

7 June 2023

Mark Drakeford MS
First Minister
Welsh Government

Re: International relations scrutiny follow-up

Dear Mark,

I am writing to you following our annual scrutiny of the Welsh Government's work on international relations on Wednesday, 10 May 2023, and for your letter of 24 May 2023 providing further information. The Committee would like to express its gratitude for the time you have taken to share with us the work that has been ongoing over the past year, and your future ambitions for international relations. During the meeting, we agreed to follow up a number of matters raised below.

Letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, Rt Hon James Cleverley MP

During the meeting, we discussed that you recently wrote to the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, Rt Hon James Cleverley MP. This was in connection with instructions to British embassies that meetings with the Welsh Government conducted as part of an overseas visit should also have a UK Government representative present. The Committee would be grateful if you could share a copy of that letter, and any response you received.

Memoranda of Understanding

We also discussed that the Welsh Government is in the process of agreeing new memoranda with Flanders and Baden Württemberg. We would welcome an update on discussions, including a timeline for putting these memoranda in place. Once these memoranda are agreed, we would be grateful to receive copies to assist with our understanding of the relationships that are being developed to support delivery of the International Strategy.



Wales in Canada

In addition, we discussed the launch of the Year of Wales in France initiative and the planned activities around the Rugby World Cup in the autumn. The Members acknowledged the importance of major sporting events as a diplomatic platform for increasing Wales's global presence and influence. As the Year of Wales in Canada initiative draws to a close, the Committee would welcome a summary of the year's activities, outlining key successes and outcomes and how these have aligned with the International Strategy. In particular, the Committee also would be keen to understand any lessons learned from the relative success of the previous year's activities and how these have informed changes to the Year of Wales in France programme.

Indigenous languages

You will be aware that languages are a particular area of interest for this Committee. Following the conclusion of the Year of Wales in Canada initiative, please could you share any information with us about work that was carried out specifically in this area, including with indigenous languages.

Priorities for 2023

You have spoken at length about your joint work with the Welsh Rugby Union to promote Wales at the last tournament in Japan in 2019. In light of the recent allegations, and the upcoming Rugby World Cup in France, has the Welsh Government's relationship with the Welsh Rugby Union to deliver its international ambitions changed please, and how?

Wales-EU relations

Could you tell us what plans there are, if any, for the future of the role of Welsh Government's representative in Europe.

Welsh Government reporting on international activities

Finally, we have a number of questions in relation to the Welsh Government's reporting on its international activities, as follows:

- Please could you provide the Committee with the Welsh Government's view of progress against its International Strategy.
- Please explain how in-country and trade mission activities are coordinated with UK Government missions and embassies to ensure value for money.
- The Draft Budget information provided on the overseas offices says that each overseas office will be responsible for delivering against their individual remits. Are you satisfied that each office managed to do so in 2022-23?
- You have provided us with a copy of your annual report on overseas offices which describes activity for the period 2022-23. The report lists events or visits that have taken place, but it does not provide information on the outcomes that were delivered as a result. How is the efficacy of overseas events and activities monitored and evaluated?
- During the meeting, you agreed to provide updated costs for international visits undertaken by Welsh Government ministers for this financial year to date. The Committee would be grateful to receive this.

We will continue consider these matters throughout the course of the Sixth Senedd and welcome your willingness to engage with the Committee and your invitation to feed into future international relations policy, as discussed.

We look forward to receiving your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Delyth Jewell'.

Delyth Jewell MS

Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.
We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.