

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Chief Secretary to the Treasury

25 February 2021

Dear Chief Secretary

Inquiry into the implementation of the Wales Act 2014 and operation of the Fiscal Framework

Thank you for your [letter of 23 February 2021](#), which addressed the issues raised in my [letter of 8 January 2021](#). However, you have not responded to the request made in my [letter of 16 February 2021](#) for you to attend a meeting of the Finance Committee to discuss issues relating to the Fiscal Framework.

Whilst the Committee is very pleased that the [Secretary of State for Wales has agreed to attend](#) to give evidence on matters relating to his responsibilities, he has made it very clear that detailed questions about the UK Government's fiscal policy and the Fiscal Framework are matters for HM Treasury.

Our [report](#) raised some key questions into tax devolution mechanisms, transparency and engagement with the Welsh Government over funding decisions, the potential for reviewing the Barnett formula; and consideration of increasing borrowing powers. Whilst your letter provides some information on these areas, your unwillingness to attend denies Members the opportunity to explore these important issues with you in depth..

We appreciate that as a UK Government Secretary you are accountable to the UK Parliament. However, I would remind you that the Independent Commission on Funding and Finance for Wales' report: [Fairness and accountability: a new funding settlement for Wales](#), recommended that a Treasury Minister should be invited to meet the Senedd's Finance Committee at least once in every spending review period to discuss the funds made available to Wales. It has been some time since a Treasury Minister has been willing to engage with us, and this engagement is vital following the implementation of the Wales Act 2014 and the Fiscal Framework



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The Committee believes that your unwillingness to participate in scrutiny of powers, which fall within the remit of both the UK Government and the Welsh Government, sets a precedent which has constitutional implications and shows a disregard for the Senedd.

I would urge you to agree to attend a meeting of the Finance Committee prior to the end of this Senedd. However, if you remain unwilling to attend a meeting, it would be helpful, if you could outline, how you expect the Senedd to establish the success or otherwise of the Wales Act 2014 and the Fiscal Framework.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Llyr', is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Llyr Gruffydd MS / AS

Cadeirydd / Chair

Cc: Rebecca Evans MS, Minister for Finance and Trefnydd

Elin Jones MS, Llywydd of the Senedd

