



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

CYHOEDDIAD

# Cyfarfod y Pwyllgor Llifogydd ac Erydu Arfordirol: 3 Chwefror 2023: nodiadau

Cofnodion o Gyfarfod y Pwyllgor Llifogydd ac Erydu Arfordirol Rhif 11, Cyfarfod, 3ydd o Chwefror 2023, Microsoft Teams (Rhithwir).

Cyhoeddwyd gyntaf: 16 Mawrth 2023

Diweddarwyd ddiwethaf: 10 Tachwedd 2022

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# Cynnwys

## Attendance

1/2. Apologies and introductions

3. Declaration of Interests

4. Minutes of the meeting 29.09.22 and Matters Arising.

5. Chair's Announcements

6. Items from the Regional Groups.

7. Update on the Review of SuDS Implementation and Interim Findings – Andrew Sherlock, Water Policy Manager & Ian Titherington, Senior Policy Advisor Sustainable Drainage, Welsh Government; and Chris Ellis, Associate - Water, Arup

8. Health, Well-being, Climate Change and Flooding - Cheryl Williams & Nerys Edmonds, Principal Health Impact Assessment Development Officers, Public Health Wales.

9. Joint England and Wales Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme. – Eleanor Heron, Research Manager, Flood and Coastal Risk Management, Environment Agency.

10. Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Financing (CLIFF) Project – Rob Goodliffe, Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Manager, North Norfolk District Council.

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**11. National Flood Asset Database Update - Wyn Davies, Manager, National Flood Risk Services & Ben Hext, Lead Specialist Advisor, Flood Risk Analysis & Asset Group, Natural Resources Wales.**

**12. Reports**

**13. Any other business previously notified to the Chair.**

**14. Date and venue of next meeting**

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# Attendance

## Committee Present:

Martin Buckle (MB) Chair  
Andrew Stone (AS) Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC  
Darren Thomas (DT) Pembrokeshire County Council  
Paul Blackman (PB) Wallingford Hydro Solutions  
David Harris (DH) Independent Consultant  
Anne-Marie Moon (AMM) JBA Consulting  
Jeremy Parr (JP) Natural Resources Wales  
Mike Wellington (MW) Waterco  
Natalie Haines (NH) Mott MacDonald  
Geraint Edwards (GE) Conwy County Borough Council  
Karen Potter (KP) Open University  
Dominic Scott (DS) Dwr Cymru – Welsh Water  
Jean-Francois Dulong (JFD) Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

## Welsh Government

James Jewell-Edmonds (JJE)  
Leanne Llewellyn (LL)  
Keith Ivens (KI)  
Tracy Goode (TG)  
Andrew Sherlock (ASh)  
Ian Titherington (IT)

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## Audit Wales

Seth Newman (SN)

## Other Speakers

Dan Tram (DTr)	Arup
Cheryl Williams (CW)	Public Health Wales
Nerys Edmonds (NE)	Public Health Wales
Eleanor Heron (EH)	Environment Agency
Rob Goodliffe (RG)	North Norfolk District Council
Ben Hext (BH)	Natural Resources Wales
Wyn Davies (WD)	Natural Resources Wales

## Apologies:

Catherine Wilson (CW) Cardiff University

## 1/2. Apologies and introductions

The Chair gave the apologies and introductions were made.

## 3. Declaration of Interests

No conflicts of interest noted.

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## 4. Minutes of the meeting 29.09.22 and Matters Arising.

Draft minutes had been circulated for comment and subsequently published.

The Chair noted that all actions had been completed, with the exception of the Welsh Government (WG) Property Flood Resilience Policy Review which will be shared when complete.

## 5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

“ I would like to update the Committee on the meetings and events that I have attended since our last meeting. In October, I had one of my regular update meetings with Julia Cherrett, the board member of Natural Resources Wales who chairs their Flood Risk Management Committee. This enabled me to update Julia on the reports of our two Sub-Committees, and their implications for NRW.

“ In November, I met the Minister for Climate Change. This provided an opportunity to present to her our reports on resources and on the need for legislative change. The Minister is appreciative of the work undertaken to deliver these elements of the National Strategy, and is keen to see both sets of proposals moving further forward.

“ The report on legislative change recognises the value of the dialogue

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established with the Law Commission. I have continued to progress that dialogue through several meetings over recent months, and plan to continue to do so in the months ahead. Today's agenda item 12.1 sets out a broader picture for moving ahead with the Policy and Legislation Sub-Committee's proposals.

“ Also in November, the Committee was consulted for its views ahead of a recent meeting of the Joint England and Wales Research Programme Thematic Advisory Group on Policy, Strategy & Investment. This consultation highlighted the interest in the Research Programme amongst our Committee members, and a willingness to become more actively involved in it. Accordingly, I met with Eleanor Heron of the Environment Agency, who plays a role in the management of the programme, to explore how our Committee might itself play a fuller role. She will be speaking to us about the research programme under agenda item 9. I also called together a meeting in January of colleagues involved in the research programme within the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales, as well as our own Committee Members. We will be meeting again, and plan to report more fully on this matter to the next meeting of the Committee in May.

“ In December, I attended the quarterly meeting with the Chairs of the English RFCCs. The meeting had a particular focus on surface water flood risk, which is increasingly being prioritised within investment programmes. A further meeting takes place in March.

“ Also in December, I attended a meeting of the Flood and Coastal Risk Programme Board. The meeting received an update on the current year's programme, and on funding prospects for 2023/24. Of particular note were funding proposals that would enable a start on all remaining Coastal Risk Management Programmes schemes during 2023/24. A further meeting of the Programme Board takes place next week.

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“ Finally, I would draw attention to the Welsh Government consultation on Planning TAN 15, which was launched on 23rd January. The closing date is 17th April, so the Committee will need to agree its response by e-mail, with confirmation at our next meeting in May. ”

## 6. Items from the Regional Groups.

AS noted a very challenging four months since the last committee meeting. The availability of data from other South East (SE) Wales authorities has been inconsistent. From October to January, 16 yellow weather warnings were received for rain, with an average rainfall of 851mm seen in the region. 631 responses were received from the region regarding operations, including 60 residential and 24 commercial properties affected. AS noted the hard work undertaken across the region since Storm Dennis, which is paying dividends. However, there have been a number of emergency failures of culverts, which has resulted in discussions with Welsh Government regarding emergency works grants; conversations are ongoing. AS also noted that the challenges due to failed infrastructure are likely to get worse.

AS highlighted the convergence of poor weather over the recent period as a challenge, alongside the work required for the capital programme. This includes all Q3 claims and applications for small-scale schemes, all of which contributed to the challenges experienced in the most recent period. AS offered thanks to WG for extending the deadlines, in response.

Regarding the SuDS Approval Bodies (SABs), AS noted ongoing plans to get a technical working group together for SE Wales. There appears to be quite a polarised approach by applicants to SAB applications, in which they are either very good or bad. There have been many requests for exemptions from the standards and a lot more varied interpretation of the standards. Local Authorities

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(LAs) are taking forward partner projects; however, their resources are stretched. There is also lots of activity from Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) regarding TAN 15, with a concern on the lack of awareness from Lead Local Flood Authorities (LLFAs) on this. He also drew attention to ongoing joint work with North Wales authorities on surface-water modelling.

PB tabled a query on SAB applications, asking how consistent the numbers are. AS responded in that the applications remain about the same, however, there are still a lot of missing applications, whilst there has been good consistency from regular developers and consultants; however, instances of consultants coming into the area (sometimes from England) who struggle to grasp the position in Wales has been a challenge.

On behalf of North Wales (NW), GE noted the issues which arose in recent meetings focused on the lack of resources and the attention on the update of the local strategies. NW have been lucky in avoiding serious flooding in the recent period, however, there were instances of some issues with structures, on which significant sums have been spent in this financial year. GE also noted difficulties in managing the risks in response to the financial difficulties and constraints experienced across the country.

DT, on behalf of West Wales, noted concerns around the skills and capacity required to develop local flood risk strategies. Further concerns around increasing levels of public and stakeholder expectations regarding flood defences, along with concerns regarding WG's capacity within the Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) team in response to the work and issues ongoing, were raised. The latter is likely to impact upon the aspirations set on policies and the strain this puts on LAs. Regarding SAB duties, Carmarthenshire have given a view that they have seen a downturn in numbers.

LL, on behalf of the WG FCERM team, gave an update on continued revenue into 2024, noting a challenging funding landscape in WG at present. LL also provided an update on the resource constraints in the WG FCERM team,

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drawing attention to a scoping exercise planned to be undertaken on resources and with a view to gaining further support in the financial team. LL offered thanks to colleagues for the offer of support to the FCERM team, highlighting the help already received from stakeholders across Wales.

JFD, providing a pan-Wales update from the regions, reiterated the resources issues across Wales. LAs are looking at massive cuts across the board (millions to be saved over the next couple of years), whilst social services and education are likely to be prioritised for funding, with technical and environmental services likely to take a hit. LAs will need to prepare plans for coastal adaptation, with development of flood defences and sustainability the key focus of coastal issues; the WLGA will be looking to work closely with organisations on this. Furthermore, a number of LPAs are pushing for more investment in flood defences, which is likely to put more pressure on the LLFAs and on budgets.

JFD indicated that there have been hundreds of enquiries on SABs across Wales, and it is more than likely that some developers will be looking to avoid applications to SABs. Discussions are ongoing on whether there is scope to be more proactive in this area. Regarding local strategies, the WLGA have worked with a small group of LAs to develop a template, with a further session planned to take place next week to share good practice on assessments, with forty attendees from LAs expected. JFD also noted that there is a suggestion to move away from wards to instead focus on catchment areas, which has been proposed from councillors on a political level. Finally, JFD proposed a clear action plan to ensure that local strategies remain live documents, along with encouraging these to be part of corporate climate change strategies.

## **7. Update on the Review of SuDS Implementation and Interim Findings – Andrew Sherlock, Water Policy Manager & Ian Titherington, Senior Policy Advisor Sustainable Drainage, Welsh**

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# Government; and Chris Ellis, Associate - Water, Arup

ASh, IT and DT presented an update on the Review of SuDS Implementation and Interim Findings.

DT noted online event in March 2023 to assess the findings of review, extending an open invite to all attendees present.

## Questions / discussion:

AS questioned if 'deemed to comply' actually is in compliance with regards to SuDS; noted allotments as not necessarily complying with SuDS, highlighting that they can sometimes be a flood risk (also noting gravel tracks) – there is a need to be careful with this. NH commented that there is a massive amount of learning needed in the exemptions noted in SAB applications.

JP drew attention to NRW'S consultation on fees and charges, now closed: [Consultation on our regulatory fees and charges for 2023/2024 - Natural Resources Wales Citizen Space - Citizen Space](#) .

DT commented that for rural authorities, agricultural buildings, can sometimes cause a number of issues and may need some thinking on whether these can be included as exemptions. MW commented that checks and inspections need to be in place to ensure exemptions are in fact exempt. JFD agreed that there needs to be a mechanism in place to ensure exemptions are compliant, whilst AS feels that a permit or exemption application could a useful idea so that there would be checks in place, but less burden on SABs and the developer.

MB raised on a question on whether there will be a broad form of public consultations on this? ASh responded that there would need to be a public

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consultation on some elements of this, depending on the findings of the review.

JFD noted that the planning portal contract has been extended to 2024 and that a view to align the two processes together would be a huge win. Furthermore, the Stage 2 Strategic Flood Consequence Assessments informing LDPs provide an opportunity for strategic SuDs to be identified and considered.

DS, noting the need for quick wins, commented that it would be useful to get these identified at an early stage. IT responded that they endeavour to deliver quick changes where possible, whilst acknowledging resources constraints, and ensure that legislation is deliverable on the ground.

## **8. Health, Well-being, Climate Change and Flooding - Cheryl Williams & Nerys Edmonds, Principal Health Impact Assessment Development Officers, Public Health Wales.**

CW and NE presented on Health, Well-being, Climate Change and Flooding.

### **Questions / discussion:**

AS drew attention to a recent report by the British Red Cross (BRC), '**Every time it rains: British Red Cross research on flooding in the UK**'; LL noted that the Minister for Climate Change is meeting with BRC to discuss this research this month.

Regarding the presentation, AS noted keen interest, especially with Rhondda Cynon Taff (RCT) coming top of the social impact for the UK; it seems the social impact index could be a good addition to decision making.

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JFD commented on the impact of mental wellbeing on the development of policies and how they are communicated to communities. The WLGA are working with WG to make communities more aware of their risk, however, it is difficult to establish the skills of practitioners to initiate this effectively. He queried whether it is possible to work with Public Health Wales (PHW) on this. CW responded by noting engagement of local public health teams that work with communities day in and day out, stressing the importance of working together and finding ways into these communities.

NH, referencing the joint research programme, noted the need for WG to update the assessment of the damage tool to ensure the mental health benefits are built into appraisals.

PB, in addressing floods disadvantage, noted the impacts on socially vulnerable and low value houses which are currently not addressed adequately.

AS, referencing the BRC report, noted that the recommendations should be built into the tools for use in vulnerable communities. With eight yellow weather warnings over the last few months, impacts are immediately seen in RCT.

JP, having worked with PHW down the years, highlighted the economic benefits of working in this area. The long-term benefits of this are considerable, and further dialogue with PHW on research avenues would be welcomed.

MW also highlighted that the mental health anguish as a result of flooding is clear, however, sometimes flood warnings which don't result in actual flooding can also cause stress. However, as engineers, we are not best equipped to assist with mental health impacts as results of flooding. JP agreed, commenting that there is a big role for charity / community organisations like the National Flood Forum who can offer help when needed.

MB noted interest in the number of health assets in flood risk areas, and questioned whether health organisations are sufficiently active in putting in place

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procedures to protect these assets?

NE responded that beyond the immediate response to flooding, there needs to be a bigger prevention strategy and a longer tail of response, which will be coming through in the wider HIA work. Furthermore, she indicated that data assets were taken from climate change impact reports, and it is possible to search for these assets on the flood risk maps. However, she highlighted the need for further engagement between the two sectors on this.

**Action** - LL committed to provide an update on any actions that arise from the meeting with the Minister.

## **9. Joint England and Wales Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Research and Development Programme. – Eleanor Heron, Research Manager, Flood and Coastal Risk Management, Environment Agency.**

EH provided an update on the joint programme.

### **Questions / discussion:**

DS commented “we have our own water industry research with UKG, do you have a connection with this?” EH responded to highlight a previous connection in the past, but unsure of how active it is. DS offered to act as a route into this, agreeing to pick up with EH post-meeting.

NH asked with regards to working with the natural processes directory, how is the programme drawing on this information on NFM projects in Wales? EH

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indicated a lead on this piece of work, offering to provide contact details offline. There is a significant piece of work assessing the literature on this and the Committee's involvement would be welcomed.

JFD asked if EH is actively engaging with the Environment Platform Wales (EPW) (sponsored by WG, involving universities in Wales). EH noted that she is not directly involved but have discussed it with NRW. JP noted that NRW are quite involved with EPW, and it may be something for the proposed Research Sub-Committee to ensure these connections are made.

KP welcomed the chance to have these conversations; it is also worth thinking about dissemination and the role of the Committee in informing the next iteration of research. Regarding the role of the Committee, MB asked whether the Committee needs to respond on the consultation before the end of March. EH indicated that it would be useful for the Committee to look at the high-level plan. However, it would be kept as a living document, so end of March date is not essential, but comments would be welcomed sooner rather than later. MB highlighted that it would be helpful for the Committee in due course to sketch out some milestones as for when input will be required. EH noted that there are not 'milestones' as such, but a live, ongoing programme.

**Action** - DS would liaise with EH in developing links with water industry research programmes.

**Action** - NH would liaise with EH with regards to the natural processes directory, and on how information on NFM projects in Wales is being captured.

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## 10. Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Financing (CLIFF) Project – Rob Goodliffe, Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme Manager, North Norfolk District Council.

Rob Goodliffe presented an update on the Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Financing (CLIFF) Project.

### Questions / discussion:

DT noted that planning for and moving properties in Pembrokeshire is a long-term scheme. For example, Newgale has some complex funding issues, in that there is no real funding pot for large-scale adaptation; the issue with moving the road is where does this sit in terms of funding pots / departments. RG acknowledged similar concerns and issues in NN;

JP, noting other infrastructure at risk around the coast (not just properties), questioned whether this might be part of the scheme going forward? This would also link to the work of National Infrastructure Commission (NIC); it is important to establish 'how' we do it. RG acknowledged the need to have a conversation with NIC. Coastal dwellings were the original driver of CLIFF, however, it has since taken into consideration business, etc, but we need further datasets for this. We need to be ambitious and look at the big picture and find an overarching solution which can be achieved by taking a wider view.

AMM-questioned how would we change people's mindset on this. In Wales, the mindset is often 'to protect', with funding constraints possibly limiting views on the need to adapt. MB also proposed dialogue with HMRC on use of taxation mechanisms to fund such schemes such as this and close gaps.

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# 11. National Flood Asset Database Update - Wyn Davies, Manager, National Flood Risk Services & Ben Hext, Lead Specialist Advisor, Flood Risk Analysis & Asset Group, Natural Resources Wales.

BH and WD provided an update on the National Flood Asset Database.

## Questions / discussion:

AS noted that the LLFAs appear to come under some criticism. The current duties of LAs are to maintain a Section 21 register, as opposed to sharing best practice. LAs will inevitably focus on their statutory duties.

PB asked the presenters for their views on the benefit of a centralised database and how it could be used? BH responded that there are benefits for people to be able to see section 21 data; however, this does require collaboration from all authorities to make the database to work as a whole.

JP commented that intuitively a national understanding of our assets is a good thing, however, it is a significant piece of work. It is important to consider the cost and benefits, and the reality of resource issues remains.

MB asked if it is possible to foresee a time when the work on the database can bring in the more critical assets that are not in ownership of the RMAs? BH noted that steps need to be taken to ask RMAs for data, or for NRW to generate it themselves.

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## 12. Reports

### 12.1 Policy and Legislation Sub-Committee (PLSC) - To consider the joint report of the Chairs of the Committee and Sub-Committee.

MB and AS have collaborated on producing a report, taking into account the views of individual sub-committee members. In the Sub-Committee's Final Report, the proposals note the FCEC itself will be a supporting partner, which will play a role in considering how the work is taken forward.

AS noted that this is a short report providing an overview. Sub-committee members identified the importance of continuing the work of the sub-committee. Some concerns expressed on taking large pieces of work forward, in particular on the legislation side, as not to impact work of wider FCEC. The sub-committee continues to provide a supporting role for the FCEC on the Final Report's proposals. The report suggests opportunities to maintain momentum on several proposals, whilst awaiting the formal WG response, and reducing the number of sub-committee members.

JP endorsed the report and in particular the continued work with the Law Commission, as outlined in the report.

The report was agreed.

## **12.2 Resources Sub-Committee - To receive the minutes of the meetings held on 4th November 2022 and 21st December 2022.**

Minutes of the meetings were noted.

## **12.3 Managing Flood Impacts in Wales 2050: Review to be undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales (NICW) – To receive an update from the Project Advisory Group by Jeremy Parr.**

JP, on behalf of the Project Advisory Group (PAG) provided an update on the Managing Flood Impacts in Wales 2050: Review to be undertaken by the National Infrastructure Commission for Wales, including its terms of reference.

### **Questions / discussion:**

AS scoping was an eye-opener for the group, noting surprise that ground-water flooding was initially not included.

DS commented that the biggest concern is how much will current research which has been completed by repeated. There is a risk of repetition, and it may miss direction of moving to a new approach in the longer-term agenda; yet to be covered in the Term of Reference.

AMM noted that it looks as though there is a very wide scope and at some point, will need to nail down some specifics.

NH drew attention to the scoping report to be published in April, seeking an

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assurance that this should be up for consultation. JP replied that the definition is currently lacking and the need to establish who the core team are remains, whilst they could be invited to speak at committee in due course. MB expressed a view that, while the FCEC has influence on the PAG via representation by individual members, getting the scoping report right is key, and the Committee as a whole should have some input to this.

MB indicated that one of the opportunities by this being done by NICW is the impact it could have on wider infrastructure. The opportunity to engage with other infrastructure providers, which otherwise may not have been possible, is an opportunity to press for. Consultants should also be able to draw on the reports already undertaken by the FCEC which would be pertinent to the study. JP would also welcome precision on what is defined as infrastructure, to include digital, human etc.

**Action;** NICW to be invited to present to the next meeting of the Committee on scoping report.

## **12.4 Committee Work Programme - To receive the report of the Chair on the Work Programme, and to consider the recommendation that the updated Work Programme be approved.**

MB noted that this has been updated significantly since the last meeting, in being simplified and shortened. MB highlighted elements of the work-programme which need to be delivered up to the end of 2024/25.

MB drew attention to Annex 1, which sets out a programme of future committee meetings, noting the move to meet quarterly, two being in-person and two online (with a view to shorter meetings). Regarding Theme 4, Action 4.5 (the resources final report), the expectation is to report back at the next meeting with the

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Evch i <https://www.llyw.cymru/cyfarfod-y-pwyllgor-llifogydd-ac-erydu-arfordirol-3-chwefror-2023-nodiadau-html> i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

Gwybdaeth am [hawlfraint](#).

Ministerial response. As for Action 6.2, the suggestion is to receive the next coastal groups forum at Committee in December 2023. On Theme 9 (the research theme), Action 9.1 will bring a report back to next meeting in May 2023; Action 10.33, the TAN 15 response will be submitted by 17 April 2023; Action 12.1 (Section 19 reporting), we have advised that the Elwyn Evans report findings should be available by the next FCEC meeting; Action 13.3, the next annual report is due to come to next meeting in May.

MB also drew attention to Annex 3, Section 8.5, which updates the resources sub-committee work programme.

NH, commenting on the TAN 15 action, noted the deadline is before the FCEC get to meet again, and questioned whether it would be prudent to have an additional catchup if the response is divergent? MB said he was confident that the Committee will offer constructive criticism to next draft, acknowledging that NH's suggestion would present a fallback if needed.

## **13. Any other business previously notified to the Chair.**

None.

## **14. Date and venue of next meeting**

Thursday 25th May 2023,

Conwy Council,  
Coed Pella,

**Cafodd y ddogfen hon ei lawrlwytho o LLYW.CYMRU, efallai nad dyma'r fersiwn mwyaf diweddar.**

Ewch i <https://www.llyw.cymru/cyfarfod-y-pwyllgor-llifogydd-ac-erydu-arfordirol-3-chwefror-2023-nodiadau-html> i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

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LL29 7AZ.

**Efallai na fydd y ddogfen hon yn hollol hygyrch.**

Drllenwch ein [datganiad hygyrchedd](#) i gael rhagor o wybodaeth.

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Ewch i <https://www.llyw.cymru/cyfarfod-y-pwyllgor-llifogydd-ac-erydu-arfordirol-3-chwefror-2023-nodiadau-html> i weld y fersiwn ddiweddaraf.

Gwybdaeth am [hawlfraint](#).