



Delyth Jewell MS
Chair
Culture, Communication, Welsh Language, Sport
and International Relations Committee
Senedd Cymru

6 July 2023

Dear Delyth,

I am writing in response to your letter of 07 June which requested further information following my attendance at the Committee's annual scrutiny session of International Relations on 10 May.

Guidance on DAs sent to UK Heads of Mission by UK Foreign Secretary

I wrote to the Foreign Secretary on 3 May expressing disappointment with the revised guidance sent to UK Heads of Mission. The approach is not in line with the collaborative principles set out in the Inter-governmental Review as the guidance was developed unilaterally by the UK Government without consultation. It also states that a senior UK officials should be present at all overseas meetings held by devolved governments if they believe that reserved matters may be discussed.

The matter was raised at the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC) attended by Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution. The meeting noted the concerns around the recent guidance and agreed that Ministers would invite the FCDO to a future IMSC to discuss this issue.

The FS responded to my letter on 22 May, noting the concerns but concluding that the practice of UK Government officials being present at ministerial-level meetings with host governments has been a longstanding and common one, and having UK Government officials present can help to ensure policy cohesion and clarity of messaging on UK international policy. I enclose both letters for noting (English only).

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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.

International bi-lateral agreements

I signed the Wales/Flanders Memorandum of Understanding with the Minister President on his visit to Cardiff on 6 June. Similar agreements with Baden Württemberg and Silesia are currently in development, and subject to agreement we expect these to be signed before the end of the year. I will also be re-signing our agreement with Brittany when I travel to Rennes in the Summer, and we are exploring the possibility of a refreshed agreement with Catalonia at some point in the future.

Following the recommendation by the Committee, we created a [dedicated webpage](#) that lists all active international bi-lateral agreements, including the listing of the areas of co-operation with our partners. Details on the Flanders agreement have been included. On the basis that we have the details of the agreements on a dedicated webpage, I see no reason to send on copies of these to the Committee which are generally standard in their form and structure.

Wales in Canada 2022 Programme of Activity

I have included a summary of the Wales in Canada 2022 activity at Annex A, which also includes achievements and outcomes. All the activity aligned with at least one of the international strategy's three key ambitions to:

- Raise Wales' international profile,
- Grow our economy through exports and inward investment,
- Establish Wales as a globally responsible nation.

The main lessons learned from the previous campaigns centred around earlier engagement in the planning process - both across government and with external stakeholders - and the securing of additional support officers to help deliver the campaign at least three months ahead. We have also seen a difference in our communications opportunities and outputs when a press officer is part of an outward ministerial delegation. All of these lessons have been applied to Wales in France 2023 and we will continue to evaluate each campaign to measure its success and to continue to apply learning to ensure we maximise the opportunities of each campaign.

Language activity during Wales in Canada 2022

Language forms an important part of our international activity as set out in the International Strategy. Our 'Wales in' years have sought to use this opportunity to engage in this area. As part of the Wales in Canada year, activity covering language included:

- Welsh presence at BreakOut West Festival in Calgary, with three separate artists showcasing. In collaboration with FOCUS Wales, we supported three showcase concerts to highlight the Welsh artists and held a Sunday music session with Welsh and Indigenous languages artists. On Truth and Reconciliation Day, Wales Arts International and a representative of the Welsh band Adwaith spoke on a panel around the role music plays in protecting and promoting indigenous languages.

- Supporting a project through the Wales-Quebec Call for Proposals to facilitate collaboration between Literature Across Frontiers and literary festival 'Metropolis Bleu' in Montreal. A bilingual language writer came to Montreal and did a reading in Welsh and English in the Montreal Botanical Gardens.
- Promotion on social media of Urdd Peace message in Canada's official languages, and Inuktitut – the most widely-spoken indigenous language in Canada.
- Promotion of Wales via the collaboration with Yukon-based social media influencer, Pavlina Sudrich, who promoted Wales' values, language, sport, culture and heritage to her hundreds of thousands of followers. The videos we commissioned from this collaboration gained over 5.5million views, with high rates of engagement.
- Office of the Future Generations Commissioner visit to Canada showcasing our work in Wales on language as part of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages.

A full list of Wales in Canada 2022 activity is at Annex A.

Welsh Government Relationship with Welsh Rugby Union

We look forward to Wales being represented again in a major international sporting tournament and the excitement that this brings to Wales and the platform it offers to raise our profile internationally. In terms of the Rugby World Cup, this means that we will continue to work with all our stakeholders involved in the Wales in France year including the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU). The WRU is the national governing body for rugby union in Wales and has an aim to promote rugby and participation in the sport across Wales. Citizens across Wales will be looking forward to our nation's participation in the tournament and it is right that we are ready to support that.

I am concerned when any organisation faces challenges and allegations around its internal processes and cultures. I think it is important to acknowledge that the WRU has recognised and accepted the concerns that have been raised and has taken positive steps. The external review and the recent governance changes that were agreed at the EGM in March is a very positive step in the right direction. Last week WRU appointed an independent chair and a new director onto the board. We need to continue to see improvements and we will continue our engagement with WRU on that basis.

From a sport perspective we need to continue working closely with key partners and stakeholders, such as the WRU, as custodians of the game. We will maintain productive relations to deliver, for example, the community game, as this contributes to the Programme for Government commitment to enhance access and increase participation in sport and physical activity.

Future role of Welsh Government's representative in Europe.

Derek Vaughan was appointed as the Welsh Government Representative on Europe in January 2022 by open competition for a fixed term until early 2024. Since taking up the role, he has been successfully using his experience and contacts to enhance Wales' connectivity and visibility in Brussels in the post-Brexit period.

We will consider the future of the role during this year, taking account of how the role has worked, and assessing the broader context of the Wales-EU relationship.

Progress against the International Strategy

Flexibility is key to achieving the ambitions of the International Strategy. When it was written, no-one would have predicted war in Europe, the shift in the geopolitical landscape, or the fact that many of our longest-standing partner countries, such as Japan, would be forced to close their borders for more than two years hampering trade and tourism. These challenges have taught us that we have to react to change.

In fact, there is a view that global events over the last few years have increased our profile. Diplomatic and international visits into Wales are increasing rapidly. Diplomats arrive in Wales with a significant knowledge of the country, our culture and our policies. I frequently get asked specific questions about Wales' approach during the pandemic, innovative policy approaches - such as the Taith programme - or about our action to safeguard and strengthen the Welsh language. Other events, particularly sporting ones, have raised the profile of the country and we have worked hard to make the most of these. The Men's Football World Cup is an obvious one and very high profile. But it is important to remember our activities in other tournaments - including the Women's Rugby World Cup in New Zealand, the Commonwealth Games in England and the Men's Hockey World Cup in India.

The [2022-23 Annual Report](#) and the statement I made during [Plenary on 13 June](#) provides a good summary of progress on our international activity.

Co-ordinating activity with the UK Government overseas to ensure Value for Money

Our International Strategy and Export Action Plan commit us to working closely with our partners in-market, including overseas missions and embassies, to amplify our voice overseas and deliver our in-market activities/trade missions.

Where appropriate, we work jointly with the Department for Business & Trade's (DBT) overseas networks and UK Embassies to support the delivery of trade mission activity, including the delivery of in-market briefing sessions for Welsh businesses, organise networking receptions, joint stands with UK Government pavilions at targeted global trade exhibitions, to maximise opportunities and ensure value for money.

Where we have Welsh Government offices, the in-market teams develop relationships with their DBT and FCDO colleagues looking for opportunities to cooperate on key events and activities.

Overseas colleagues work with DBT colleagues to promote opportunities for Welsh companies to participate in overseas DBT initiatives such as in-bound and out-bound sector missions, virtual/physical conferences and events and business/ academic/ expert speaking opportunities.

Overseas teams also seek UK colleague's engagement with Wales-led projects such as St David's Day and our "Wales in..." initiatives. The French Ambassador, for example, recently hosted the launch and supported other activities for Wales in France 2023. And we had a close working relationship with the UK Embassy in Qatar throughout the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

In markets where we don't have an office, we work on a reactive basis building links with local governments and economic development agencies to develop opportunities for Welsh exports and uncover any linked investment opportunities.

Delivery against the Overseas Office Remits

I am very proud of what our overseas offices have delivered in 2022-23 – and have had the chance to see some of that in person through my programmes in Dublin and Cork, Qatar, Brussels and Paris. The annual report shows an extensive array of activity that they have delivered against their remits.

As well as delivering on trade and investment, our offices have also undertaken considerable work in terms of projecting Wales' values and our commitment to working in partnership as a globally responsible partner. They have promoted Wales' innovative programmes and policies such as Taith and the Well-being of Future Generations Act.

They have worked with colleagues across the Welsh Government to support Programme for Government and other commitments in education, sport, education, tourism, culture, Welsh Language, sustainable futures and science to promote Wales' distinct propositions and ideas to collaborate to solve our global challenges of climate change and decarbonisation.

The overseas offices have worked with Wales delivery partners and overseas stakeholders from sector forums and business clusters, including those where we have established strategic international partnerships such as the Urdd, Wales Arts International, Future Generations Commissioner's Office, and Academi Heddwch – as well as other partnerships with British Council Wales, Global Wales and Amgueddfa Cymru. These partnerships are growing year-on-year and combined efforts are delivering more impact internationally.

In Europe, the team has also been active in developing key European networks, such as the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and Vanguard Initiative to support the delivery of European aspects of our economic, academic, science and research and innovation objectives.

Our combined international marketing and communications reach has also increased significantly - discovering some new, innovative ways to tell Wales' story - particularly through digital channels - reaching new audiences in engaging ways, as well as some success stories with traditional TV and press coverage e.g. Wales in Canada, Wales in France, FIFA World Cup.

Monitoring and evaluation of international activity

Soft power, by the very nature of its activity, is difficult to measure, but is a valuable tool in our international engagement.

The Annual Report sets out publicly what we have achieved over the past year. It includes three case studies – the FIFA 2022 World Cup, Wales in Canada 2022 and our approach to Europe. Each overseas office also has a published remit which sets out how it will support the delivery of the International Strategy and its action plans.

Each of the Action Plans contain a series of short- and long-term objectives which contain a mix of tangible and intangible outcomes.

It is relatively easy to measure attendance and engagement at our overseas events. The number of companies attending a trade mission or trade show, the value of export deals signed at these events all provide very tangible outcomes - as do the number of attendees at a diaspora reception or networking event.

Where it is difficult to measure the outcomes, we can use metrics - such as communications - to understand the reach of our activity. Not all our activity can be measured in this way but each of our overseas teams uses social media to promote Wales in line with the ambitions of the International Strategy.


The media coverage of Wales throughout the Minister for Economy's visit to Washington DC for the Wales v USA game was wide and varied, including radio and television interviews. The Washington Post had the 'Soccer in the Circle' event as the front page of its Metro supplement, plus a double page inside spread, which included interviews with American alumni who had studied in Wales. This type of engagement is valuable but difficult to measure – readership is estimated at over 655,000 in the DC Metro area and more than 63 million people access the Washington Post's website.

A fuller evaluation of the Qatar World Cup is still taking place and is expected to be published in July.

Ministerial Overseas Travel Costs

All ministerial overseas travel costs will be published in line with the timetables set out in the Ministerial Code. A Written Statement outlines the programme for each visit and ensures that Members - and the public - can see the breadth of activity undertaken on an overseas visit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

MARK DRAKEFORD

Wales in Canada 2022

Below is the full list of activity between March 2022 – February 2023.

Activity	Where
<u>March</u>	
• Launch Wales in Canada - FM message	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• Launch Wales in Canada - HC to UK message	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• Launch Wales in Canada - Reception on Ice	Ottawa, Ontario
• Panel on indigenous languages in music	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• St David's Day activities	London, UK
• Expo Dubai	Dubai, UAE
• Parliamentary Internship Programme visit to Wales	Cardiff, Wales
• Cyber UK	Newport, Wales
<u>April</u>	
• Nuclear Trade Mission	Ottawa, Ontario
• Global Wales Scholarship extended to Canadian Students	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• Agent General for Ontario visit to Cardiff	Cardiff, Wales
<u>May</u>	
• World AI Summit	Montreal, Quebec
• FOCUS Wales	Wrexham, Wales
• Canada Goes Cymru Launch	Wrexham, Wales
• Metropolis Blue Montreal	Montreal, Quebec
• Urdd peace message	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• Launch of Wales-Quebec joint call for proposals	Virtual – Quebec/ Wales
• Alumni Event Toronto	Toronto Ontario
• Visit to Welsh Church Toronto	Toronto Ontario
<u>June</u>	
• Jubilee Garden Party	Ottawa Ontario
• Doors Open Ottawa	Ottawa Ontario
• HMS Protector event – Montreal & Quebec City	Quebec City, Quebec
• Wales Coast Path press trip	Wales
• Canadian Poet in Wales through Wales-Quebec Call for proposals	Aberystwyth, Wales
• Banff Cultural Centre visit – National Indigenous People's Day	Banff, Alberta
• Cor Gogledd America concert – Banff & Calgary	Banff & Calgary

<u>July</u>	
• Marking 6 month of WiC	Virtual
• Commonwealth Games	Birmingham, UK
• Farnborough International Airshow	Farnborough, UK
<u>August</u>	
• Donna Screening	Ottawa
• Welsh Women Rugby Team in Canada: Wales v Canada match	Halifax
<u>September</u>	
• Trade Mission to Canada	Ottawa / Toronto / Halifax
• Toronto International Film Festival	Toronto
• WFG Commissioner visit	Montreal/ Ottawa / Vancouver
• Welsh Event Vancouver	Vancouver, BC
• Wales Arts International Visit	Montreal Ottawa, Vancouver
<u>October</u>	
• Breakout West	Calgary, Alberta
<u>November</u>	
• SoftPowerCymru Podcast Launch	Virtual - Canada/ Wales
• Ontario & Wales at Medica Düsseldorf	Düsseldorf, Germany
• CAMH/Wales Symposium: Digital Mental Health from Policy to Practice	Virtual - Ontario/ Wales
• M for Montreal	Montreal Quebec
• Announce results of Call for Proposals	Quebec & Wales
• BC Creative x Creative Wales Trade reception	London, UK
• FIFA World Cup events	Canada
<u>December</u>	
• Minister for Climate Change Visit to Montreal	Montreal, Quebec
• WG presence at Biodiversity COP15 Summit	Montreal, Quebec
• End of year message from MCC	Virtual – Canada/ Wales
• FM responds to Yukon TikTokker	Virtual The Yukon
<u>January</u>	
• FM interview on CBC Radio	Virtual The Yukon
<u>February</u>	
• Yukon TikTokker visits Wales	Wales

Outcomes & Achievements

Wales in Canada key achievements and outcomes included:

Education

- The extension of the Global Wales Postgraduate Scholarship to students from Canada. So far, over more than 100 students from Wales are to study in Canada through the Taith programme, and this Scholarship aims to encourage even more links between higher education institutions in Wales and those in Canada.

Arts

- Wales Arts International signing an agreement with the *Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec* (CALQ) for three reciprocal artistic residencies between Wales and Quebec, supporting six artists. The first of these will begin with a Welsh artist taking up residency at the *Centre des musiciens du monde* in Montreal in September 2023.
- Screening of the film 'Donna': Screening event to premier the film 'Donna' at Ottawa's Capital Pride. The event included a Q&A with Welsh director Jay Bedwani, Welsh producer Dewi Gregory, and protagonist Donna Persona who was flown out from San Francisco by the US Embassy Ottawa, who we partnered with on the event.

Strengthening relationships

- Following the alumni and diaspora events, new contacts were made and used to facilitate other events throughout the year, such as World Cup watch parties.
- Policy roundtable between the Future Generations Commissioner's and Vancouver Economic Commission (VEC), focussed on First Nations approaches to well-being and knowledge sharing between Wales and Canada.
- Ongoing discussions with the Ontario Government about signing a Memorandum of Understanding across a range of sectors for mutual benefit, with an accompanying action plan, in 2023.
- A pipeline of follow up activity from the Minister of Climate Change visit to Montreal in December 2022; the first inward visit to Wales by one of the Canadian stakeholders met is planned for June 2023.
- 12 joint projects between Welsh and Quebec-based stakeholders approved for 2022 in collaboration with the Quebec Government to be undertaken in 2023, with a fourth Call for Proposals to be launched in spring 2023.

Raising Wales' profile

- Three Canadian television networks covered our work, the Globe and Mail (with a readership of over seven million) published a full-length op-ed. The First Minister also delivered an audio interview with CBC.
- Our collaboration with a Canadian social media influencer from the Yukon generated over 5.3million views for the commissioned Wales content across TikTok and Instagram alone, with nearly 750,000 likes and comments.
- The collaboration was a news story for major news organisations in Canada and Wales, with articles and interviews about this work appearing online and on primetime television broadcasts.
- The Welsh women's rugby team played the Canadian women's rugby team in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in the run-up to the Rugby World Cup in New Zealand in October 2022. The match was used to host local business, political, and diaspora contacts. The match was broadcast on S4C in Wales and the main sports channel in Canada, TSN. We also undertook some corporate sponsorship of the match to market tourism to Wales.