

Mark Drakeford AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a'r Gymraeg
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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

5 March 2025

Dear Mike,

I can confirm that the Finance: Interministerial Standing Committee (F:ISC) meeting was held in Cardiff on 27 February. A communique has been published following the meeting: [Finance: Interministerial Standing Committee - 27 February 2025 - GOV.UK](#).

I chaired the meeting and joining me were the Rt Hon Darren Jones MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury (UK Government), Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, Shona Robison MSP (Scottish Government) and John O'Dowd MLA, Minister of Finance (Northern Ireland Executive).

The meeting was productive with a focus on collaboration to address the current fiscal challenges. The Chief Secretary confirmed that the Spring Forecast on 26 March will present the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) forecast. We also explored how we can engage to ensure our key priorities are reflected in the UK Government's Spending Review, which will conclude on 11 June. We agreed to work together to look at opportunities to align our priorities for investment and maximise available resources, including in respect of our infrastructure investments.

During discussions on fiscal plans, I explained the impact of the UK Government's National Insurance Contributions changes in Wales and the importance of the UK Government funding Welsh public sector employers' National Insurance contributions, in the same way as English public services.

Improvements in communication, including earlier notification of changes to devolved settlements from the UK Government was acknowledged and welcomed, and agreement was reached to codify these so that they are set out formally.

We discussed the importance of increased budgetary flexibilities, such as additional borrowing and reserve flexibilities to allow the devolved governments to maximise resources and adapt to unforeseen financial pressures. It was agreed that a detailed options paper will be prepared for discussion at our next meeting.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Mark.Drakeford@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Mark.Drakeford@llyw.cymru

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.

The next in person meeting will be held in London in May, with the intention to also meet virtually in April.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'M'.

Mark Drakeford AS/MS

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