for Government commitment to place social partnership on a statutory footing in Wales.

The purpose of this statement is to inform Members of the Senedd of my intentions regarding commencement of the provisions of the Act.

Part 1 of the Act establishes the Social Partnership Council for Wales (“the SPC) to be chaired by the First Minister and comprising representatives of employers and workers from the public, private and third sectors”. I intend to commence these provisions on 29 July 2023. Nominations will be invited for worker and employer representatives and appointments made in the months following commencement. The draft procedures for the SPC will also be published in the autumn. It is my intention that the first meeting of the SPC should be held before the end of January 2024.

Part 2 of the Act places social partnership duties on those public bodies subject to the well-being duty in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and on Welsh Ministers. Part 2 also replaces the reference to ‘decent work’ in the *A Prosperous Wales* well-being goal with a reference to ‘fair work’. The provisions relating to public bodies will be commenced on 01 April 2024. Public Bodies covered by the legislation will need to seek consensus or compromise with recognised trade unions or other representatives of staff when developing their well-being objectives or making decisions of a strategic nature about the steps they intend to take to deliver the objectives. For their part, Welsh Ministers will be required to consult with the SPC when making decisions of a strategic nature in relation to the delivery of their own well-being objectives.

Part 3 of the Act places new socially responsible procurement duties on a range of public bodies in Wales. To allow sufficient time for the development of the necessary subordinate legislation, codes, and guidance, and for those public bodies subject to the duty to familiarise themselves with the requirements and make the necessary arrangements, the Part 3 provisions will not be commenced until late 2024/early 2025 at the earliest.

I will provide Members with a further update, including in relation to the commencement of the social partnership duty on Welsh Ministers, and more detailed information regarding the commencement of the socially responsible procurement duties before the end of the year.

We know that it is only by working in partnership with workers, employers and businesses that we can make real changes which will embed equality, fairness and well-being in our workplaces.

I want to thank Members of the Senedd, in particular Members of the relevant scrutiny committees and Plaid Cymru our Co-operation Agreement partners, our trusted social partners, and all who worked with us to create this Act, which will make a real difference to people, to workplaces, and to Wales as a whole.

[The full text of the Act, and Explanatory Notes, are available here](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asc/2023/1/contents/enacted).