



National Assembly for **Wales**
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol **Cymru**

The UK Government's Legislative Programme 2007-08: Bills of significance to Wales

This paper provides information on the Bills announced in the Queen's Speech on 6 November 2007 that contain Welsh provisions.

Three of the Bills announced contain framework powers for the National Assembly for Wales and a further eight contain specific provisions for Wales.

A brief summary of all the Bills announced is also included.

November 2007

The UK Government's Legislative Programme for 2007-08: Bills of significance to Wales

Members' Research Service

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Bills that contain Welsh provisions.....	2
3	Bills containing framework powers.....	2
3.1	The Local Transport Bill [HL].....	2
3.2	The Education and Skills Bill.....	4
3.3	The Planning Bill	4
3.4	A note on Parliamentary consideration of framework powers for Wales.....	5
4	Bills with Welsh provisions.....	6
4.1	The Children and Young Persons Bill [HL].....	6
4.2	The Climate Change Bill [HL].....	7
4.3	The Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill [HL]	9
4.4	The Energy Bill	10
4.5	The Health and Social Care Bill	11
4.6	The Housing and Regeneration Bill	12
4.7	The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Bill [HL]	13
4.8	The Sale of Student Loans Bill.....	15
5	The full list of Bills announced in the Queen's Speech:	16
6	Further information.....	21

The UK Government's Legislative Programme for 2007-08: Bills of significance to Wales.

1 Introduction

On the 11 July 2007, the Prime Minister made a statement¹ in the House of Commons setting out the UK Government's draft legislative agenda ahead of the Queen's Speech in November 2007. This is the first time any Government has consulted on its legislative priorities in advance of the Queen's Speech.

On Tuesday 06 November 2007, the following Bills were announced in the Queen's Speech to Parliament²:

- Apprenticeship Reform Bill (draft)
- Banking System Bill
- Channel Tunnel Rail Link (Supplementary Provisions) Bill
- Child Maintenance and Other Payments Bill
- Children and Young Persons Bill
- Citizenship and Immigration Bill (draft)
- Climate Change Bill
- Constitutional Renewal Bill (draft)
- Counter-Terrorism Bill
- Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill
- Crossrail Bill
- Cultural Property (Armed Conflict) Bill (draft)
- Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill
- Education and Skills Bill
- Employment Bill
- Energy Bill

¹ [HC Deb 11 July 2007 c1449](#)

² [HL Deb 06 November 2007 c1](#)

- European Communities (Finance) Bill
- European Union Reform Treaty Bill
- Health and Social Care Bill
- Heritage Protection Bill (draft)
- Housing and Regeneration Bill
- Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill
- Local Transport Bill
- Marine Bill (draft)
- Marine Navigation and Port Safety Bill (draft)
- National Insurance Contributions Bill
- Pensions Bill
- Planning Reform Bill
- Political Party Funding and Expenditure Proposals
- Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Bill
- Sale of Student Loans Bill

There will be a statement by the Secretary of State for Wales and a debate on the Queen's Speech in Plenary on Wednesday 28 November 2007.

2 Bills of significance to Wales

Three Bills announced in the Queen's Speech contain framework powers for Wales. A further eight contain Welsh provisions. A summary of the proposals contained within these Bills is provided below.

3 Bills containing framework powers

3.1 The Local Transport Bill [HL]³

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 7 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The provisions in the Local Transport Bill are intended to support the UK Government's strategy to tackle increasing road congestion and to improve the quality of local bus services. Many of its provisions relate to England only.

The Bill contains provisions to amend the legal frameworks relating to:

- the operation of local bus services;
- the responsibilities of English local authorities in relation to local transport including the establishment and functions of Passenger Transport Authorities (PTAs) in England only; and
- the establishment and operation of local road user charging schemes

In relation to Wales, the *Transport (Wales) Act 2006*⁴ already gives Welsh Ministers the power to establish Joint Transport Authorities, should voluntary collaborative arrangements between local authorities prove to be unsatisfactory.

The Bill confers a number of new or expanded powers on the Welsh Ministers, in line with changes being made to certain powers of the Secretary of State in relation to England (excluding London).

In addition, one provision, which relates to the application of revenues from local charging schemes, would replace an existing power for the Welsh Ministers to make regulations with provision on the face of the *Transport Act 2000*⁵.

Part 5 of the Bill deals with PTAs which do not exist in Wales and so does not apply. There are also a small number of provisions that have a different effect in Wales as compared to England. For example, the Bill removes the requirement for the Secretary of State to confirm road pricing schemes in England, whilst in Wales this power is retained by Welsh Ministers.

Clause 109 of this Bill seeks to amend Schedule 5 to the *Government of Wales Act 2006*⁶ to insert a matter into field 10 (highways and transport). This matter will allow the Assembly to pass an Assembly Measure containing provision for and in connection with the making, operation and enforcement of schemes that impose charges in respect of the use or keeping of motor vehicles on Welsh trunk roads (which are defined as those roads for which the Welsh Ministers are the traffic authority). The new matter does not enable such an Assembly Measure to make provision about traffic signs, apart from provision about the placing and maintenance of such signs.

Any Assembly Measure would be able to make provision about the purposes for which the proceeds of charges are to be applied.

³ [The Local Transport Bill \[HL\], Bill 1 2007-08](#)

⁴ [The Transport \(Wales\) Act 2006 \(chapter 5\)](#)

⁵ [The Transport Act 2000 \(chapter 5\)](#)

⁶ [The Government of Wales Act 2006 \(chapter 32\)](#)

3.2 The Education and Skills Bill

Status: This Bill has not yet been introduced.

The purpose of the Bill is to raise the minimum age at which young people can leave education or training to 18 (this applies in England only) and to bring in the legislative changes needed to implement key elements of the Leitch Review into the UK's long-term skills strategy.

The main elements of the Bill include:

- Duties on young people to participate;
- Duties on parents to take reasonable steps to ensure their children participate;
- Duties on employers to release young people to undertake education or training;
- Registration duties on providers and local authorities;
- Establishing an enforcement process and setting out a system of penalties;
- A provision to enable data sharing to help report on whether the education system is delivering economically valuable skills.

In relation to Wales the Bill proposes to amend Schedule 5 to the *Government of Wales Act 2006* to insert Matters in relation to:

- The inspection of schools for the pre16 age group (to complement the existing powers for inspection of post 16 education and training)
- The registration and regulation of independent schools in Wales.

3.3 The Planning Bill

Status: This Bill has not yet been introduced.

The purpose of the Bill is to implement proposals in the May 2007 Planning White Paper⁷ to streamline and improve the planning regime, including introducing a single consents regime for major infrastructure projects, establishing an Independent Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), and further measures to improve the Town and Country Planning System in England.

Welsh Ministers have fully devolved responsibility for town and country planning policy and decision-making. It is the Welsh Assembly Government's intention to publish a Position Statement which outlines its vision for the future of the land use planning system

⁷ [UK Government White Paper, *Planning for a sustainable future*, 21 May 2007](#)

in Wales. This will address many of the proposed changes in the Planning White Paper intended for England.

The White Paper set out the UK Government's proposals to streamline the consents process for major infrastructure projects, including transport, waste, water and energy projects. It is proposed to transfer decisions on these projects from UK Government Ministers, such as the Minister for Transport, to a new independent Infrastructure Planning Commission from April 2009. As decisions on major energy applications in Wales are currently made by the Minister for Trade and Industry, the UK Government proposes that these decisions would transfer to the IPC. The IPC would be responsible for assessing applications for major energy infrastructure projects in Wales and determining them in line with UK Government policy, set out in National Policy Statements. These Statements would be prepared by UK Government departments on a range of topics, following extensive consultations.

In relation to Wales the Bill proposes to amend Schedule 5 to the *Government of Wales Act 2006* to insert Matters in relation to:

- The preparation, content, examination and review of local development plans (LDPs)
- The powers of the Welsh Ministers to intervene in relation to LDPs and the preparation, content and status of the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP).

3.4 A note on Parliamentary consideration of framework powers for Wales

The UK Government now provides explanatory memoranda to accompany any framework power in a Bill. An explanatory memorandum was laid before Parliament to accompany the *Local Transport Bill*.

The Under Parliamentary Secretary of State for Wales, Huw Irranca–Davies MP, stated at an evidence session of the Welsh Affairs Committee on 7 November 2007 that⁸:

'It may be worth mentioning to the Committee - it is the first opportunity I have had to put it on record - that as with Orders in Council, the Government is committed to ensuring the proper scrutiny of framework powers in UK Bills. As a result of a request from Parliament we have already developed this process surrounding framework powers and have started providing Explanatory Memoranda to accompany any framework power in a Bill. From the beginning of the session the Secretary of State gave a commitment by way of a written ministerial statement to Parliament to highlight any Welsh elements in the legislative programme, including framework powers, which has already been done. In addition to this, briefing sessions by myself and the relevant Welsh Assembly Government Minister to discuss the proposals in detail will be offered to both Houses of Parliament separately following the introduction in the Bill.'

⁸ [HC 44 –i, 07 November 2007 \(Uncorrected oral evidence\)](#)

4 Bills with Welsh provisions

4.1 The Children and Young Persons Bill [HL]⁹

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 14 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The purpose of the Bill is to reform the statutory framework for the care system, to ensure that children and young people receive high quality care and support and to drive improvements in the delivery of services focussed on the needs of the child.

The Bill extends to England and Wales, with the exception of the provision to enable the Chief Inspector to issue a compliance notice where they have concerns that standards in residential care settings are not being met, which applies to England only.

The main elements of the Bill include:

- Enabling those who enter the care system to achieve the aspirations parents have for their own children and reducing the gap in outcomes between children in care and their peers;
- Improving placement stability and ensuring more consistency for children in care; and
- Improving the experience children in care have at school and increasing their educational attainment.
- Giving pilot local authorities the power to test a different model of organising social care by commissioning services from 'Social Work Practices' and enabling regulation of these practices;
- Increasing the focus on the transparency and quality of care planning and ensuring that the child's voice is heard when important decisions that affect their future are taken;
- Increasing schools' capacity to address the needs of children in care, including placing the role of the designated teacher on a statutory footing and ensuring that children in care do not move schools in Year 10 and 11 except in exceptional circumstances;
- Ensuring that young people are not forced out of care before they are ready, by giving them a greater say over moves to independent living and ensuring they retain support and guidance as long as they need it; and

⁹ [The Children and Young Persons Bill \[HL\], Bill 8 2007-08](#)

- Improving the quality and stability of placements for children in care, securing higher placement standards, ensuring that children in care and custody are visited regularly.

The Wales Office has indicated¹⁰ that **Welsh provisions** include:

- Powers to strengthen the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) and powers to allow Welsh Ministers to externalise the IRO service should this prove necessary to achieve greater independence.
- Social Worker Contact & Independent Visits - to prescribe social worker visits to all children in care in different settings to ensure regular effective contact is maintained between the social worker and the child.
- Education – to strengthen educational stability by restricting school moves (as a result of a care placement) at Key stage 4 only in exceptional cases; putting the role of the designated teacher for children in care on a statutory footing so that they are treated as a priority by all schools; and a requirement for local authorities to support care leavers to go on to Higher Education with a £2,000 bursary. The fee level for Wales will be for Welsh Ministers' determination.
- Placements – restricting use of out-of-authority placements and strengthening of market management by requiring local authorities to secure provision within the child's home/community and to require that children be accommodated and supported to live with siblings, family or friends unless there is an overriding risk.

4.2 The Climate Change Bill [HL]¹¹

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 15 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The purpose of the Bill is to create a long-term legal framework to reduce the UK's CO2 emissions to 2050.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Compared to a 1990 baseline, it sets a mandatory target of a 26-32 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2020, and a reduction of 60 per cent by 2050;
- To introduce a new system of 5-year carbon budgets from 2008, during which time greenhouse gas emissions must be within predetermined limits; Includes a provision for the Secretary of State to change agreed carbon budgets only after consultation with devolved administrations;

¹⁰ [Wales Office Press Release, Peter Hain hails 'coming of age for devolution' with record law-making powers transferring to National Assembly for Wales](#), 6 November 2007

¹¹ [The Climate Change Bill \[HL\], Bill 9 2007-08](#)

- To establish a new independent Committee on Climate Change which will advise the UK Government and, upon request, other national governments in the UK, on aspects of climate change;
- Make provisions for trading schemes to be established in any of the UK countries;
- To increase confidence and certainty for business planning and the investment in technology needed to move towards a low carbon economy;
- To create a new approach to managing and responding to climate change in the UK through setting ambitious targets, taking powers to help achieve them, strengthening the institutional framework, and establishing clear and regular accountability to Parliament;
- To demonstrate the UK's international leadership to help make progress towards a post 2012 global agreement;
- To enhance the operation of the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation (RTFO), which is expected to deliver significant carbon savings from the road transport sector by increasing the use of biofuels;
- Provide a power to pilot local authority incentives for household waste minimisation and recycling;
- To implement the Carbon Reduction Commitment (a mandatory cap-and-trade scheme covering energy use emissions from approximately 4,000-5,000 large, non-energy-intensive organisations that will save 1.1 MtC per year by 2020); and
- Require the Secretary of State to prepare, and lay before Parliament, a report assessing the risks from climate change in the UK, and provide a sustainable framework for adapting to the impacts.

The Bill confers the following functions on the **Welsh Ministers**:

- Part 2 and Schedule 1: powers to seek advice from Committee on Climate Change and functions in relation to its joint sponsorship;
- Part 3 and Schedules 2, 3 and 4: the power to make trading schemes covering certain activities in Wales, and to require information from electricity suppliers and distributors and potential participants in a trading scheme;
- Part 5, clause 56: the duty to draw up and lay before the National Assembly for Wales, a report on greenhouse gas emissions and the impact of climate change in Wales. This will include actions that have been taken by Welsh Ministers and others to deal with emissions, and future priorities;
- Part 5, clause 57: amends legislation so that Welsh local authorities must have regard to a 'climate change measures report' prepared by Welsh Ministers, rather

than the UK Secretary of State's 'energy measures report'; this clause inserts a new, Wales-specific section 3A into the *Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006*¹².

The Welsh Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing, Jane Davidson AM, issued a written cabinet statement on 15 November 2007 outlining the Welsh Assembly Government's response to the publication of this Bill¹³.

4.3 The Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill [HL]¹⁴

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 7 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The Bill would enable unclaimed assets to be invested for community purposes, whilst ensuring the rights of owners to be reunited with their assets are protected.

Unclaimed assets are defined broadly as covering all bank and building society accounts where there has been no customer-initiated activity for 15 years. Banks will be permitted to extinguish their existing liabilities to dormant account customers on condition that assets are transferred into the scheme. This will enable banks to voluntarily transfer monies without impacting on their profit and loss accounts. The Bill will allow for assets to be distributed, with the devolved administrations deciding on their own spending priorities.

The **Welsh provisions** of this Bill are outlined in the explanatory memorandum that accompanies this Bill. They are:

- Dormant account money which is transferred to the reclaim fund will be apportioned between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, according to a formula to be determined by the Secretary of State after consulting the Big Lottery Fund and the devolved administrations.
- There will be devolved provision in relation to the establishment of priority spending areas, so the purposes for which dormant account money may be distributed to meet Welsh expenditure will be specified by the Welsh Ministers.
- The Welsh Ministers will also have the power to issue directions to the Big Lottery Fund, dealing with matters such as who may receive dormant account money and the conditions on which money should be distributed.
- Welsh Ministers will have a right to be consulted before the Secretary of State makes orders under the Bill setting the formula for apportioning dormant account money between the home nations, adding or removing distributors, or prohibiting the distribution of money to specified people.

¹² [The Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Bill 2006 \(chapter 19\)](#)

¹³ [Welsh Assembly Government Written Cabinet Statement, Climate Change Bill, 15 November 2007](#)

¹⁴ [The Dormant Bank and Building Society Account Bill \[HL\], Bill 2 2007-08](#)

4.4 The Energy Bill

Stage: This Bill has not yet been introduced.

This Bill proposes to update and strengthen the legislative framework so that it is appropriate for today's energy market and fit for the challenges the UK faces on climate change and security of supply.

The main elements of the Bill include:

Strengthening the market framework to help ensure secure and affordable energy supplies; and

- Encouraging a diverse, secure supply of electricity while at the same time reducing carbon dioxide emissions. This would help the UK make further progress towards reducing carbon dioxide emissions by at least 60% by 2050 relative to 1990 levels.
- Offshore gas supply infrastructure - strengthening the regulatory framework to enable private sector investment in gas supply projects. This would help maintain reliable supplies of gas, given expected projections that the UK will rely on imports to meet up to 80% of demand by 2020;
- Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) - creating a regulatory framework to enable private sector investment in CCS projects. CCS has the potential to reduce the carbon emissions from fossil fuel power stations by up to 90%;
- Renewables - strengthening the Renewables Obligation to drive greater and more rapid deployment of renewables in the UK; and
- Nuclear waste and decommissioning financing (on a contingent basis subject to the current consultation) - If it is decided in the public interest to allow private sector investment in new nuclear power stations, the bill would create a framework that will help protect the taxpayer by requiring owners or operators of a new nuclear power station to make financial provisions to cover the full decommissioning costs and their full share of waste management costs.

The exact nature of **Welsh provisions** within this Bill is **not yet clear**. The Leader of the House of Commons website indicates that the UK Government's objective is to create UK-wide investment frameworks for the energy sector and that the UK Government is working with the Devolved Administrations on the responsibilities they have in the policy areas covered by the Bill.

4.5 The Health and Social Care Bill

Stage: This Bill received its first reading on 15 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

This Bill will enhance professional regulation and create a new integrated regulator, the Care Quality Commission, for health and adult social care, with focus on providing assurance about the safety and quality of care for patients and service users. The Bill mainly extends to England and Wales only.

The main elements of the bill are:

- To assure the safety and quality of care and apply a consistent approach to regulation by requiring providers of health services and adult social care to register with a new regulator, the Care Quality Commission;
- To equip the new regulator with tougher powers, backed by fines, to inspect, investigate and intervene where hospitals are failing to meet hygiene standards;
- To implement, following the inquiry into the case of Harold Shipman, the manifesto commitment to strengthen clinical governance; and to reform the system of professional regulation to ensure it earns and sustains the confidence of patients, professionals and Parliament;
- To implement the 2006 pre-Budget Report commitment to extend financial support to mothers-to-be from the 29th week of pregnancy;
- The Bill provides a comprehensive set of public health measures to help prevent or control the spread of serious diseases caused by infection or contamination.
- To introduce legislation to ensure all healthcare professional regulatory bodies use the civil, rather than criminal, standard of proof; to create an independent adjudicator to undertake independent and objective formal adjudication for the professional regulatory bodies; and to ensure that all healthcare organisations employing or contracting with doctors appoint a 'responsible officer' with personal responsibility to work with the GMC to identify and handle cases of poor professional performance by doctors, including overseeing arrangements for revalidation of doctors; and
- To update the *Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984*¹⁵: to strengthen the response to infectious disease and to provide a response to contamination; to create broader and more flexible provisions with the aim of providing a more effective and proportionate response to infectious disease; and to modernise the existing legislation by taking into account modern scientific understanding, human rights legislation and worldwide developments such as the World Health Organisation's International Health Regulations.

¹⁵ The *Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984* (chapter 22)

The **Welsh Provisions** of the Bill are described in the explanatory memorandum that accompanied the Bill. They are:

- The Care Quality Commission - The functions of Mental Health Act Commission under mental health legislation are transferred to the Commission in relation to England and to Welsh Ministers in relation to Wales.
- Regulation of Health Professions and Health and Social Care Workforce - the clauses on the regulation of the social care workforce apply to England and Wales. However, regulations will be made in both territories independently by the appropriate Minister.
- Public Health Protection - the public health protection clauses apply to England and Wales. However, regulations will be made in both territories independently by the appropriate Minister.
- Weighing and measuring of children: Wales - Clause 133 gives Welsh Ministers the power to lay regulations in relation to Wales.
- Social Care - the extension of direct payments covers Wales to the same extent as section 57 of the *Health and Social Care Act 2001*¹⁶ does now. However, subsection (8) of clause 134 amends section 64 of that Act to enable the National Assembly for Wales to pass a resolution annulling any statutory instrument containing regulations made by the Welsh Ministers under section 57.
- National Information Governance Board for Health and Social Care - It is intended that the functions of the National Information Governance Board in relation to Wales will be the same as those of the Patient Information Advisory Group (PIAG) conferred by section 252 of the *National Health Service Act 2006*¹⁷.

4.6 The Housing and Regeneration Bill

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 15 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The Bill supports delivery of housing supply through the creation of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), and reforms social housing and social housing regulation to promote better services for tenants.

The main elements of the Bill are:

- Bringing together land and housing, and shifting from simply grant funding social housing to investing in infrastructure, the Homes and Communities Agency would support the regeneration and delivery of new social and affordable housing, both social and private. It would also make better use of surplus public sector land and maximise the potential for brownfield development.

¹⁶ [The Health and Social Care Act 2001 \(chapter 15\)](#)

¹⁷ [The National Health Service Act 2006 \(chapter 41\)](#)

- The Bill would also provide an opportunity to modernise powers on establishing new settlements like eco-towns, and simplify the ways in which the Homes and Communities Agency would facilitate delivery of these projects.
- It would reform regulation of social housing, to provide better services for tenants.
- The Bill would implement a European Court of Human Rights ruling on Gypsies and Travellers, and other miscellaneous provisions.
- The introduction of a mandatory sustainability rating for new homes in England and Wales

The **Welsh Provisions** of the Bill are described in the explanatory memorandum that accompanied the Bill. They are:

- Part 1 of the Bill mainly applies to England only but consequential amendments apply in Wales. The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) will operate in England only and so any functions of the Secretary of State in relation to the agency will apply in England only. This Part also abolishes the Commission for New Towns. Functions of the Commission for New Towns in England are being transferred to the HCA. Functions of the Commission for New Towns in Wales are being transferred to the Welsh Ministers and any residual assets of the Commission for New Towns in Wales are also being transferred to Welsh Ministers.
- Part 2 of the Bill mainly applies to England only but consequential amendments apply in Wales. The Office for Tenants and Social Landlords will operate in England only and so any functions of the Secretary of State in relation to the regulator will apply in England only.
- Part 3 of the Bill applies to England and Wales. Powers will be exercised by the Secretary of State in relation to England and by Welsh Ministers in relation to Wales.

4.7 The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Bill [HL]

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 8 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The Bill establishes the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO), bringing consistency to local authority enforcement; puts in place a range of administrative sanctions for regulatory non-compliance that will complement existing criminal sanctions, and requires that regulators do not maintain or impose unnecessary burdens.

The **Welsh Provisions** of the Bill are described in the explanatory memorandum that accompanied the Bill as:

- All Parts of the Bill apply in Wales in respect of both reserved and devolved matters.
- Part 1 gives powers to the Welsh Ministers in areas where they have functions that are broadly comparable to those granted to UK Ministers with regard to LBRO's operations.
- Any extension of LBRO's scope, by adding enactments to Schedule 3 or adding matters to clause 4(3), will require the consent of the Welsh Ministers if the extension relates to local authorities in Wales in respect of a Welsh ministerial matter.
- Clause 7 ensures that, where LBRO gives directions to a local authority in Wales with regard to Welsh ministerial matters, it will need to have the consent of the Welsh Ministers.
- Under clause 10, LBRO may give advice or make proposals to Welsh Ministers regarding the way in which local authorities in Wales exercise their regulatory functions in relation to any Welsh ministerial matter.
- Clause 11(1) (b) allows LBRO to issue a list of enforcement priorities for Welsh local authorities subject to approval by the Welsh Ministers.
- Clause 16 of the Bill provides that Welsh Ministers may give LBRO guidance and directions as to the exercise of its functions in relation to any matter in respect of which the Welsh Ministers exercise functions.
- Any orders made by the Secretary of State under clauses 26 and 27 are subject to the consent of the Welsh Ministers.
- Schedule 1 requires the Secretary of State to consult the Welsh Ministers before making LBRO board appointments; it also allows the Welsh Ministers to make grants to LBRO of such amounts as they think fit.
- Under Part 3, clause 34 provides that the powers given to Ministers of the Crown in the Bill can also be used by the Welsh Ministers where the provision in question relates to a Welsh Ministerial matter.
- Under clause 57, Ministers of the Crown must consult with Welsh Ministers before making an order under the Bill that will affect the sanctioning of an offence that applies in or relates to Wales. They must obtain their consent before making an order, which relates to a Welsh Ministerial matter.
- Under Part 4, clause 68 provides that the powers given to Ministers of the Crown in the Bill can also be used by Welsh Ministers for regulatory functions which are a Welsh Ministerial matter.

4.8 The Sale of Student Loans Bill¹⁸

Status: This Bill received its first reading on 8 November 2007. Progress can be tracked on the [UK Parliament website](#).

The Bill enables a programme of sales of the UK Government's Student Loans Portfolio. It includes the power for Welsh Ministers to sell their own student loan portfolio. The sales will make no difference to the terms and conditions for individual borrowers. The UK Government will retain control of all loan arrangements and regulations, including interest rates and repayment thresholds.

In terms of **Welsh provisions**, the explanatory note that accompanies the Bill indicates that the Bill confers on the Welsh Ministers similar powers to sell in relation to loans made by them as the Secretary of State has in relation to loans made by him.

¹⁸ [The Sale of Student Loans Bill, Bill 6 2007-08](#)

5 The full list of Bills announced in the Queen's Speech:

Apprenticeship Reform Bill (draft)

A review of the apprenticeship programme is currently underway. It is considering the scope for reforms to the programme and the need for any legislative changes. The review is due for completion in January 2008. However, in general the Legislation would be expected to cover the leadership of the apprenticeship programme and the rights and responsibilities of those involved, apprentices, employers, training providers and statutory bodies.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Banking System Bill

The purpose of legislation would be, in line with the UK Government's objectives of financial stability, competitiveness and consumer confidence, to improve the current framework for dealing with banks in distress, including the arrangements for depositor protection.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Channel Tunnel Rail Link (Supplementary Provisions) Bill

The Bill would set out a small number of provisions which would clarify the legislative and regulatory position of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (now renamed High Speed 1) ahead of a restructuring of London and Continental Railways (LCR).

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Child Maintenance and Other Payments Bill

The Bill would abolish the requirement that parents with care in receipt of certain benefits be treated as having applied for a statutory maintenance arrangement, establish the new Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission (CMEC), and put in place improved arrangements for the assessment, collection and enforcement of child maintenance liabilities.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Children and Young Persons Bill

The Bill would reform the statutory framework for the care system, to ensure that children and young people receive high quality care and support and to drive improvements in the delivery of services focussed on the needs of the child.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Citizenship and Immigration Bill (draft)

The draft Bill would take forward any recommendations emerging from the Goldsmith Review of Citizenship requiring primary legislation.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Climate Change Bill

The Bill would create a long-term legal framework to reduce the UK's CO2 emissions to 2050.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Constitutional Renewal Bill (draft)

The draft Bill would set out proposals to implement commitments in the UK Government's Green Paper *The Governance of Britain*¹⁹ requiring legislation.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Counter-Terrorism Bill

The Bill includes new measures to strengthen terrorist prosecutions and deal with terrorists after they have been charged.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill

The Bill will take forward the UK Government's criminal justice agenda by reducing re-offending, protecting the public, promoting justice, improving access to justice and increasing confidence in the justice system.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Crossrail Bill

The Bill would grant powers for the construction and maintenance of Crossrail: a new east-west railway linking Maidenhead and Heathrow with Shenfield and Abbey Wood through new tunnels under central London.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Cultural Property (Armed Conflict) Bill (draft)

¹⁹ [UK Government Command Paper, *The Governance of Britain*, Cm7170, July 2007](#)

The Bill would allow the UK to ratify the 1954 Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and to accede to the Convention's two Protocols of 1954 and 1999.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Dormant Bank and Building Society Accounts Bill

The Bill would enable unclaimed assets to be invested for community purposes, whilst ensuring the rights of owners to be reunited with their assets are protected.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Education and Skills Bill

The Bill would introduce a requirement to remain in education or training beyond the current statutory leaving age, and implement Leitch recommendations on adult skills.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Employment Bill

The Bill would increase protection for vulnerable workers and lighten the load for law-abiding businesses.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Energy Bill

The Bill would update and strengthen the legislative framework so that it is appropriate for today's energy market and fit for the challenges the UK faces on climate change and security of supply.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

European Communities (Finance) Bill

The Bill would amend the *European Communities Act 1972*²⁰ to include the revised decision on the Communities' system of own resources (Own Resources Decision (ORD)), and repeal the *European Communities (Finance) Act 2001* (c 22)²¹.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

European Union Reform Treaty Bill

The Bill would give effect in UK law to the EU Reform Treaty due to be signed in December. The Reform Treaty is required to enable the enlarged EU of 27 Member States

²⁰ [The European Communities Act 1972 \(chapter 68\)](#)

²¹ [The European Communities \(Finance\) Act 2001 \(chapter 22\)](#)

to work effectively. The UK Government's approach was set out in detail in a White Paper which was presented to Parliament in July.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Health and Social Care Bill

The Bill would enhance professional regulation and create a new integrated regulator, the Care Quality Commission, for health and adult social care, with focus on providing assurance about the safety and quality of care for patients and service users.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Heritage Protection Bill (draft)

The draft Bill would reform and unify the terrestrial and marine heritage protection systems in England and Wales, and the marine heritage protection system in Northern Ireland.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Housing and Regeneration Bill

The Bill supports delivery of housing supply through the creation of the Homes and Communities Agency, and reforms social housing and social housing regulation to promote better services for tenants.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill

The Bill would update regulation of assisted reproduction and embryo research to take account of technological advances and changes in public attitudes.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Local Transport Bill

The Bill would support the UK Government's strategy to improve public transport and tackle road congestion, by ensuring local authorities have the right powers to take local action to meet local transport needs.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Marine Bill (draft)

The draft Bill would create a new marine planning and management framework that balances the need for wildlife protection with the requirements of industry around our coasts.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Marine Navigation and Port Safety Bill (draft)

The draft Bill aims to increase the already high safety standards for those working in or travelling through our ports and waters.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

National Insurance Contributions Bill

The Bill would raise the Upper Earnings Threshold for National Insurance Contributions to align with the higher rate threshold for income tax and introduce the Upper Accruals Point for the State Second Pension in 2009.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Pensions Bill

The Bill would enact the remainder of the landmark pensions reform package set out in the UK Government's May 2006 White Paper, *Security in retirement: towards a new pension system*²², including providing for the establishment of a new scheme of personal accounts.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Planning Reform Bill

The Bill would implement proposals in the May 2007 Planning White Paper to streamline and improve the planning regime, including introducing a single consents regime for major infrastructure projects, establishing an Independent Infrastructure Planning Commission, and further measures to improve the Town and Country Planning System.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Political Party Funding and Expenditure Proposals

The UK Government is committed to a fair and transparent system of political party funding that does not disadvantage any party and restores public confidence in the systems.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Bill

The Bill would establish the Local Better Regulation Office, bringing consistency to local authority enforcement; it would put in place a range of administrative sanctions for

²² [Department for Work and Pensions, *Security in retirement: towards a new pension system*, May 2006](#)

regulatory non-compliance that would complement existing criminal sanctions, and require that regulators would not maintain or impose unnecessary burdens.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

Sale of Student Loans Bill

The Bill would enable a programme of sales of the UK Government's Student Loans Portfolio. The sale of the student loan book is part of an ongoing UK Government strategy to transfer ownership of all public assets that are not essential to the UK Government's public service delivery objectives.

[Further information about the Bill](#)

6 Further information

Information on all the UK Government's Bills of the 2007-08 session is available from the [Office of the Leader of the House of Commons website](#).

Information on the progress of the Bills once introduced to Parliament is available from the UK Parliament's [Public Bills before Parliament 2007-08' website](#).

The Members' Research Service can provide more specific information on the progress of any of the UK Government's Bills, at the request of Assembly Members.