



Mike Hedges MS
Chair, Legislation, Justice and Constitution Committee
Senedd Cymru
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

16 October 2024

Dear Mike,

Further to my recent letter advising you of the Finance: Interministerial Standing Committee (F:ISC) on 3 October in Belfast, I would like to briefly report on the discussions. A communique was also published following the meeting: [Communiq   from the Finance: Interministerial Standing Committee - 3 October 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/finance-interministerial-standing-committee-3-october-2024).

Joining me in attendance were Rt Hon Darren Jones MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Shona Robison MSP, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, and Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, Northern Irish Minister of Finance.

The overall tone of the meeting was one of collaboration and partnership. During our discussion on the economic and fiscal context and plans, I highlighted the impact the previous UK Government's austerity policy had on productivity of public services, including the NHS. We discussed opportunities to boost productivity, including through digital initiatives and we agreed to work together on the parameters of public sector pay. There was also a commitment to greater collective engagement to drive growth.

There was a discussion around devolved governments having appropriate budgetary flexibilities. It was agreed officials would work together to look at structural issues to enable devolved governments to be empowered to manage our resources in the best way and maximise the value derived from them.

It was acknowledged there was a series of legacy issues on which the incoming UK Government would want to take its own view but would have implications for the devolved governments. We explored how we can work together to make progress, including on the future of replacement EU funds and other UK levelling up funds. This included the principle that spending decisions in devolved areas must be made by devolved governments.

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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.

I will host the next meeting in Wales.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language