

Sir Chris Bryant MP
Minister of State
Department for Business and Trade
UK Government

Rebecca Evans MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Welsh Government

The Rt Hon Jo Stevens MP
Secretary of State for Wales
UK Government

16 October 2025

Dear Sir Chris, Rebecca and Jo,

Trade Defence

In light of last week's European Commission proposals on steel, the Committee is deeply concerned about the future of the Welsh and the wider UK steel industry. As you will all be well aware, steel is a critical industry for the nation and provides many high-quality jobs across Wales. As such it requires strong support through Government policy.

On Thursday 9 October we held a [meeting looking at the future of Welsh steel](#). In this meeting we heard from Tata and from key trade unions who represent steel workers. Both Tata and the unions made it absolutely clear that the European Commission's proposals, if realised, could present a real threat to the Welsh and wider UK steel industry.



During that meeting Rajesh Nair, Chief Executive of Tata Steel UK told us “the UK also needs to start looking at or designing the new quota systems or the safeguard systems that it would like to put in place, similar to what the European Union has done”.

Alasdair McDiarmid, Assistant General Secretary of Community Union, told us that whilst the US tariffs have been a major problem for the industry the proposals would be on “completely different order of magnitude” as 80% of Welsh steel is exported to the EU. Alasdair echoed Rajesh’s calls for stronger trade defences saying “we have to bring forward really decisive action on our own trade defence regime”.

Alasdair also noted that domestic consumption of UK-manufactured steel is at a historic low. He told the Committee “Only 32 per cent of UK demand is satisfied by steel that’s produced in the UK”. He highlighted that, whilst this was a sad “state of affairs”, it was also an opportunity. He suggested that with “the right trade defence, with the right investment, we do have the opportunity to grow our industry to take back some of that market share”.

In light of the European Commission’s proposals and the increasingly unpredictable global trading environment, the Committee believes that the UK Government must have in place a responsive trade defence regime to ensure the UK steel industry is competing on a level playing field.

The UK and Welsh Governments must work together to support our steel industry, to avoid a damaging trade war but also to ensure our trade defences are prepared in case they are necessary.

Please can you keep the committee up to date on both negotiations around the Commission’s proposals and any work to implement a new trade defence policy to protect our steel industry.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew RT Davies". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Andrew RT Davies MS

Chair: Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English