

Agenda – Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Meeting Venue:

**Committee room 3 – Senedd
and video conference via Zoom**

Meeting date: 5 November 2025

Meeting time: 09.15

For further information contact:

Robert Donovan

Committee Clerk

0300 200 6565

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

Hybrid

Private pre-meeting

09.00 – 09.15

Public session

09.15 – 12.10

1 Introductions, apologies, substitutions, and declarations of interest

09.15

2 Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Evidence Session 1

09.15 – 10.45

(Pages 1 – 49)

Mark Drakeford MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language,
Welsh Government

Helen John, Deputy Director, Licensing of Visitor Accommodation, Welsh
Government

Robbie Thomas, Head of Licensing of Visitor Accommodation, Welsh
Government

Dylan Hughes, Legislative Counsel, Welsh Government

Hannah Starkey, Lawyer, Welsh Government



**Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament**

[Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation \(Wales\)
Bill, as introduced](#)

[Explanatory Memorandum](#)

Attached Documents:

Research brief

Bill summary

Break

10.45 – 10.55

**3 Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor
Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Evidence Session 2**

10.55 – 11.30

(Pages 50 – 52)

Rebecca Godfrey, Interim CEO, Welsh Revenue Authority

Anthony Pritchard, Chief Digital Officer, Welsh Revenue Authority

Joseph Dooher, Head of Visitor Levy and National Registration Delivery, Welsh
Revenue Authority

Attached Documents:

Welsh Revenue Authority background briefing

Break

11.30 – 11.35

4 Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Evidence Session 3

11.35 – 12.10

Marc Crothall MBE, Chief Executive, Scottish Tourism Alliance

Fiona Campbell, Chief Executive, Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers

5 Papers to note

12.10

5.1 UK Steel Industry

(Pages 53 – 54)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair of British Steel – 10 October 2025

5.2 European Commission Steel proposals

(Pages 55 – 58)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Chair of the International Trade Committee,
European Parliament – 16 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to the Minister of State, Department for Business and
Trade, UK Government, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and
Planning, Welsh Government, and the Secretary of State for Wales, UK
Government – 16 October 2025

5.3 Future of Welsh Steel session – 9 October 2025

(Pages 59 – 73)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and

Planning, Welsh Government, and the Secretary of State for Wales, UK
Government – 16 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to the CEO, Tata Steel UK – 24 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to Community Union – 27 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to GMB Union – 27 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to Multi-Union Committee – 27 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to Unite the Union Wales – 27 October 2025

Response from Unite the Union Wales – 28 October 2025

Letter from Hinkley Point C Power Station to the Chair – 17 October 2025

5.4 Invitation to give oral evidence to the Committee on the developments in the Welsh steel industry

(Pages 74 – 75)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Secretary of State for Wales, UK Government – 17 October 2025

5.5 Future of Welsh Steel

(Pages 76 – 79)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Chief Commercial Officer and Regional Director – Wales, Associated British Ports (ABP) – 20 October 2025

Letter from the Chair to the CEO, Celtic Freeport – 20 October 2025

5.6 Organic Production (Amendment) Regulations 2025

(Pages 80 – 81)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 17 October 2025

5.7 Follow-up from the committee meeting held on 1 October 2025 – General Ministerial Scrutiny

(Pages 82 – 83)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 20 October 2025

5.8 Follow-up questions from the committee meeting held on 24 September 2025 – Food Processing

(Pages 84 – 85)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs – 20 October 2025

5.9 Food Processing

(Page 86)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to Castell Howell – 24 October 2025

5.10 Global Centre of Rail Excellence

(Pages 87 – 88)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales – 21 October 2025

5.11 Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee report: Hybu Cig Cymru

(Pages 89 – 99)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response – 15 October 2025

Hybu Cig Cymru response – 22 October 2025

5.12 Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals: Letter to the UK Government and Welsh Government

(Pages 100 – 112)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response – 23 October 2025

UK Government response – 27 October 2025

5.13 Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Government Statistical Service (GSS) consultations

(Page 113)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Office for National Statistics – 28 October 2025

5.14 Report on the UK–EU implementation review of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

(Pages 114 – 133)

Attached Documents:

Welsh Government response – 29 October 2025

5.15 Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the UK and India

(Pages 134 – 135)

Attached Documents:

Letter from the Chair to the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning – 30 October 2025

6 Motion under Standing Order 17.42(ix) to resolve to exclude the public from the remainder of the meeting

12.10

Private session

12.10 – 12.25

7 Development of Tourism and Regulation of Visitor Accommodation (Wales) Bill: Consideration of evidence

12.10 – 12.25

Agenda Item 2

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Agenda Item 3

Document is Restricted

10 October 2025

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1SN

Dear Mr Davies,

I am writing to request a meeting to discuss an issue of growing importance for British Steel and for Wales's wider industrial base.

As you know, British Steel has long been a cornerstone of the UK's manufacturing capability and a vital contributor to communities and supply chains across Wales and beyond. We are proud of our role in supporting jobs, investment and the materials that underpin national infrastructure. However, we are increasingly concerned that the current policy and procurement landscape in Wales is unintentionally working against those objectives.

As new frameworks on embodied carbon and procurement evolve, UK-produced steel – particularly blast furnace steel – is finding it harder to compete for major construction and infrastructure projects, even where it remains the most resilient and strategically aligned option. We recognise and support the Welsh Government's ambition to lead on net zero construction and embodied carbon standards, as set out in the Net Zero Strategic Plan and related policies. However, in practice, the system for assessing carbon and supply chains often focuses too narrowly on headline figures, without taking account of lifetime emissions, supply chain resilience, or the wider value of supporting domestic production.

We are already seeing this play out in practice. Under the Sustainable Communities for Learning programme, the funding criteria for 2025 set a threshold of 600kg of CO₂ per m², following the UK Green Building Council methodology. This effectively disqualifies British-made blast furnace steel from supply, despite its strategic importance and the jobs and communities it supports. As a direct result, the major school-building programme delivered in Wales over the past two years has relied almost entirely on imported steel, at the expense of UK producers.

This has caused significant commercial harm to Welsh businesses in our supply chain, most notably Dyfed Steel in Llanelli – our largest customer in Wales – which has lost major orders to distributors of imported steel. Dyfed Steel has previously raised this issue directly with its Senedd constituency member in January 2025.

These developments raise important questions for Wales's industrial strategy and the coherence of its net zero policies. Public procurement should be a lever for strengthening the economy, supporting skilled employment and securing resilient supply chains. Instead, the current approach risks channelling taxpayer-funded projects towards low-carbon imports and away from UK producers who support jobs, livelihoods and communities across the country.

British Steel shares the same long-term goal as government – to deliver low-carbon, sustainable steel production in the UK. The challenge is ensuring that policy and procurement support that transition, rather than undermining it.

We would welcome the opportunity to brief you and the Committee in more detail, and to discuss how future scrutiny and policy development might help ensure that public investment continues to support Welsh industry, British manufacturing and the transition to net zero.

Yours sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'L Coulson'.

Lisa Coulson

Chief Commercial Officer
British Steel

Bernd Lange MEP
Chair of the International Trade Committee
European Parliament

16 October 2025

Dear Bernd Lange,

European Commission Steel proposals

Global overcapacity in the steel sector and the dumping of cheap steel imports is a common existential crisis for the steel sector in both the EU and the UK.

As the Committee responsible for Economy and Trade in the Welsh Parliament, we know all too well the devastating impacts of these issues on our steel making communities and industry. Impacts that we know are similarly felt across many countries and regions in the European Union.

The UK and the EU are important trading partners in steel. Around 80% of Welsh steel exported to the EU annually, and EU steel makes up 50-60% of our steel imports. Our manufacturing industries such as defence, automotive and renewable energy production that rely on the steel sector are closely intertwined and we share an ambition to ensure that our domestic industries thrive in order to support infrastructure transformation and the green transition.

It is understandable that in the context of the global steel market and the adoption of increasingly protectionist trade policies by many, that the Member States of the EU would seek to protect its market from cheap imports. Just as we hope the UK Government will do when it renews its steel safeguard measures next year.

However, we believe that the introduction of these new proposals by the European Commission without further derogations or exemptions for the UK would have a significantly detrimental impact on industry in both the UK and the EU. The Committee has heard that the implementation of the proposals as presented by the European Commission without change would pose an 'existential'

threat to our steel making communities in Wales who have already suffered deeply from closures and job losses.

As allies in the promotion of fair and free trade we believe that there is scope for a mutually beneficial agreement between the UK and EU which would support and protect both our industries without recourse to harmful reciprocal measures. We note and welcome the agreement reached in May of this year to restore the UK's country-specific steel quota to the EU to historic levels and the commitment to reflect this in a post-2026 regime.

As your Committee and the European Parliament considers these proposals and the broader UK-EU trading relationship in the coming months we hope that you will give consideration and support to any measures designed to continue tariff-free trade between us and preserve the effort and progress made by both parties since the UK's withdrawal from the EU to this shared end.

We would be happy to engage further with you on this issue and to facilitate the provision of any further information that would be of assistance to you in your work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Copy to: Manon Aubry MEP

Iuliu Winkler MEP

Kathleen Van Brempt MEP

Karin Karlsbro MEP

Sir Chris Bryant MP
Minister of State
Department for Business and Trade
UK Government

Rebecca Evans MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Welsh Government

The Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP
Secretary of State for Wales
UK Government

16 October 2025

Dear Sir Chris, Rebecca and Jo,

Trade Defence

In light of last week's European Commission proposals on steel, the Committee is deeply concerned about the future of the Welsh and the wider UK steel industry. As you will all be well aware, steel is a critical industry for the nation and provides many high-quality jobs across Wales. As such it requires strong support through Government policy.

On Thursday 9 October we held a meeting looking at the future of Welsh steel. In this meeting we heard from Tata and from key trade unions who represent steel workers. Both Tata and the unions made it absolutely clear that the European Commission's proposals, if realised, could present a real threat to the Welsh and wider UK steel industry.

During that meeting Rajesh Nair, Chief Executive of Tata Steel UK told us “the UK also needs to start looking at or designing the new quota systems or the safeguard systems that it would like to put in place, similar to what the European Union has done”.

Alasdair McDiarmid, Assistant General Secretary of Community Union, told us that whilst the US tariffs have been a major problem for the industry the proposals would be on “completely different order of magnitude” as 80% of Welsh steel is exported to the EU. Alasdair echoed Rajesh’s calls for stronger trade defences saying “we have to bring forward really decisive action on our own trade defence regime”.

Alasdair also noted that domestic consumption of UK-manufactured steel is at a historic low. He told the Committee “Only 32 per cent of UK demand is satisfied by steel that’s produced in the UK”. He highlighted that, whilst this was a sad “state of affairs”, it was also an opportunity. He suggested that with “the right trade defence, with the right investment, we do have the opportunity to grow our industry to take back some of that market share”.

In light of the European Commission’s proposals and the increasingly unpredictable global trading environment, the Committee believes that the UK Government must have in place a responsive trade defence regime to ensure the UK steel industry is competing on a level playing field.

The UK and Welsh Governments must work together to support our steel industry, to avoid a damaging trade war but also to ensure our trade defences are prepared in case they are necessary.

Please can you keep the committee up to date on both negotiations around the Commission’s proposals and any work to implement a new trade defence policy to protect our steel industry.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Rebecca Evans MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Welsh Government

The Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP
Secretary of State for Wales
UK Government

16 October 2025

Dear Rebecca and Jo,

Future of Welsh Steel session – 9 October 2025

On Thursday 9 October we held a meeting on the future of Welsh steel, looking at what has happened in the year since the closure of the blast furnaces at Port Talbot. As part of this work, we explored the experience of the workers who have been laid off and the wider community.

During this meeting we heard from representatives of the Tata Multi Union Committee at Port Talbot. We invited the Multi Union Committee to give evidence because, while we were keen to hear from Tata and from senior union representatives, we also wanted to understand what was happening and what people were feeling at a more 'grass roots' level.

The Multi Union Committee representatives provided important and powerful evidence and firsthand insight into the impact of this transition, the needs of affected workers and local communities. I encourage you to read the [transcript of this panel](#) available on the Senedd website.

The Committee was extremely disappointed to hear that local union representatives have not been included on the Transition Board. We believe their expertise and local perspective would be invaluable, and their exclusion undermines the Board's ability to secure buy-in for its work from local communities and deliver meaningful support.

We would strongly urge you to invite a representative of the Multi Union Committee to join future Transition Board meetings and engage fully in its work going forwards. Please can you tell us whether you intend to do this, and if you decide not to extend this invitation, please can you write to the Committee setting out your reasons for doing so.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Rajesh Nair
CEO
Tata Steel UK

24 October 2025

Dear Rajesh,

Follow-up information after evidence session on 9 October

Thank you for providing evidence on 9 October regarding developments at Tata as part of the Committee's inquiry into the future of Welsh steel.

Since then, Tata has confirmed it will have an elongated shutdown period at some sites from November to January, affecting the hot strip mill at Port Talbot, the tinplate works at Trostre, and the pickle line at Llanwern. The Committee has heard reports that affected workers will receive 65% of their normal pay during this period, and that some contractors are being given notice due to this decision.

Please can you confirm the rationale for the shutdown, whether affected workers will only receive 65% of their salary during the shutdown, and if so why you have decided to reduce their pay by this amount? Can you also set out how you considered the impact on contractors in deciding to hold an elongated shutdown?

In addition, a number of important issues were raised during the other evidence sessions on 9 October. I would be grateful if you could provide information to aid the Committee's understanding of the situation on the following:

- The Committee heard concerns that Tata is not delivering on commitments made to trade unions around future investments at your Welsh sites, beyond the new Electric Arc Furnace (EAF). These include building a new galvanising line and further upgrades at

Llanwern, wider upgrades at Port Talbot, and considering upgrades at Trostre. How would you respond to these concerns?

- The Committee understands Tata committed that over 90% of contractors working on the new EAF would be local, and that redundant workers would be given preference in filling these positions. Can you confirm how you have sought to meet these commitments, and what percentage of those working for contractors on the new EAF are local?
- The Committee was told that 30 staff members benefitted from the furlough scheme you provided, rather than the 100 Tata had committed to. Can you outline how the furlough process worked, and why less workers benefitted from it than anticipated?

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Alasdair McDiarmid
Assistant General Secretary
Community Union

27 October 2025

Dear Alasdair,

Follow-up information after evidence sessions on 9 October

Thank you for providing evidence on 9 October regarding developments at Tata as part of the Committee's inquiry into the future of Welsh steel.

Following the meeting, the Committee is keen to gain a deeper understanding of how the unions are continuing their relationship with their members after the redundancies at Tata, and how the unions have reached out to members who have lost their jobs to support them to re-enter the workplace.

I would be grateful if you could therefore detail the approach your union has taken in relation to these issues following the Tata redundancies, and how the unions have worked together to ensure a coherent and co-ordinated response. The Committee would appreciate further detail on the approaches to reaching those workers who have engaged less with the available support, and supporting those who live further away from Port Talbot, as part of your response.

Please can you also advise whether your union has a specific rate for unemployed members to be able to keep up their union membership after redundancy.

I have written to all three steel unions and the Multi-Union Committee in similar terms and I would be happy to receive individual or joint responses to the points raised.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Tom Hoyles

Press Administration and Research

GMB Union

27 October 2025

Dear Tom,

Follow-up information after evidence sessions on 9 October

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Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Barrie Evans

Multi-Union Committee

Ian Williams

Multi-Union Committee

27 October 2025

Dear Barrie and Ian,

Follow-up information after evidence sessions on 9 October

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Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Jason Bartlett

National Officer for Tata Steel UK

Unite the Union Wales

27 October 2025

Dear Jason,

Follow-up information after evidence sessions on 9 October

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Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Andrew RT Davies MS

Senedd Cymru
Bae Caerdydd,
Caerdydd,
CF99 1SN

28th October 2025

Good afternoon, Andrew.

Thank you for the email and content of the attached letter.

The first point to mention is that Unite does provide a reduced rate for members that become unemployed, there are the return-to-work members who pay £2.60 per week and then the retired members who pay £2.38 per week, all get the same benefit as a fully employed member.

Unite focus on updating members and non-members around the importance and benefits of being a member, we use social media, email, and text messages, you can see the General Secretary Sharon Graham is every single day communicating on social media of disputes and wins that have been achieved.

During any redundancy process there are the local reps on site that are the first point of contact, within Tata Steel Port Talbot we have 18 representatives on site and the senior rep is on days permanently, when an individual is required to attend the redundancy consultation they are supported by the local rep, if they are then made redundant it is explained around retention of their membership at the reduced rate and what training is available.

If a member drops off the system, we get a report every Sunday where the retention team will contact the member to ask the reason for cancelling the membership, most often it's because they pay off check off and then get no wages so Tata will not be able to deduct it from their pay. They are then taken through the options and payment via direct debit.

All members were supported during the redundancy process by local reps and the multi union, on-going training was offered, the multi union officers were part of the Transition Board and take part in Jobmatching, Outplacement and Skills Workstream which offers training and support to those effected.

It is very difficult to reach out to members that have engaged less, some have disengaged for a reason that Unite do not know, communication can be difficult depending on what information they have put on their membership i.e.: - phone number, email address.

Unite the Union
19 High Street
Swansea
SA1 1LF

Tel: 01792 472410
Fax: 01792 644410

WALES /CYMRU

Regional Secretary/Ysgrifennydd Rhanbarthol
Peter Hughes



Uno'r Undeb

It has and always is Unite the Union's position to offer as much support to members around any issue they encounter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J P Bartlett".

Jason Bartlett
National Officer for Tata Steel UK
Unite the Union

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair of the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

17 October 2025

Dear Mr Davies,

I'm writing to you in relation to the Senedd Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee session held on [9 October 2025](#). I noticed that figures were shared about Hinkley Point C (HPC) nuclear power station which weren't an accurate representation of the project, and I'd like to take this opportunity to correct the record and highlight the significant contribution Wales is making to HPC.

In the session, there were figures which suggested that 95% of HPC's supply chain is in France. I'm pleased to share that 64% of the project's value is going to British businesses, with over 4,600 British companies in the supply chain.

To date, 190 Welsh companies have been directly involved in HPC's supply chain, with £188 million spent on Welsh contracts, and 200,000 tonnes of Welsh steel will be used to build the station. In addition to all those in the wider supply chain, of the nearly 15,000 workers we have on site itself, 2,380 are Welsh. HPC also took over the training of 29 former Horizon apprentices following the pause of the Wylfa development.

Welsh suppliers include Express Reinforcements in Neath and Newport for steel reinforcement, William Hare in Risca for steel, engineering and design, and Ledwood in Pembroke Dock for steel and pipe fabrication. These are just a few examples of how Welsh industry is helping to deliver the UK's first new nuclear power station in a generation - boosting growth, productivity, and skills. Nationally, HPC is contributing £13.3bn to the UK economy, supporting 26,000 jobs, and has trained over 1,500 apprentices.

The UK's nuclear renaissance is well underway, and EDF is proud of our central role in this. Construction of HPC's Reactor Unit 2 is progressing 20-30% faster than Unit 1, and the insights and experience gained will directly benefit Sizewell C and future gigawatt-scale projects. As HPC and Sizewell C are built, it is important too that the UK Government retains Wylfa as an option for future GW scale.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions or would like further information. I would also be delighted to help arrange a meeting with colleagues or a visit to HPC, should that be of interest.

Kind regards,



Andrew Cockcroft
Head of Stakeholder Relations – Hinkley Point C

**Economy, Trade, and
Rural Affairs Committee**

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The Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP
Secretary of State for Wales
UK Government

17 October 2025

Dear Jo,

**Invitation to give oral evidence to the Committee on the developments in the
Welsh steel industry**

The Committee is currently examining the consequences of Tata's decision to close the Port Talbot blast furnaces and transition to electric arc furnace steelmaking. Our ongoing inquiry is considering the future of the Welsh steel industry, the impact of job losses on steelworkers and their communities, and the support being provided both by the Transition Board and through additional channels.

I am aware that the committee clerk has been in contact with your officials to arrange a suitable date for your attendance at the Committee, so the Committee is able to understand the UK Government's perspective on a number of key issues relating to the transition at Port Talbot and the future of the steel industry. While I understand your preference is to wait until the new UK Government Steel Strategy is published a plethora of serious issues which have arisen in the Welsh steel industry over the last few weeks including the recent announcement regarding extended Christmas shutdowns at Tata's Port Talbot, Llanwern, and Trostre sites. As a result it is imperative we receive evidence from the UK Government on these crucial and urgent issues at the earliest opportunity.

We have capacity to hold this evidence session on the 3, 11 or 18 of December. If these dates do not work for you the committee clerk can advise your officials on other available slots.

Thank you for your attention to this vitally important issue.



Yours sincerely,

Andrew RT Davies

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

Senedd Cymru

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Julian Walker

Chief Commercial Officer and Regional Director, Wales

Associated British Ports (ABP)

20 October 2025

Dear Julian,

Future of Welsh Steel

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee is undertaking an ongoing piece of work on the Future of Welsh Steel. As part of this, we have been looking at Tata's transition to Electric Arc Furnace steelmaking in Port Talbot.

As part of our work, we have been exploring future economic opportunities in Port Talbot and the surrounding areas, and the role that Tata, the supply chain, and the local workforce may be able to play in these.

When we spoke to Tata about this they told us: "As we move forward, we will work with all people who are potentially interested in using parts of the site to work and deliver their own business. And, as far as the EAF is concerned, once we start making the steel, that steel is available for everyone to use in their respective applications."

In light of the developments at the Steelworks and as part of our work on the Future of Welsh Steel, we would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

- What role do you expect Tata's operations at Port Talbot to play in relation to the Celtic Freeport?



- What opportunities do you anticipate there will be to use steel from Port Talbot in relation to Celtic Freeport projects, and in relation to upcoming floating offshore wind developments?
- What discussions have you had with Tata in relation to these potential opportunities?
- What potential do you believe there is for the Celtic Freeport to support the creation of secure, well-paid jobs for those affected by the job losses at Tata, and how do you intend to realise these opportunities?

I have also written to Celtic Freeport to pose these questions, and am happy to receive an individual or a joint response as you see fit. Thank you in advance for your time and help with this inquiry, I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Luciana Ciubotariu

CEO

Celtic Freeport

20 October 2025

Dear Luciana,

Future of Welsh Steel

The Senedd's Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee is undertaking an ongoing piece of work on the Future of Welsh Steel. As part of this, we have been looking at Tata's transition to Electric Arc Furnace steelmaking in Port Talbot.

As part of our work, we have been exploring future economic opportunities in Port Talbot and the surrounding areas, and the role that Tata, the supply chain, and the local workforce may be able to play in these.

When we spoke to Tata about this they told us: "As we move forward, we will work with all people who are potentially interested in using parts of the site to work and deliver their own business. And, as far as the EAF is concerned, once we start making the steel, that steel is available for everyone to use in their respective applications."

In light of the developments at the Steelworks and as part of our work on the Future of Welsh Steel, we would be grateful if you could answer the following questions:

- What role do you expect Tata's operations at Port Talbot to play in relation to the Celtic Freeport?

- What opportunities do you anticipate there will be to use steel from Port Talbot in relation to Celtic Freeport projects, and in relation to upcoming floating offshore wind developments?
- What discussions have you had with Tata in relation to these potential opportunities?
- What potential do you believe there is for the Celtic Freeport to support the creation of secure, well-paid jobs for those affected by the job losses at Tata, and how do you intend to realise these opportunities?

I have also written to Associated British Ports (ABP) to pose these questions, and am happy to receive an individual or a joint response as you see fit. Thank you in advance for your time and help with this inquiry, I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Agenda Item 5.6

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: MA/HIDCC/1629/25

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair
Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

17 October 2025

Dear Andrew,

I am writing to inform you of my intention to provide consent to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to make regulations on behalf of Wales in an area of devolved competence, in line with the powers granted to her to do so in Article 38a(3) of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007.

The Organic Production (Amendment) Regulations 2025 are required to require introduce new expiry dates for three organic derogations. These derogations currently apply for the use of non-organic pullets (young chickens) in organic egg production, for the use of non-organic gellan gum in organic production and for the inclusion of up to 5% non-organic protein feed for pigs and poultry. The proposed SI will extend these derogations until 31 December 2026.

Extending the derogations until 31 December 2026 will provide certainty and stability given the current economic picture, reduce potential financial impact for producers and operators who may be forced to make interim structural changes (pullets), and the financial and administrative burden for businesses for repeated derogation requests (gellan gum).

These derogations will allow organic production to continue uninterrupted while the market develops.

Though Welsh Ministers have the powers to make regulations in this area, it is important to avoid unnecessary discrepancies between Wales, Scotland and England in technical

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

regulations due to the interconnected nature of our agricultural markets. The proposed SI intends to extend the expiry date of regulations that are already in place, rather than creating any new policy, and as such there will be no practical change to the status quo. The SI is an extension of previous regulations, which were made using the same powers at a Great-Britain level. The Organic Production Framework provides a governance structure through which the Welsh Government has worked with the UK Government on the development of regulations in this area.

The SI will be subject to the made affirmative procedure, and it is proposed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) that it is laid before Parliament on 22 October 2025. Welsh Government officials were consulted regularly by colleagues DEFRA throughout the development of these regulations and will continue to work closely with their counterparts to oversee the delivery of the SI.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and strokes, representing the name Huw Irranca-Davies.

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Newid Hinsawdd
a Materion Gwledig

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change
and Rural Affairs

20 October 2025

Dear Huw,

**Follow-up from the committee meeting held on 1 October 2025 –
General Ministerial Scrutiny**

Thank you again for attending the Committee's General Ministerial Scrutiny evidence session on 1 October. During the session, you offered to write to the Committee on several areas, which are outlined below as a reminder, and for clarity:

- The detail and dates of the communication plan for how you will advertise to farmers the change in bovine TB policy, to restrict 'resolved standard Inconclusive Reactor (IR)' animals, ahead of 1 January 2026.
- The number of prosecutions to date for those guilty of river pollution (in the context of the additional funding allocated to NRW to clamp down on those polluting rivers).
- Detail of the strategy to tackle industrial-scale agricultural pollution.
- The date you expect to be able to announce the options available for the long term water supply for the Monmouth-Brecon Canal, and any detail of the work of the task and finish group.

Additionally, the Committee would be very keen to receive an update on any progress on the Natural Resources Wales proposals to introduce licensing to regulate the release of game birds in Wales. This

follows your comments that you were waiting for Ministerial advice on this at the Committee's previous scrutiny session on 17 July 2025.

I would be grateful to receive responses to these queries please by 14 November 2025.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Huw Irranca-Davies MS

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change
and Rural Affairs

20 October 2025

Dear Huw,

Follow-up questions from the committee meeting held on 24 September 2025 – Food Processing

Thank you again for attending the Committee evidence session on 24 September for our inquiry into Food Processing. As discussed at the close of the session, there were several questions focussing on public procurement not reached in time frame, which the Committee would appreciate a written answer to. In its discussions of your evidence following the session, the Committee also identified a couple of follow-up questions, included below.

Public procurement of Welsh food and drink

- You highlight the Procurement Act and Social Partnership and Public Procurement Act which aims to “support local supply chains to increase the amount of Welsh food and drink purchased.” We understand the Welsh Government is developing guidance to support the latter Act. When will the guidance be published?
- Stakeholders say they want clarity and support on how to implement the new requirements. How will the Welsh Government work with contracting authorities to help them maximise the potential benefits brought by the new legislation?
- Your paper draws attention to initiatives in Anglesey and Caerphilly to increase the amount of Welsh food on school menus. It also acknowledges the challenge of scaling

successful pilots regionally and nationally. What is the Welsh Government doing to spread good practice across Wales?

Meat Consumption

During the course of this inquiry, the Committee has heard evidence – particularly from Jose Peralta of Hybu Cig Cymru – relating to the contradiction in the reduction in livestock numbers against the rates of meat consumption. The Committee has heard that there is currently no indication that the rate of meat consumption is going to reduce at anywhere near the rate of expected destocking levels. Understandably, this causes concern surrounding Wales' commitment to reach its net-zero targets as well as the impact on Welsh farms, since this situation will realistically lead to a substitution of local low-carbon meat with imported produce which has a higher carbon footprint. The Committee would therefore like to know whether the Welsh Government acknowledges these clashing priorities, and to understand what it plans to do to address these concerns.

We would be grateful to receive a response to these questions by 14 November 2025.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

Agenda Item 5.9

Pwyllgor yr Economi,
Blasnach a Materion Gwledig

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

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Edward Morgan

Group Environmental, Social and Governance Manager

Castell Howell

24 October 2025

Dear Edward,

Food Processing

The Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee has been undertaking an inquiry into food processing in Wales.

Castell Howell has been raised several times during the course of our inquiry as a significant food distributor and we would therefore like to seek your views on the specific challenges of sourcing and supplying local Welsh produce, in addition to the details of any particular successes that may be relevant to our work. We would also welcome any further comments you may wish to make in relation to the terms of reference for our inquiry, which can be found on our [website](#).

As the Committee is reaching the end of its evidence gathering, we would be grateful to receive your response by Friday 7 November if possible.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English



Senedd Cymru
Welsh Parliament

Pack Page 86

Ein cyf/Our ref:PO/KS/513/25

Andrew RT Davies MS
Chair of Economy, Trade & Rural Affairs
Committee

SeneddEconomy@senedd.wales

21 October 2025

Dear Andrew

Global Centre of Rail Excellence

Thank you for your letter which focusses on the objective of securing the capital investment required to deliver the objectives envisaged for the Global Centre of Rail Excellence (GCRE). Welsh Government is closely involved with the delivery of the GCRE programme. It works with the board of directors and the executive team at GCRE Ltd in support of its efforts to secure private investment in the company. Specifically, GCRE has been granted the ability by Welsh Government to explore the extent to which the project may need to be derisked, by virtue of additional public funding or the provision of a guarantee in order to secure the private capital funding necessary to take the project forward.

Understandably, it is not possible at this point to articulate the scope or extent of any additional intervention, but officials will be available to support those negotiations at the appropriate time.

In addition, GCRE has been resourced to extend its remit into non-rail activities to establish whether complementary investment on site may be able to generate receipts or income to support the core project. To facilitate this, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy & Planning and I have recently committed additional funding to GCRE Ltd for the period up to the end of this financial year.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

On the final point, officials continue to engage with UK Government and the National Wealth Fund to explore all options to meet the capital cost of GCRE. I am grateful to have been copied into your letter to the Secretary of State on this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Ken Skates', with a stylized, looping flourish extending from the end.

Ken Skates AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Drafnidiaeth a Gogledd Cymru
Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales

Welsh Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Hybu Cig Cymru

Response to the ETRA Committee report (October 2025)

15/10/2025

Contents

1. <i>Introduction</i>	2
2. <i>Response to the 9 recommendations</i>	2
i. <u>Recommendation 1</u>	2
ii. <u>Recommendation 2</u>	3
iii. <u>Recommendation 3</u>	3
iv. <u>Recommendation 4</u>	4
v. <u>Recommendation 5</u>	5
vi. <u>Recommendation 6</u>	5
vii. <u>Recommendation 7</u>	6
viii. <u>Recommendation 8</u>	7
ix. <u>Recommendation 9</u>	8

1. Introduction

On 3 September 2025 the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee submitted its report on Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC) and I thank the committee for undertaking this inquiry.

The report includes 9 recommendations, and this is the Welsh Government's response to those recommendations.

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change & Rural Affairs

2. Response to the 9 recommendations

Recommendation 1

The committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government should review the governance of HCC with the aim of enhancing representation of levy payer's views and increasing wider industry involvement within the organisation. As part of this review, they should consider all options ranging from reserving specific positions on the board for levy payers and the wider industry to returning full ownership of the organisation to the levy payers.

Welsh Government Response: Reject

The Welsh Government and Hybu Cig Cymru (HCC) acknowledge the importance of ensuring that HCC's governance structures reflect the views and interests of levy payers and the wider industry. With five out of eleven board members, including the Chair being levy payers, the contribution made by our public appointees is critical in ensuring a continually improving board that is passionate about the agricultural sector and is committed to promoting, developing, and marketing Welsh red meat in Wales.

The current HCC board is also composed of members with a diverse range of skills and external perspectives. The board members bring essential expertise in areas such as knowledge exchange, governance, marketing, finance, animal health, research, and environmental sustainability. My officials will be shortly advising me on the reappointment and /or recruitment options for those board members whose terms end in March 2026. I will take the Committee's recommendation into account and will continue to ensure there is a varied skill-set and continue to provide a robust and diverse board.

The new Chief Executive has been in position since January 2025. Conducting an extensive review (as recommended by the Committee), while significant work related to the Vision is underway is a longer-term task that should be considered by the next Government once the Vision has been finalised and the Chief Executive has had sufficient time to implement any necessary changes.

Financial Implications - None

Recommendation 2

The committee recommends that:

The committee fully support the continued use of the statutory levy as a method for funding HCC, however the evidence received, including from HCC, was clear that levy income alone is not sufficient to cover the current remit and workload of the organisation. The Welsh Government should set out how they intend to continue funding HCC or how they expect HCC to continue to operate financially.

Recommendation 3

The committee recommends that:

It is evident that for HCC to fulfil its extensive mandate, additional funding will be necessary. The Welsh Government and HCC should explore all possible avenues to increase HCC's budget, including identifying work that HCC could perform to complement other Welsh Government policies and securing financial support from the Welsh Government for such initiatives. Furthermore, they should identify other funding sources that HCC could apply for including grants and possibly provision of services to other organisations. However, any increase in funding for HCC must be accompanied by enhanced accountability and performance measures.

Welsh Government response to recommendation 2 and 3:

Accept: In principle

The Welsh Government recognise the challenging financial situation for HCC due to several factors including a reduction in the red meat levy income and look forward to working with them as they develop their priorities through the Vision for 2026 through to 2030.

We are committed to a sustainable, vibrant and successful agricultural sector and food chain which helps to underpin the wider rural economy. We need to provide the right support to our farmers throughout the transition to a decarbonised food system and ensure Wales's land is fit for the future.

The introduction of the Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) provides opportunities for working with a cross section of organizations to deliver bespoke research and innovative solutions etc to farmers. HCC is integral to that process, and we will work collaboratively to make sure the SFS and the development of HCCs Vision for 2026 are aligned. Once this work is complete we will update the Committee.

HCC have now applied for the Welsh Government Dynamic Purchasing Framework which may provide alternative funding opportunities for them in the future. Any funding that HCC may receive in future through the Dynamic Purchasing Framework will be subject to the governance and monitoring set out in the Welsh Government's

procurement rules.

Financial Implications - this work is ongoing and will be accommodated within existing budgets.

Recommendation 4

The committee recommends that:

In order to support both farmers' and processors' business planning, the Welsh Government should make its position on future livestock numbers clear. If the Welsh Government decides to support a reduction in livestock numbers, it should set out the anticipated impact of this on the processing industry and provide any support that may be required.

Welsh Government response: Accept

The Welsh Government recognises that a stable and sufficient supply of livestock is essential to the viability of the red meat and dairy processing sectors in Wales. The 2024 June Agricultural and Horticultural Survey revealed recent livestock numbers in Wales have shown notable changes, with declines in cattle, sheep, and pigs, but an increase in poultry. These trends are significant in the context of climate change goals and projections for future livestock populations.

In its latest advice to Wales, the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC, Welsh Government's statutory adviser on climate) recommends a 19% reduction in ruminant livestock numbers by 2033 (particularly cattle and sheep), to cut methane emissions, which is a major contributor to the agriculture greenhouse gas inventory. The reductions suggested by the UKCCC are part of an economy wide, Balanced Pathway, which they deem to be a cost-effective and balances the need to decarbonise in all sectors of our economy at different rates. In determining the recommendation, the UKCCC use a baseline which commences in 2025, and estimates cattle and sheep numbers to be 10.9 million, falling to 9.7 million in 2030, which they describe as largely being driven by market forces.

The latest published June Survey statistics for 2024 confirm that livestock numbers in Wales are already lower than the UKCCC estimation for 2025. This means that livestock numbers were, in 2024, almost at the level suggested by the UKCCC in 2030 within their Balanced Pathway. The Welsh Government will continue monitoring the next iteration of the June survey statistics for 2025 (which are due to be published in November 2025) and also with the other Governments through the UK Market Monitoring Group.

The Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) is designed to incentivise responsible production, which in turn supports the supply chain to meet sustainability standards. The SFS aims to support Welsh Agriculture to more sustainable practises. This is inclusive of livestock production.

Financial Implications - None

Recommendation 5

The committee recommends that:

HCC should regularly report to the Welsh Government outlining progress on producing and maintaining a healthy corporate culture for the next three years. The Welsh Government should continue to monitor the culture at HCC and keep this Committee and its successor in the next Senedd informed on HCC's progress in this area.

Welsh Government Response: Accept

A healthy corporate culture is crucial for the success of any organisation. It drives engagement, productivity, happiness and revenue growth. HCC implements several initiatives to enhance employee well-being.

Ministerial meetings are held on a regular basis with the HCC Chair and Chief Executive to discuss a broad range of topics, including organisational culture. We will ensure that 'corporate culture' is a standing agenda item in the quarterly Governance meetings, which can be monitored appropriately.

Financial Implications – None

Recommendation 6

The committee recommends that:

HCC has a very wide remit, however the Committee believes HCC must focus its work to match its reduced budget. To achieve this the Welsh Government should agree new, measurable and transparent KPIs with HCC. Progress against these KPIs should be regularly measured by the Welsh Government and the outcome of that review should be published in a manner that is clear and transparent to levy payers and other stakeholders. The new KPIs should include indicators which:

- Set clear expectations around engagement with stakeholders and levy payers including meeting levy payers where they are and ensuring clear visibility and accessibility of HCC staff including senior leadership;
- Ensure best value for levy payers and any additional public money HCC may receive; and
- Ensure strong outcomes from promotional activities which is measured in a clear and open way.

Welsh Government Response: Accept

Welsh Government continues to support HCC in ensuring the organisation continues to deliver its important work for the red meat sector in Wales.

The Welsh Government, through its Board Members, regularly monitors HCC's key performance indicators against delivery and also through the quarterly Governance

meetings. These meetings provide a formal opportunity to share information and ensure the work of HCC is monitored and undertaken effectively to enable HCC to be resolutely focused on delivering value for money to levy payers and promoting our red meat industry.

We will work closely with HCC in developing their Vision for 2026-2030. In conjunction with the Vision, we will also continue to develop the Business plan within the policy framework set by the Welsh Government to cover the period of the strategic agenda.

This will include agreeing the annual operational plan which sets out the level of service to be achieved in key areas and the performance and output of information which will be collected to monitor progress. Welsh Government will review the KPIs to ensure they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound (SMART).

Financial Implications - None

Recommendation 7

The committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government should undertake a review to identify areas where HCC could increase joint working and/or resource sharing with other levy boards and other relevant devolved organisations such as Farming Connect. This should include looking for areas where they can minimise duplication of effort and take advantage of potential economies of scale. The purpose of this review should be to identify areas where savings could be made which can be reinvested into HCC's core business of promoting Welsh meat and developing the red meat sector. This review should not be limited in scope and must extend beyond simple information sharing to aspects like joint procurement and sharing back-office functions.

Welsh Government Response: Reject

HCC and other Levy bodies

HCC has built up an excellent working relationship with the other levy boards and through continuing collaboration, will continue to work together to amplify activity where relevant and, access funding to establish programmes which maximise value for money that benefit the whole supply chain.

The supplementary letter sent to the ETRA Committee on 30 May 2025, lists all the activities and collaborative projects between the levy bodies.

Farming Connect

Farming Connect suppliers have established effective partnerships with HCC across numerous contracts, with HCC supplying market intelligence and Farming Connect developing targeted interventions to enable producers to meet processor requirements.

The Welsh Government is currently procuring a new Farming Connect contract, which will commence on 1 April 2026.

The updated procurement specification requires that all events and initiatives must complement activities delivered by the Welsh Government, its sponsored bodies, levy bodies, and other sector organisations. Evidence of how this will be achieved will be required as part of any bid from potential suppliers. The successful bidder will be expected to establish working protocols with these groups to avoid duplication within any aspect of delivery before the new contract commences. Bidding for the contract is a commercial decision for organisations, including HCC, and some may opt to collaborate as a consortium to optimise efficiencies.

Undertaking a review during the ongoing procurement process is not appropriate at this time and would be more suitably addressed as a longer-term objective.

Financial Implications – None

Recommendation 8

The committee recommends that:

HCC must ensure it is measuring the impact of promotional activities through tangible and comparable data which will show outcomes not just activities. One option to achieve this would be building on the work it has done with retailers on the use of loyalty card data to understand the direct impact of their work. The details of this measurement and the outcomes should be communicated clearly and openly to levy payers.

Welsh Government Response: Accept

This recommendation is specifically aimed at HCC rather than the Welsh Government. However, we acknowledge that Welsh Lamb's 2024-25 integrated campaign combined TV, digital, social, press, and in-store media to boost brand awareness and sales, targeting 62 stores in Wales and South East England. The campaign used robust measurement tools including YouGov Direct surveys, a Sky brand uplift study, and Nectar360 sales data to assess its impact.

- **Integrated multi-channel activation:** The campaign partnered with Sky and Nectar360, focusing on 62 stores aligned with Sainsbury's Taste the Difference range, targeting lamb purchasers and meat buyers with tailored messaging to maximize engagement.
- **Robust measurement and insights:** Campaign effectiveness was tracked through a 3,000-person YouGov panel and Sky's brand uplift study, with Nectar360 providing first-time access to post-campaign sales data, enabling detailed consumer behaviour analysis.
- **Significant sales growth:** Welsh Lamb sales in Wales increased by 24% year-on-year for September and October, with total lamb sales rising by 70% and 101%, while targeted English stores saw a 21% uplift, demonstrating

successful retail support.

- **Enhanced consumer perceptions:** In Wales, brand awareness rose to 93%, with increases in perceptions of quality, taste, health, and sustainability; England also saw growth in awareness and purchase propensity despite some declines in logo recognition and sustainability perception.

Over the 2025-26 campaign HCC are building on previous success, the 2025–26 integrated consumer awareness campaign maintains existing objectives while continuing partnerships with Sky and Nectar360. A new addition – AdMaxim - enables precise footfall tracking into stores stocking Welsh Lamb, strengthening retailer collaboration and unlocking deeper insights.

This year's evaluation mirrors previous methodology, enabling meaningful year-on-year comparisons. By campaign end, data will include three years of brand tracking via Sky TV, six years of overall brand insights, and two years of retail sales data with specific retailer—forming a strong foundation for long-term strategic analysis.

Financial Implications - None

Recommendation 9

The committee recommends that:

The Welsh Government and HCC must ensure industry voices are well represented in their work to update the HCC Framework Agreement. To achieve this the Welsh Government must consult with industry 'where they are' to ensure it is hearing all voices, not just those who have the time and ability to easily engage with the Welsh Government.

Welsh Government response: Reject

HCC and the Welsh Government have a clear understanding of their remits and responsibilities through the Delegation Agreement.

The Framework Agreement is an internal arrangement between Welsh Ministers and HCC which sets out the broad framework within which HCC operates, details the terms and conditions under which the Welsh Ministers may provide resources to HCC, and defines the roles and responsibilities of the Welsh Ministers and HCC as well as the relationship between them.

The recently agreed and published Framework Agreement provides more clarity in relation to roles and responsibilities, specifically of Ministers, the Chair of the board and board Members, the accounting officer, the Sponsorship team and Public Bodies Unit.

The existing Vision and Strategic Direction for the Welsh Red Meat Sector expires in 2025. HCC is initiating the development of a new Vision, which will guide the sector from 2026 through to 2030.

Since the appointment of a new Chief Executive in January 2025, engagement with the industry has been top priority. This is over and above ongoing engagement carried out by the organisation on a weekly basis via multiple owned, earned, shared and paid channels.

This enhanced engagement has been developed as part of a proactive campaign focusing on the future strategy for the industry (Vision 2030). Key highlights include:

- One-to-one meetings with key stakeholder organisations, including farming unions, processors and wider organisations
- HCC attendance across Wales at livestock markets (16 total) to directly engage with levy payers in order to support the development of HCC's strategy going forward.
- Wider levy payer 'survey' over May – July 2025
- 'Call for views' from stakeholder organisations from the industry and wider about the future strategy and needs of the industry.
- Strengthened presence and interaction at the Royal Welsh Show 2025 with particular emphasis on gathering views for Vision 2030.
- Enhanced engagement is ongoing over 2025-26 as HCC seek to finalise Vision 2030. Following its completion HCC plans to implement an integrated communications campaign to inform, as partners, the industry in its implementation from April 2026 onwards.

Financial Implications - None



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22 October 2025

Dear Chair,

Re: Inquiry by the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee into Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales’ remit and funding

As Chief Executive of Hybu Cig Cymru I would like to formally thank committee members for their time in carrying out the inquiry into the organisation’s remit and funding.

Following the formal response by the Welsh Government to the committee’s recommendations, we will now engage with Welsh Government officials to explore and consider how best to respond to the areas highlighted.

If I can assist in the future on any other inquiries, similar to our recent evidence to the Food Processing inquiry, please feel free to contact me.

Kind regards,

José Peralta
Chief Executive



Welsh Government Response to the ETRA Committee Letter Dated 17th September 2025

Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals

Set out below are the Welsh Government's responses to each of the Committee's recommendations set out in the letter of the 17th of September 2025 on Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals.

Contents

1. Introduction 3

2. Recommendations 4

3. Conclusions..... 11

1. Introduction

There are four City and Growth Deals in Wales, Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Swansea Bay City Region Deal, Mid Wales Growth Deal, and North Wales Growth Deal.

City and Growth Deal Assurance:

There are two Government Boards; a Welsh Government Board, and a joint Government Board, which meet quarterly to provide oversight and assurance to Welsh Government on the performance of all City & Growth Deals in Wales.

2. Recommendations

North Wales Growth Deal

Signed in 2020, the 15-year North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD), led by the North Wales Local Authorities have acknowledged the challenges it has faced in delivery over the Deal over the first five years.

Recommendations 1 and 2:

Ensure Welsh and UK Governments are monitoring and supporting Ambition North Wales to deliver the deal but also that the considerable public funds allocated to the Deal will create the jobs and investment aimed for.

Set out how they will support and monitor progress with the North Wales Growth Deal.

Response: Accept in Principle

1. The WG and the UKG, regularly engage to provide both support to, and oversight of the Portfolio Management Office and Ambition North Wales in delivery of the Deal. There are diarised monthly and quarterly meetings as part of Deal oversight.
2. Delivery of the deal is fully devolved to ANW who are accountable for its KPIs and Impacts, but both governments are fully committed to providing the environment and conditions of support to enable ANW to deliver accordingly. Support and guidance include:
 - a. Regular executive level project review and updates
 - b. Access to specialist support, for example JV work with the WGs Property team.
 - c. Programme Management Training
3. The NWGD undergoes an annual independent assurance review (PAR), which Governments use as part of the evidence base in assessing delivery confidence and financial performance.

Recommendation 3:

Offer urgent clarity around the funding available to the NWGD.

Response: Accept:

4. Under the terms of the Final Deal Agreement Welsh Government and UK Government each agreed to provide £120mill of funding across the life of the Deal. Approval of the release of government funding is reviewed annually and subject to performance of the Deal, and the outcome of the independent annual Assurance Review. In addition to Government funding The Deal is committed to securing an additional £750mill of private and other investment funding across the 15 years.
5. To date Governments have approved the release of 3 years of annual funding to the Deal and have ensured there is sufficient funding to cover North Wales Growth Deal commitments with significant reserves held within deal accounts.
6. In the last two years the independent annual Assurance Review found successful delivery of the project/programme appeared in doubt and there were major issues which needed resolving. In light of these assessments and coupled with lack of spend by the Deal, both governments agreed it could not release the annual funding at that point.
7. The Welsh Government continues to work alongside the Deal and its partners on its future funding requirements, protecting the public purse, and ensure the North Wales Growth Deal delivers the investment and impact we all signed up to.

Recommendation 4.

Explore what lessons can be learnt from the Trawsfynydd project failure and its knock-on impact on the Deal.

Response: Accept:

8. The North Wales Growth Deal is a Portfolio of projects managed by the Deal. Welsh Government welcomes the steps recently taken by the Deal to review its portfolio and create a reserve list to enable a quicker response in the event that a project does not progress or will not progress within the lifetime of the Deal, such as the Trawsfynydd project.

Cardiff Capital Region City Deal

Cardiff Capital Region Job Creation

Recommendation 5:

Welsh and UK Governments work with Cardiff Capital Region and Transport for Wales to ensure there are clear job creation targets for both the Metro and Wider Investment Fund parts of the City Deal.

Response: Accept

9. Cardiff Capital Region City Deal (CCRCD) Investment Fund is a £1.229 billion fund consisting of a pre-allocated sum of £734m to the Metro Project and £495m to the Wider Investment Fund (WIF). The Metro project is a Welsh Government programme which is subject to its own governance arrangements.
10. Separately, Cardiff Capital Region is responsible for delivering outcomes for the WIF element of the CCRCD. The Welsh Government also has Accounting Officer responsibilities for this Fund. The extant Heads of Terms and Assurance Framework for the WIF specify metrics for the CCRCD which were agreed to be achievable when the CCR City Deal was agreed in 2016 between the UK Government, the Welsh Government and the ten leaders of the local CCR. This includes the creation of new 25,000 jobs.
11. Welsh Government acknowledges the Committee's concerns. If it is CCR's view that the jobs metric, and the £4bn private sector investment metric, as raised by the Committee, are no longer achievable for the WIF element of the Deal over its lifetime, Government will work together with CCR to consider and agree revised metrics. In any event, Government, through the established Governance arrangements for the CCRCD, which includes quarterly progress reporting, will work to seek more detailed information.

Recommendation: 6

Ensure Cardiff Capital Region is monitoring as best it can where job creation is being achieved to make sure they are not accidentally disproportionately favouring or neglecting different parts of the Region.

Response: Accept in Principle

12. CCR provides jobs data to UKG and WG as part of the ongoing governance arrangements. This includes a breakdown across direct, indirect and construction jobs created, plus apprenticeships, jobs safeguarded and graduate employment. Government will work with CCR to seek further granularity to support, where possible, better transparency on where, across the Region or Local Authority area these jobs are, and that this information is reported regularly.

CCR: Aberthaw

Recommendation: 7

Seek clarification from Cardiff Capital Region around the latest estimate of the total development costs for the Aberthaw project including where they see this investment coming from and share this information with the Committee.

Response: Accept

13. Our understanding is that the £38m of CCRCD funds allocated for the Aberthaw Power Station site was for acquisition, demolition, and partial remediation only, with plans to seek private sector investment to ensure the site reaches its full potential and delivers on regional and national ambitions. Demolition is ongoing and a further Masterplan is being developed.
14. CCR provides information on progress and costs in respect of the Aberthaw Power Station site through the quarterly reporting arrangements, established as part of the Governance arrangements for the CCRCD. In addition, Welsh Government officials meet regularly and receive updates directly from CCR Energy Limited, which has been established to own and lead the demolition, remediation, and future development of the site.

Recommendation: 8

Closely monitor the spending on Aberthaw to ensure there is best value for money and the project does not become an unchecked drain absorbing public money or a project where good money is thrown after bad.

Response: Accept in principle

15. CCR acts independently in its investment decisions, and it is for CCR to ensure best value for money through the South-East Wales CJC's own Governance arrangements and Investment Board, as Accountable Body for the CCRCD. As above, through the quarterly reporting arrangements, CCR provides high level financial and delivery information to the UK and Welsh Governments across their Programme and Project portfolios including risk management and reporting of metrics.

Swansea Bay City Deal

Recommendation: 9

Welsh Government and UK Government views on the different conditions the Swansea Bay and Cardiff Capital Region deals have and any considerations around this they may make going forwards

Response: Accept

16. The Welsh Government recognises that the Swansea Bay City Deal and the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal were agreed under different UK Government schemes and therefore have distinct terms and governance structures. The Swansea Bay Deal, signed in 2017, had all capital funding committed upfront and a clearly defined portfolio of projects from the outset.

Recommendation: 10

Welsh Government and UK Government their position on the effect of inflation on the Swansea Bay City Deal, and the three other Welsh Deals, including any additional funding they may supply or mitigation they may make to delivery targets.

Response: Accept

17. The Welsh Government is acutely aware of the inflationary pressures affecting the delivery of City and Growth Deals across Wales. In the case of the Swansea Bay City Deal, WG funding for the deal has been slightly front loaded over the 15 year term.

Mid Wales Growth Deal

Recommendation: 11

Set out any views the governments have on the decision not to transfer management of the Mid Wales Growth Deal to their Corporate Joint Committee.

Response: Accept

18. Economic development, transport and land use planning are aligned in the Corporate Joint Committees (CJCs) to provide the opportunity to pool resources and consider and capitalise on the interdependencies between these functions at a regional scale. With the right ambition, we maintain that CJCs can rapidly become the focus for the delivery of regional economic wellbeing.
19. It is for each CJC to reflect how they meet collective local needs and ambitions within their areas of responsibility. We have welcomed South-East and North Wales CJCs further developing their economic development activity by 'lifting and shifting' their city or growth deals into the CJC mechanism. The South-West CJC is considering doing so, and the Mid Wales CJC is creating deeper alignments.

Recommendation: 12

Welsh and UK governments monitor this different approach to governance from Mid-Wales compared to the other three deals to see if there are any clear advantages or disadvantages between the approaches.

Response: Accept

20. Both Governments require that all Deals have in place good governance structures to provide assurance on the effective and efficient administration of the Deal. We continue to monitor the comparative governance arrangements for each of the City and Growth Deals and how these align with their respective CJC.
21. South-West Wales Growth Deal has also not yet chosen to formally merge their City Deal into the CJC mechanism.

Recommendation: 13

Welsh and UK governments ensure the unique challenges faced by the Mid-Wales Growth Deal, such as economic diversity and access to private sector investment as outlined in their evidence, are factored in to any ongoing work with and support offered by the two governments to the Deal.

Response: Accept

22. In Mid Wales, the regional partners have established a Joint Committee between the respective local authorities (with additional supporting infrastructure consisting of a private sector led Economic Advisory Board and Management Board comprising senior officials) for this purpose and to fulfil the functions required.
23. The exact nature of governance established has been a matter for the local partners to determine. This effectiveness of the regional governance arrangements is reviewed as part of the regular assurance reviews undertaken (via PARs) and we will continue to monitor on a regular basis, including any recommendations they make in this regard.

Recommendation: 14

The UK and Welsh Government work with the four growth deals to ensure lessons are learnt and best practice is shared to support the deals when transitioning through political leadership changes.

Response: Accept

24. Welsh Government encourages all Deals to engage with each other to share learning and best practice.
25. All Deals engage with the Welsh Integrated Assurance Hub, who are the lead body in Wales undertaking Assurance Reviews on City and Growth Deals in Wales.
26. Over the last five years Welsh Government Office of Project Development have run network events for public sectors partners, including Deals, to share experience and best practice on the adoption and application of Better Business Case Methodology .

3. Conclusions

27. Delivery of the City and Growth Deals resides with the relevant regional organisations.
28. As funders, both Welsh and UK Government require that all Deals have in place strong governance structures to provide assurance on effective oversight and fiscal administration of the Deals.
29. Welsh Government has a regional lead official for each City and Growth Deal who maintains regular, formal and informal contact to support and respond to changes which will occur over the life of each of the Deals.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee
Senedd Cymru
The Senedd Pierhead St
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

27 October 2025

Dear Andrew,

RE: Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals

Thank you for your correspondence on behalf of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee regarding the performance and future of the Welsh City and Regional Growth Deals.

The four Welsh Growth Deals - Cardiff Capital Region City Deal, Swansea Bay City Region Deal, Mid Wales Growth Deal, and North Wales Growth Deal - represent a landmark collaboration between governments, local authorities, and regional stakeholders. These Deals are designed to deliver long-term, transformational economic change through large-scale capital investments. While these investments take time to reach full maturity, they have already delivered thousands of jobs and significant projects across Wales.

The UK and Welsh Governments have each committed substantial funding to these Deals and jointly monitor their progress through established governance mechanisms, including quarterly oversight boards and annual assurance reviews. We remain committed to supporting the Deals in delivering investment where it is most needed.

In line with the Welsh Government's response, we remain committed to working collaboratively to ensure the Growth Deals deliver maximum benefit for communities across Wales. Both governments have provided the necessary tools to support delivery, and we continue to monitor progress closely to ensure that performance improves where needed.

We acknowledge the Committee's concerns regarding the North Wales Growth Deal. Both governments have taken steps to improve delivery, including appointing Non-Executive Directors and a senior investment specialist to strengthen governance and bring private sector expertise. We continue to engage regularly with Ambition North Wales and the Portfolio Management Office to provide support and oversight. I recently met with the Chair of the Deal this week to receive an update and to re-emphasise the need for rapid progress with delivery. Funding decisions are made annually based on performance and assurance outcomes, and we are working closely with partners to ensure future funding aligns with delivery expectations.

Regarding the Cardiff Capital Region, we recognise the importance of clear job creation metrics and transparency in delivery. The Welsh Government is working with CCR to review and, if necessary, revise these metrics to reflect current conditions. We also support efforts to monitor job distribution across the region to ensure equitable outcomes. On the Aberthaw project, we welcome CCR's steps to clarify development costs and secure private investment, and we continue to monitor spending to ensure best value for public money. The innovative Wider Investment Fund is already delivering returns, which is encouraging.

For the Swansea Bay City Deal, we acknowledge the distinct governance and funding structures compared to other Deals and are mindful of inflationary pressures affecting delivery. However, we welcome the work by the Deal to mitigate these issues through innovative value engineering within their projects and programmes. We remain open to discussions on mitigation strategies and additional support where appropriate.

In Mid Wales, we respect the decision not to transfer management of the Growth Deal to the Corporate Joint Committee and continue to monitor governance effectiveness. We are committed to supporting the region's unique challenges, including economic diversity and access to private investment. It is encouraging to see the Deal move swiftly into delivery, applying lessons learned from other Welsh Growth Deals to maximise impact.

Both governments encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing across all Deals to ensure lessons are learned and best practices adopted, especially during transitions in political leadership.

We welcome the Committee's engagement on this important agenda. Economic growth remains our top priority, and we expect each City and Growth Deal to deliver meaningful outcomes for the people of Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Anna McMorris MP

UK Government Minister for Wales
Gweinidog Llywodraeth y DU dros Gymru

Andrew RT Davies MS
Welsh Parliament
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1SN

28 October 2025

Dear Mr Davies,

As Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and Government Statistical Service (GSS) would welcome your contribution to two consultations launched today.

The ONS has launched the Census 2031 topic consultation, asking for your views about the topics you think should be included in the next census. For more than two centuries, a decennial census has provided information about the population and housing, helping to inform decisions about public services and to better understand the economy, public health and inequality. While the core topics of age, education and jobs have remained the same over time, other topics such as armed forces veterans have been added based on the needs of users. This 14-week consultation will provide evidence to inform what topics will be included in the next census of England and Wales in 2031.

The GSS has also launched a consultation asking for your views on additional response options for ethnicity data. The GSS would like to understand your needs for data on additional ethnic groups, with the goal of making the harmonised ethnicity standard more inclusive.

Responses submitted over the 14-week period will feed into a new standard for ethnicity data collection, which will be recommended for use by collectors of ethnicity data across the GSS, including teams working on future censuses.

We would welcome your contributions to these consultations before they close on 4 February 2026. You can respond to the consultation in Welsh or English.

Both consultations are live on the [ONS consultations web page](#).

Yours sincerely,



**Emma Rourke, Acting National Statistician & Darren Tierney, Permanent
Secretary, Office for National Statistics**



Welsh Government Response to the UK-EU implementation review of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement

I would like to thank all four committees for the work they have undertaken to produce these recommendations.

The European Union is our closest and largest trading partner, and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) governs the relationship between the UK and the EU.

However, the agreement is not a like-for-like replacement for the market access that the UK had as an EU member, and it has created barriers for Welsh businesses.

The Welsh Government has always advocated for a closer association with the EU. The announcement of a Common Understanding between the UK and EU in May 2025 provides opportunities to open negotiations, reset the relationship between the UK and the EU and reduce barriers for Welsh businesses.

Both these negotiations, and the TCA review, are upcoming negotiations and what can be set out and discussed publicly is necessarily limited due to sensitivities around international negotiations.

Contents

Responses to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Recommendations..... 6

Recommendation 1..... 6

Recommendation 2..... 6

Recommendation 3..... 7

Recommendation 4..... 7

Recommendation 5..... 8

Recommendation 6..... 8

Recommendation 7..... 9

Recommendation 8..... 9

Recommendation 9..... 10

Responses to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee Recommendations..... 11

Recommendation 10..... 11

Recommendation 11..... 11

Recommendation 12..... 12

Recommendation 13..... 12

Recommendation 14..... 13

Recommendation 15..... 13

Recommendation 16..... 13

Recommendation 17..... 14

Recommendation 18..... 14

Recommendation 19..... 14

Recommendation 20..... 15

Recommendation 21..... 15

Recommendation 22..... 16

Recommendation 23..... 16

Recommendation 24..... 16

Recommendation 25..... 17

Recommendation 26.....	17
Recommendation 27.....	17

Responses to the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee Recommendations 19

Recommendation 28.....	19
Recommendation 29.....	19
Recommendation 30.....	20
Recommendation 31.....	20
Recommendation 32.....	21
Recommendation 33.....	21
Recommendation 34.....	21
Recommendation 35.....	22

Responses to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee Recommendations.....23

Recommendation 36.....	23
Recommendation 37.....	23
Recommendation 38.....	23
Recommendation 39.....	24
Recommendation 40.....	24
Recommendation 41.....	24
Recommendation 42.....	25
Recommendation 43.....	25
Recommendation 44.....	25
Recommendation 45.....	26
Recommendation 46.....	26
Recommendation 47.....	26
Recommendation 48.....	27
Recommendation 49.....	27
Recommendation 50.....	27
Recommendation 51.....	28
Recommendation 52.....	28

Recommendation 53.....28

Recommendation 54.....29

Recommendation 55.....29

Responses to the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 1.

The Welsh Government should continue to regularly review and update its EU priorities, closely monitoring developments for their potential impact on Wales.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government actively updates and reviews its priorities as negotiations develop and circumstances change. We will continue to review and update EU priorities and consider any potential impact on Wales as part of this ongoing work.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 2.

The Welsh Government should work to strengthen its relationships with EU institutions in order to advance Welsh interests and gain deeper insight into the EU's position and develop a dedicated EU Strategy.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government already has active relationships with many EU institutions, and we will continue to strengthen these as our work progresses. These relationships have developed through the work undertaken by our Brussels office and our dedicated Representative for Europe as part of the delivery remit for our International Strategy, which includes our relationship with Europe and the EU. The focus and foundation of any developments of the relationship with the EU should be around recreating a relationship that works for both sides and this is already happening. As the current International Strategy draws to a close, and we move into a new phase of Wales' relationship with the EU, consideration will be given to whether a dedicated EU Strategy is required as part of our wider work on our approach to international relations.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 3.

The Welsh Government should, in its response to this report, confirm whether it is:

- actively pursuing full participation rights at UK-EU meetings where it has observer status.
- requesting to attend UK-EU meetings that fall outside the TCA institutional framework.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government can confirm that it is not actively pursuing full participation rights at UK-EU meetings where it has observer status. The EU does not allow devolved governments to have participation rights. This is comparable to individual EU Member States also having observer status. However, we can confirm that we continue to engage with the UK Government on the committees that fall within the TCA institutional framework, to ensure that our interests are represented at these meetings. The Welsh Government will request attendance at any relevant UK-EU meetings that fall outside of the TCA institutional framework, where we believe this is appropriate.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 4.

The Welsh Government should update its review priorities to reflect its stated position, outlined by the Cabinet Secretary in response to the Culture shock report, of fully supporting the PPA's recommendation for a comprehensive solution for touring artists, covering both the movement of people and goods.

Response: Accept

Our International Delivery Plan 2025 reaffirmed our commitment to European engagement and the priority that the Welsh Government places on working with the UK Government on its ambitions to reset the UK-EU relationship. We continue to use all available levers to encourage the UK Government and the EU to ease the difficulties faced by creative sector workers. At the UK-EU relations Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) meeting on 23 September 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning raised the issue of touring artists and the importance of coming to a solution for them.

We welcome the recent re-set in relations between the UK and the EU and the announcement of the UK-EU Common Understanding Agreement. We

particularly welcome the announcement made by the UK and EU governments at the summit on 19 May to establish a mutual commitment to negotiating a youth experience scheme. We believe such a scheme could potentially benefit young artists, as it is generally younger, less-established artists who face the greatest challenges when touring with increased costs, time limits, and bureaucracy resulting from EU exit.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 5.

The Welsh Government should make representations to the UK and the EU to ensure that the issue of touring artists remains a priority. This should include calling for the UK and EU to articulate plans for improvements.

Response 5: Accept

The Welsh Government are using all available levers to encourage the UK Government and the EU to ease the difficulties being faced by creative sector workers, particularly touring artists. This includes actively engaging with the UK Government and the EU, to ensure that the interests of Welsh creative workers are represented and advanced. We recognise that further discussions are needed about supporting touring artists and we will continue to raise this matter with the UK Government. At the UK-EU relations Inter-Ministerial Group meeting on 23 September 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning raised the issue of touring artists and the importance of coming to a solution for them.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 6.

The Welsh Government should provide a comprehensive list of EU programmes that it would like to participate in and indicate the extent to which there is agreement between the four UK governments on participation.

Response: Accept

The written Statement¹ published by the Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning following the EU summit in May, set out our ambition for Wales to participate in a broader range of EU programmes, including Erasmus+ as well as accessing other EU programmes such as Creative Europe and European Territorial Cooperation.

¹ [Written Statement: EU- UK Summit \(19 May 2025\) | GOV.WALES](#)

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 7.

The Welsh Government should share its understanding of why UK association to additional EU programmes, including Creative Europe, was not agreed in Common Understanding, and whether association to other programmes is still being pursued by the UK Government.

Response: Accept

Access to additional EU programmes such as Erasmus+ and Creative Europe is a priority that we regularly emphasised with the UK Government ahead of the May summit. The Welsh Government is pleased that the UK and EU agreed to work towards association of the Erasmus+ programme and are working intensively with the UK Government to ensure that Welsh interests are represented in these negotiations and the other areas of cooperation agreed as part of the Common Understanding.

We cannot comment on the negotiations that took place between the UK and EU ahead of the May Summit. We note and welcome the commitments in the Summit Joint Political Statement for regular meetings to consider joint strategic interests and ensure opportunities for future cooperation are maximised. In this context, we will continue to press the UK Government to include access to additional EU programmes, such as Creative Europe, as a priority for future EU-UK discussions.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 8.

The Welsh Government should clarify whether changes to the TCA are required to facilitate UK participation in additional EU programmes.

Response: Accept

The written evidence refers to the implementation review of the TCA, the text relating to the review is standard text commonly used by the EU in its trade agreements. Reviews conducted under these agreements have not led to significant changes to the respective agreements in the past.

The Common Understanding Agreement, agreed in May 2025, is a framework agreement which set out areas where the UK and the EU are seeking closer cooperation. The negotiations for this work are currently underway and are separate to the review of the TCA. As negotiations are currently active, we

cannot comment on what may be included in any finalised agreement and if this finalised agreement may lead to amendments to the TCA.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 9.

The Welsh Government should confirm whether it has calculated the cost of participation in Erasmus+ and Creative Europe using the formula set out in the TCA, or whether it has been part of joint UK-wide exercise to do so.

Response: Accept

The decision to rejoin EU programmes such as Erasmus+ and Creative Europe is a reserved matter for the UK Government. The Welsh Government has not undertaken its own cost calculations for rejoining these programmes, nor has it participated in any UK-wide exercise to do so.

However, the UK Government has committed—through the Common Understanding with the EU—to work towards rejoining Erasmus+, and Welsh Government officials have been actively collaborating with the Department for Education (DfE) on this effort.

Additionally, the Welsh Government has clearly communicated to the UK Government its desire to participate in a broader range of EU programmes, including Creative Europe.

Financial Implications: None

Responses to the Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 10.

The Welsh Government should produce a perspectives document on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement in line with its approach to other international trade agreements as a matter of urgency.

Response: Reject

The Welsh Government published *'The new relationship with the EU: What it means for Wales'* in 2021². The 'perspective' documents have been published for newly signed trade agreements to provide an overview of potential impacts on Wales. The TCA has been in operation for several years and analysis on its impacts is already available. It should also be noted that the potential outcomes of any new arrangements with the EU as part of upcoming negotiations will render any immediate report out of date almost immediately. Should new arrangements be agreed with the EU, we will publish our views on these at that time.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 11.

The Welsh Government should report to the committees on the extent to which the Welsh and UK Governments' implementation review priorities align on trade and what the implications are for Wales. Where the UK and Welsh governments' priorities do not align, the Welsh Government should outline how it is going to support the affected sectors.

Response: Reject

I published a Written Statement responding to announcements made at the UK-EU Summit in May, including where the announcements represented the Welsh Government's high-level priorities, for example on seeking an SPS Agreement, cooperation on energy, alignment of Emission Trading Schemes, Youth Mobility and Erasmus+. However, our more detailed priorities on these areas form part of ongoing discussions between the UK and the EU and we cannot comment on upcoming negotiations. The Welsh Government meets regularly with the UK Government and continues to set out its priorities.

Financial Implications: None

² [The new relationship with the EU: What it means for Wales | GOV.WALES](#)

Recommendation 12.

The Welsh Government should continue to call on the UK and EU to prioritise practical steps to address trade friction and should provide this Committee with quarterly updates on progress in the areas listed in this chapter.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government has always called on the UK and the EU to improve its trading relationship. The EU is our most important trading partner and any steps to reduce trade frictions are welcome. Updates are provided during the Cabinet Secretary's regular appearances before the Committees.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 13.

The Committee expects the Welsh Government to raise at intergovernmental meetings, practical steps to address trade barriers. It should provide detailed reports to this Committee on progress in its written statements and meeting notifications.

Response: Accept in principle

Intergovernmental meetings are forums for discussing the active trade negotiations. We follow the process of informing committees when meetings will take place and what is discussed. Whilst we are limited in including sensitive information, this includes the key points discussed at the meetings.

The various committees established under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement are often a better forum to discuss existing trade barriers and the Welsh Government makes representations to these committees on trade barriers. Minutes of committees are published by the UK and the EU accordingly.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 14.

The Welsh Government should ensure its business support for sectors are tailored to reflect the impacts the different treatment of goods and services are having on companies and sectors.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government accepts that support needs to be updated and specific; however, the review of the TCA, which is due to take place in 2026, and the active negotiations for the common understanding which are currently underway are both variables which may influence how the treatment of goods and services will be considered, therefore it is prudent to actively monitor these negotiations and tailor support and guidance when information becomes available.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 15.

The Welsh Government should confirm if Common Understanding could require renegotiation of non-EU trade agreements.

Response: Accept

As the negotiation of elements of the Common Understanding, such as a potential SPS agreement, are not yet completed, it is impossible for us to say whether any final agreements will require re-negotiation of non-EU trade deals.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 16.

The Welsh Government should set out how it will ensure that Wales's unique position in post-Brexit trade flows is taken into account in discussions with the UK Government on a UK-EU SPS agreement.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government recognises the strategic importance of the SPS agreement and is committed to ensuring that Wales's distinct trade profile, and devolved responsibilities, are fully reflected in ongoing discussions with the UK Government. We continue to support the UK Government's position in seeking an SPS agreement with the EU.

The Welsh Government will continue its active engagement with UK Government departments to ensure Welsh priorities are embedded in SPS negotiations. This includes continuing the frequent official level engagement we already have in place

and ensuring that Ministerial engagement takes place in a way that reflects the pace of any negotiations.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 17.

The Welsh Government should ascertain its role in the early consultation mechanism with the EU as part of an SPS agreement and inform the committees as soon as possible.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government's role in the early consultation mechanism is a subject for negotiation in the forthcoming UK-EU Common Understanding negotiations and we are unable to comment on live negotiations; we will inform the committee of such a role as soon as possible.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 18.

The Welsh Government should keep the implications of an SPS agreement on border control posts under review and provide the Committee with an update in its response to this report and on a quarterly basis thereafter.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs set out the Welsh Government's position on Border Control Posts (BCPs) in Wales and this statement (highlighted under paragraph 154) remains the current position. The decision to pause the implementation of the Border Target Operating Model (BTOM) arrangements was made by the UK Government which has indicated that this will remain subject to review. Working with colleagues in the UK and Scottish governments, the Welsh Government will keep the implications of an SPS agreement on border control posts under review. We will update the Committee as appropriate but, while negotiations are still live, a quarterly review would not be appropriate.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 19.

In line with recommendations 12 and 13 of this chapter, the Welsh Government should provide the Committee with regular updates on the progress of UK-EU discussions, and discussions with the UK Government on the provision of services and the subsequent implications for Wales.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will, within the limits of what is possible to report during live negotiations, update the committee on the progress of UK-EU discussions during the Cabinet Secretary's regular appearances before the committee.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 20.

In its response to this report the Welsh Government should set out:

- why further improvements to MRAs on conformity assessments were not pursued in Common Understanding;
- confirm if this issue is still being pursued with the EU; and
- if it will form part of the implementation review.

Response: Accept

Currently the EU does not believe that there is reciprocal value in negotiating a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) on conformity assessment with the UK and, as such, it was not included as part of the Common Understanding. The Welsh Government will continue to pursue both the UK and the EU in the value of a MRA to be included in future UK-EU Summit announcements.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 21.

The Welsh Government should provide an update and analysis of the historic and potential future effects of this issue on the shellfish farming sector and Welsh trade.

Response: Accept:

Due to lack of granular trade data for Wales, it is not currently possible to determine the value of trade in shellfish between Wales and the EU. However, published HMRC data shows, in the year ending June 2025 there was £9.3m worth of seafood exports (of which shellfish is a part of) from Wales to the EU. This is considerably lower than the £23.5m exported the year ending June 2015.

Statistics on Welsh aquaculture production from 2012 to 2023 are currently being developed as part of the UK Data Collection Framework. As these are Official Statistics in development we are unable to share until they are published. When the data is available Welsh Government will provide the committee with an analysis as requested.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 22.

In its discussions with UK Government on its priorities for the implementation review, the Welsh Government should emphasise the importance of addressing issues related to rules of origin.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government has regular dialogues with the UK Government on rules of origin issues. We believe that the UK should seek to open negotiations to join the Pan European Mediterranean (PEM) Convention and have made this view clear to the UK Government.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 23.

In line with recommendations 12 and 13 of this chapter, the Welsh Government should provide the Committee with regular updates on progress relating to rules of origin.

Response: Reject

We are unable to provide detailed regular updates due to industry sensitivities and/or impact on live negotiations. We can continue to provide high-level updates.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 24.

In its response to this report, the Welsh Government should set out what its priorities are for addressing animal welfare issues through both the implementation review and the UK-EU reset and set out how it will balance the benefits of both alignment and divergence in this area.

Response: Accept

Welsh Government has always made clear that we will seek the inclusion of firm commitments within trade agreements to help improve animal welfare standards. This remains the case for both the implementation review and the negotiations for the UK-EU reset. We are working closely with the UK Government and other Devolved Governments to ensure that they are aware of our priority to maintain and enhance our high standards and ambitions for animal health and welfare and biosecurity in all UK Government Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations. The UK and the EU both share commitments to improving Animal Welfare standards. We are proud of the high standards we have in Wales, including for animal health and welfare, traceability, and food safety.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 25.

In line with recommendations 12 and 13 of this chapter the Welsh Government should provide regular updates to the committees on this matter, including on the animal welfare dimensions of an SPS agreement.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government will not be able to provide detailed updates on live negotiations but will comment on the provisions included in the final agreement.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 26.

The Welsh Government should explore with the other UK governments the development of a UK-wide mechanism to monitor alignment and divergence with the EU.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will explore with the UK Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive, including through the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU Relations, the potential to develop a UK-wide mechanism to monitor alignment with, and divergence from, the EU.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 27.

The Welsh Government should:

- set out how it feeds in Welsh assessments of alignment and divergence into UK intergovernmental discussions;
- clarify what discussions take place currently on alignment and divergence within the Welsh Government and its Trade Policy Advisory Group; and
- set out how it works with other stakeholders to seek their input on the effects of alignment and divergence.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government meets frequently with the UK Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive, including through the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU Relations and the IMG EFRA to discuss a range of topics. This including discussions on alignment and divergence, where it is relevant to upcoming EU negotiations. In addition, the Welsh Government works with stakeholders through the Trade Policy Advisory Group to discuss alignment and divergence and its view on

EU reset work more broadly. We also engage with specific industry bodies when specific discussions on issues are needed.

Financial Implications: None

Responses to the Climate Change, Environment, and Infrastructure Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 28.

The Welsh Government should set out its position on whether the TCA meets the environment-related tests outlined in its 2024 approach to trade policy document.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government's Approach to Trade Policy does not set out formal "environment-related tests." Instead, it outlines a series of policy expectations that trade agreements should meet to support Wales's environmental objectives and legal duties under the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

The expectation is for environmental provisions to be a key part of any trade agreement and that there should be no impact on our ability to meet our existing commitments both domestically or internationally or prevent us from making ambitious commitments in the future. This reflects the importance that the Welsh Government places on the environment, both in terms of addressing climate change and ensuring high levels of environmental protection.

The TCA generally aligns with these expectations, with shared commitments to non-regression, high levels of environmental protection and seeking to improve upon these standards. The environmental scope of the TCA is broad, including detailed provisions related to climate action and nature and biodiversity conservation, which are key Welsh Government priorities, in addition to several other areas related to environmental protection.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 29.

The Welsh Government should clarify whether it supports enhanced or additional UK-EU cooperation and/or agreements beyond the current provisions in the TCA.

Response: Accept

We accept and welcome the importance of enhanced cooperation in the areas identified under the common understanding, whilst recognising that the TCA does not replace the cooperation framework that existed across EU members prior to EU exit. However, the existing TCA does provide several routes for the exchange of views, for sharing information on areas of environmental policy and to identify areas of mutual interest and topics which would benefit from further discussion. For example, at the Level Playing Field -Trade Specialised Committee, the UK and the EU are able

to discuss core policy areas where further discussion may be beneficial. Welsh Government officials engage with counterparts on relevant agenda items.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 30.

The Welsh Government should clarify the Cabinet Secretary's comments, that closer alignment with the EU could lead to "a potential reduction in some of our standards or values around the environment", including examples of where this may be a concern.

Response: Accept

Whilst closer alignment may realise potential benefits, these need to be assessed on a case-by-case basis depending on the specific details of what that alignment might look like, to ensure any changes would support Wales's policy goals. Whilst there are a very small number of environmental regulations in scope of the common understanding, such as around the Emission Trading Schemes (ETS) provisions, the majority are out of scope. The EU and the Welsh Government both have high ambitions for environmental protection and, importantly, the TCA allows the UK and Devolved Governments to develop and implement policies appropriate for our domestic circumstances, including improving on existing levels of protection. However, the Welsh Government does not, and cannot know, what legislation the EU may introduce in the future. Thus, a situation could exist in the future where the EU could introduce legislation that runs counter to some of our environmental standards and values.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 31.

The Welsh Government should publish and share its views on the list of sectors that will be covered as a minimum by a future UK-EU ETS linking agreement, as set out in Common Understanding,

Response: Reject

ETS linkage is a subject for negotiation in the forthcoming UK-EU Common Understanding negotiations, and we are unable to comment in detail on upcoming live negotiations. However, the only sectors that can be covered by a linking agreement are those currently within the UK ETS and the EU ETS.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 32.

The Welsh Government should finalise a clear position on ETS linkage as a matter of priority.

Response: Accept in Principle

ETS linkage is subject to negotiation in the forthcoming UK-EU Common Understanding negotiations. There are potential benefits in linking which come with being part of a larger market. However, our view on ETS linkage will be informed by those negotiations, and we are unable to comment on live negotiations.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 33.

The Welsh Government should provide its view on the environmental and climate implications of the ETS linkage and CBAM exemptions envisaged by Common Understanding.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government will take a view on the environmental and climate implications of ETS linkage and Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) exemptions, once the forthcoming UK-EU Common Understanding negotiations have progressed. We will provide these views once negotiations have been completed.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 34.

The Welsh Government should explain how it is promoting the importance of UK-EU cooperation on energy infrastructure in Wales-adjacent seas, including in the Irish and Celtic seas.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government is actively engaged on the energy portfolio between Wales and Ireland. The Welsh Government's Ireland team is an active member and participant in the UK-Ireland MoU meetings, supporting our energy policy officials on active projects.

The Welsh Government's team in Ireland works directly with Irish Government officials in the departments of Foreign Affairs, Transport and Energy on joint opportunities and

this has ensured that the Ireland-Wales 2030 Shared Statement³, which the First Minister signed in July 2025, had a key theme of collaborative working on energy.

The Welsh Government is also working with Celtic Sea developers on active projects to explore ways in which the Welsh ports and supply chain can maximise the benefits on offshore energy projects in the Celtic Sea. The Welsh Government are also working the Irish Maritime Area Regulatory Authority and undertaking collaborative working with Welsh counterparts. The Welsh Government is also active in exploratory discussions with the UK Government on possible UK access to the single EU electricity market as part of the Common Understanding between the European Commission and the United Kingdom.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 35.

The Welsh Government should confirm whether the mechanisms being considered for the resumption of shellfish trade include the UK's dynamic alignment to EU rules on water quality.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will monitor ongoing negotiations but will be unable to report on these until the final agreement is reached.

Financial Implications: None

³ [Ireland-Wales shared statement 2030 \[HTML\]](#) | GOV.WALES

Responses to the Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee Recommendations

Recommendation 36.

The Welsh Government should provide information on discussions between the UK and the EU and between the UK's governments with the aim of reducing complexity arising from current arrangements.

Response: Accept in Principle

While discussions between the UK and the EU are sensitive, and not something the Welsh Government would be able to provide information on without the consent of both the UK and the EU. The Welsh Government does write to the committee to highlight discussions and minutes of IMG meetings. TCA committee meetings are published online.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 37.

The Welsh Government should set out the steps it is taking to simplify its own advice and guidance in respect of current UK-EU arrangements

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government is regularly reviewing its advice and guidance and, with the negotiations ongoing for the common understanding, this may amend the current trading arrangements. The Welsh Government will develop guidance when these negotiations have concluded.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 38.

The Welsh Government should develop its own guide to UK-EU arrangements, similar to that produced around the time of the UK's exit from the EU.

Response: Accept

As the review of the TCA is due to take place in 2026 and with negotiations ongoing for the common understanding, both of which may amend the current trading arrangements, the Welsh Government will develop guidance when negotiations for both have concluded.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 39.

The Welsh Government should call on the UK Government to outline its specific priorities for the implementation review and the scope of the review as a matter of urgency.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government has regular discussions with the UK Government on the upcoming review, including where its priorities lie. The UK Government has currently not publicly outlined its specific positions for upcoming negotiations.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 40.

The Welsh Government should keep its priorities under review, monitor developments to understand their implications for Wales, and should notify the four committees if or when changes are made.

Response: Accept in Principle

As set out in recommendation 1, the Welsh Government will continue to review and update EU priorities and consider any potential impact on Wales as part of this ongoing work. Whilst we will notify the committee should changes be made to our high-level priorities, such as seeking an SPS Agreement, we will be unable to notify the committees of detailed negotiation positions during the negotiation period.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 41.

As we have previously recommended, the Welsh Government should make representations to the UK Government for the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU Relations to take place sufficiently in advance of Trade and Cooperation Agreement meetings and UK-EU negotiations.

Response: Agree

The Welsh Government has made representations to the UK Government for IMG to take place in advance of negotiations.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 42.

The Welsh Government should call for the terms of reference of the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU relations to be updated to take into account arrangements emanating from the reset, such as Common Understanding and the implementation review. This will make sure they remain fit for purpose for the next phase of UK-EU relations.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will ask for the terms of reference to be updated.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 43.

As we have previously recommended, the Welsh Government should call for a new memorandum of understanding on UK-EU relations to be agreed between the UK Government and the devolved governments.

Response: Accept in Principle

The Welsh Government is working with the UK and the other Devolved Governments on updating some of the four nations agreements that are currently in place. These discussions may be a route by which to explore cooperation around the UK and Devolved Governments' relationship with the EU.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 44.

The Welsh Government should ascertain how it will be involved in the early stage consultation mechanisms described in Common Understanding and should encourage the UK Government to reach an agreed position with the devolved governments.

Response: Accept in Principle

The role of the Welsh Government in early consultation mechanisms is a subject for negotiation in the forthcoming UK-EU Common Understanding negotiations and we are unable to comment on live negotiations. We will inform the committee of such a role as soon as possible.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 45.

The Welsh Government, in its response to this report, should provide an updated view on the compliance of border control arrangements with World Trade Organisation rules.

Response: Accept

World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules are applicable in situations where trading partners do not have a full scale free-trade agreement in place. As the UK and EU have a trade agreement in place, in the form of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, preferential treatment on goods between the UK and the EU is permitted.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 46.

The Welsh Government should provide its view, in its response to this report, on whether the arrangements to be negotiated as part of Common Understanding could raise compliance issues with Wales's existing international obligations, including non-EU trade agreements.

Response: Accept

We are currently unable to comment on compliance of what may be included in the final arrangements that are part of the Common Understanding, as these have not yet been negotiated. However, we can be clear that the Welsh Government takes its international obligations seriously and would immediately raise with the UK Government if it thought that an arrangement being negotiated would lead to non-compliance. Once a final negotiated position has been reached, the Welsh Government will be able to set out its perspectives on any agreed position.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 47.

Welsh Government should provide its assessment of the operation of the European Union (Future Relationship) Act 2020, and of its implications for the devolution settlement, in the context of concerns raised with Senedd committees. This should include specific commentary on section 29.

Response: Reject

The Welsh Government's positions on the implementation of post-EU legislation has been stated on numerous occasions. The UK Government has committed to not normally legislate in areas of devolved competence without our consent and never without consultation. The Welsh Government will continue to monitor the operation

of the Act and section 29 but does not consider a specific assessment to be required at this time.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 48.

The Welsh Government should provide an update on discussions with the UK Government on the provision of financial support for UK Domestic Advisory Group participants.

Response: Accept

This issue has been discussed directly with the UK Government and it has confirmed that no funding is available and that all UK Domestic Advisory Group (UK DAG) meetings have a hybrid option for attending.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 49.

The Welsh Government should set out how it engaged with the UK Government's 2024 review of the membership of the UK DAG, and should explain the steps it took to raise awareness amongst Welsh organisations of the UK Government's expressions of interest campaign.

Response: Accept

The standard process we follow when membership of groups such as the UK DAG are being recruited for, or reviewed, is to use our existing networks, such as our Trade Policy Advisory Group, to raise awareness of these opportunities. However, in the specific case of the 2024 DAG review we do not have a record of whether this process was followed.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 50.

The Welsh Government should clarify the link, if any, between the Welsh Government's Trade Policy Advisory Group and the TCA's civil society forums.

Response: Accept

There is no formal link between the Trade Policy Advisory Group (TPAG) and the TCA's Civil Society Forum (CSF). The Trade Policy Advisory Group was set up provide the Welsh Government with advice on matters relating to Trade Policy, with its remit increasingly focusing on the EU Trade in 2024. Membership of both TPAG and the CSF is broad, including business bodies and a range of other organisations. Although,

some members of TPAG may also attend CSFs, there is no deliberate effort to ensure that CSF attendees are also TPAG members.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 51.

The Welsh Government should clarify how it monitors and engages with the work of the UK Domestic Advisory Group and the Civil Society Forum.

Response: Accept

While it is the responsibility of the UK Government to monitor the work the UK Domestic Advisory Group (DAG), some members of the Welsh Government's Trade Policy Advisory Group (TPAG) are also members of the UK DAG and as such we are able to hear their views directly. We also actively engage with other DAG members such as APBI, BSI, SMMT and UKAS⁴ to understand their views on key matters and identify opportunities to collaborate.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 52.

The Welsh Government should confirm if the governments of the UK are developing a central mechanism to monitor changes to EU law for the purposes of monitoring alignment and divergence.

Response: Accept

The Welsh Government will explore with the UK Government, Scottish Government and Northern Ireland Executive, including through the Inter-Ministerial Group on UK-EU Relations, the potential to develop a UK-wide mechanism to monitor alignment with, and divergence from, the EU.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 53.

The Welsh Government should set out how it has ascertained whether alignment and divergence has occurred between the UK and the EU, and between Wales and the EU, since the UK's exit from the EU.

Response: Accept in principle

This work is already underway in the areas that are currently being negotiated.

⁴ APBI - Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, BSI - British Standards Institution, SMMT - Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, UKAS - United Kingdom Accreditation Service

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 54.

The Welsh Government should seek clarity on how EU law will apply in the UK if it is to dynamically align to the EU. It should ensure this process respects the role of the devolved governments and legislatures.

Response: Accept

We are currently engaging with the UK Government on how it intends to take forward legislation to implement any future agreements with the EU, including on the role that devolved legislatures will need to take to implement agreements in devolved areas. We have been clear that any legislative process must respect the devolution settlement and existing processes in the devolved governments.

Financial Implications: None

Recommendation 55.

The Welsh Government should clarify what role common frameworks will play in decision-making about UK alignment to the EU.

Response: Accept

Common Frameworks are an important mechanism for discussion and cooperation between the four governments in policy areas previously governed by EU law. They provide a forum to share evidence and explore the impacts of regulatory alignment and divergence, helping governments to make informed decisions on EU alignment. Each government retains the right to decide on EU alignment within its own competence. Frameworks help ensure those decisions are transparent and can support coordinated approaches where appropriate, while respecting each government's ability to diverge.

Financial Implications: None

Economy, Trade, and Rural Affairs Committee

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Rebecca Evans MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning

30 October 2025

Dear Rebecca,

Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the UK and India

The Committee noted with interest the signing of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between the UK and India (the Agreement) in July 2025.

We welcome the evidence you provided to the Committee during our evidence session on 17 July in regards to the Agreement and Wales' trading relationship with India, including your commitment to publish a perspectives document.

I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with a copy of the document. If it is not yet available, the Committee would welcome a progress update on its development and expected publication date.

In light of rapidly evolving global trade developments, it would also assist the Committee if you could provide your early findings on the below aspects of the Agreement which may fall outside of the perspectives document.

- The UK Government has cited that the Agreement could be worth £80m to the Welsh economy, as well as providing Welsh consumers access to lower priced products. What has the Welsh Government's assessment found to be the key impacts and do they align with the UK Government's findings?
- Will the assessment detail the compatibility of the Agreement with the Welsh Government's ambitions, as set out in its 2024 approach to trade policy paper?



- What are the Agreement's implications for the Welsh steel industry?

I would be grateful to receive your response by 21 November.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English