

Lesley Griffiths AM
Minister for Environment and Rural Affairs

11 June 2019

Dear Lesley

Please find enclosed a copy of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee ('the Committee') report on the Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum for the Agriculture Bill.

I should be grateful if you would respond to the Committee's conclusions and recommendation as soon as possible, and **at least one week in advance of the Plenary debate on the LCMs.**

I would also like to take this opportunity to seek clarification and/or further information from you on a number of matters arising from your recent Plenary statement on *Brexit and Our Land*.

We note your intention to consult on revised policy proposals for a single sustainable farming system over the summer, with a view to responding to the consultation in spring 2020.

1. Can you provide an indicative timeline for the development of the new system, beyond spring 2020?

You have made clear that changes to the current system of support cannot be made until a new system is adequately designed and relevant impact assessments are undertaken. You have also made clear that this work cannot be progressed until there is clarity from the UK Government around future funding for agricultural support.



2. Given that you are unlikely to be in a position to change the current system of support for some time, can you clarify whether it is still your intention to take the relevant powers in Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 3 of the UK Agriculture Bill, which would enable you to introduce a new system?

In our report, the *Legislative Consent Memorandum in relation to the UK Agriculture Bill* ('our first report'), we call for the Welsh Government to commit to making time available in the legislative programme for a Wales Agriculture Bill to be brought forward and passed before the end of the fifth Assembly. While you have not yet responded to our first report, you make clear in your response to the *Brexit and Our Land* consultation that the timing for a Wales Agriculture Bill "will be determined in the context of decision on the legislative programme".

3. Can you clarify what discussions you have had with the First Minister about securing time within the legislative programme for a Wales Agriculture Bill?

I should be grateful if you would respond to the above questions as soon as possible, and by **Tuesday 25 June** at the latest.

Finally, I would like to thank you for informing us of the dates of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and of the key issues that are due to be discussed. In line with the *Inter-Institutional agreement between the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government*, we would welcome more specific details of agenda items for each meeting, as they become available. We look forward to receiving a written summary of the issues discussed at the 26 June meeting in due course.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Hedges AM

Chair of Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee

