

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS
Y Dirprwy Brif Weinidog ac Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros
Newid Hinsawdd a Materion Gwledig
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate
Change and Rural Affairs



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref PO/HIDCC/0012/25

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

20 January 2025

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your letter of 14 January regarding the Water (Special Measures) Bill, and advance sight of some of your recommendations.

I recognise the Bill has progressed at pace through the UK Parliament and I would like to thank the committee for its engagement on the Bill.

You will no doubt have noted that the Legislative Consent Motion for the Bill was laid on 14 January which outlined the clauses requiring the Senedd's consent. SLCM (No.3) was laid because of the amendment to extend the application of Clause 2 (Pollution Incident Reduction Plans) to Wales. Paragraph 48 of SLCM (No.3) states that I am seeking the legislative consent of the Senedd in relation to Clause 2, and in paragraph 54 I recommend the Senedd gives its consent to the amendments covered in SLCM (No.3).

I trust this addresses your concerns around SLCM (No.3) with regard to clarity on the clauses requiring consent.

I am grateful for sight of your further recommendation of an additional SLCM on the Welsh Government's approach to water quality in Wales. I do not feel it would be appropriate for me to use a procedural measure on a specific piece of legislation to set out wider policy statements, and that was not the intention of the reference the Committee has highlighted.

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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 would draw the Committee's attention to my Statement to the Senedd on 17th September last year. In that I set out clearly my priorities for the water sector and the wider water environment in Wales.

The reference to water as a cross-border issue was simply intended to reflect the reality that some of our iconic rivers, such as the Severn, the Dee and the Wye, cross national borders. What happens upstream in England impacts downstream in Wales and vice versa and so cooperation is key. In addition, regulators such as Ofwat, the Drinking Water inspectorate and the organisation which champions the interests of consumers, the Consumer Council for Water operate with both Wales and England remits.

Given there have been amendments tabled for Report Stage in the UK Parliament, I will be laying a further Supplementary Legislative Consent Memorandum in due course and am happy to clarify the position within that.

I hope this letter addresses your concerns, and I look forward to hearing from the Committee further in due course.

I am also copying this letter to the Llywydd.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Huw Irranca-Davies', written in a cursive style.

Huw Irranca-Davies AS/MS

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