

Huw Irranca-Davies MS
Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

08 April 2024

Dear Huw

Internal Drainage Districts (IDDs)

On 19 March I received a response from the previous Minister for Rural Affairs to a request for information about the effectiveness and sustainability of the current approach to managing IDD, and whether funding and capacity was sufficient to support that work. I informed the Minister that the Committee was also writing to NFU, FUW and NRW for their views.

The Minister's response was brief and lacking in detail or timeframes for action. It indicated that work to alter IDD boundaries has stalled due to other legislative commitments but did not address the continued sustainability of the current IDD regime. The responses received from NRW and FUW indicate there are significant issues to be addressed, including around NRW's ability to effectively fulfil its role as Internal Drainage Board for the 13 IDBs in Wales. This is particularly important in light of climate change and the need to protect fertile and productive agricultural land. NRW's response calls for a review:

"We are of the opinion that there should be a review of the purpose and role of IDBs/IDDs, and the operating model, and would be happy to play our part in such a review alongside all stakeholders. This sits within the need to continually review our collective flood risk management responses and future plans in all areas of Wales, and not just IDBs, as we respond to the significant challenges from the climate and nature emergencies."

The responses are attached and will be published as papers to note at the Committee's next meeting on 24 April. I would be grateful if you would review them and provide the Committee with a more full explanation of Welsh Government's plans in this regard, and clear timescales for further action. The



Committee has been asked to undertake an inquiry into this issue, and would like a fuller response from the Welsh Government before proceeding further.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'P' and a long, sweeping underline.

Paul Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

