

# Cross-Party Group Minutes

## Cross Party Group Details

### Cross Party Group Title:

Senedd Cross Party Group for Europe

### Date and time of meeting:

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2025 12.30 to 1.20pm

### Location and state of holding (in-person/ remote/ hybrid):

Conference Room B, Ground Floor, Ty Hywel (In-person)

### Was the meeting an Annual General Meeting:

Yes

No

### Name of Group Chair:

Mick Antoniw MS

### Name of Secretary and Organisation:

Dr Caroline Turner, Wales for Europe

Elizabeth Lending, Wales for Europe

**In attendance:**

**Name/title/organisation:**

Mick Antoniw MS

Alun Davies MS

Rhun ap Iorweth MS

Adam Price MS

Anthony Slaughter

Dr Charles Smith

Dr Caroline Turner (Secretariat)

Elizabeth Lendering (Secretariat)

Nick Wall – MS Support Staff

**Apologies**

Delyth Jewell MS

Peredur Owen Griffiths MS

Sian Gwenllian MS

Jane Dodds MS

Professor Kevin Morgan

## Summary of meeting:

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### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Mick Antoniw welcomed all to the first meeting of the CPG. The meeting would focus on the approach that the Group wishes to take over the next 12 months.

### 2. Appointment of Officers and Secretariat

Chair - Mick Antoniw MS

Vice Chair – Adam Price MS

Secretariat – Wales for Europe – Dr Caroline Turner and Elizabeth Lendering

### 3. Appointment of Supporters

Anthony Slaughter, President of Wales for Europe, Leader of the Wales Green Party

Dr Charles Smith, Chair of Wales for Europe

Prof Kevin Morgan, Emeritus Professor, Cardiff University

Mick Antoniw agreed to approach David Melding, Federal Trust, to see if he would be willing to contribute to the Group's discussions.

### 4. Name of Group and Terms of Reference

Name – Senedd Cross Party Group for Europe

Terms of Reference - The focus of the CPG is to make the case in Wales for the UK to rejoin the European Single Market and Customs Union as a first step to full UK membership of the EU.

### 5. Discussion about priorities and forward work programme

The Group held a discussion the most effective use of the one year remaining of the current Senedd. The meetings must be mindful of the work undertaken by Senedd Committees in recent years and avoid duplication. Initial scoping had identified:

- Lack of data and analysis of the impact of Brexit on the economy of Wales and on specific sectors, with a need for funding to undertake such research
- Though it was laudable that the First Minister leads on European matters, that there is a limit to the focus she is able to give to this matter
- That the Welsh Government approach on how to mitigate the impact of Brexit or how to engage effectively with the European Union would benefit from greater clarity
- That the Welsh Government would benefit from re-establishing a mechanism to engage with sectors and civil society to hear about the impact of Brexit on them (since the European Advisory Group was wound up a while ago)
- That there is no consistency of Senedd Members engaging on European matters, and that a Contact Group approach might be more appropriate
- That there is no funding available for sectors and organisations (including Senedd Members and officers) to maintain their links with well-established European networks or to keep up-to-date with the work of the European Union on matters related to their responsibilities.

Following a thorough discussion, it was agreed that we need to identify how Wales could increase its impact in forthcoming discussions about the UK's links with the EU, in particular the review of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement and the UK Government's Reset. This will be achieved through:

- Inviting Derek Vaughan to the CPG's next meeting, to enable the CPG to gain a better understanding of his role on behalf of Welsh Government
- Inviting the EU Ambassador to the UK to come to Cardiff, for an event hosted by the CPG
- Hearing from key organisations in Wales, such as Universities, the Voluntary Sector and Local Government, as well as business representatives and Trade Unions
- Undertaking a mapping of current links with European Networks and Regions
- Understanding who represents Wales in different fora and networks, such as the Parliamentary Association of the Council of Europe

**6. Europe Days 3-10<sup>th</sup> May** – it was agreed that Mick Antoniw would write to the Presiding Officer of the Senedd, asking for the Council of Europe's flag to be flown between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May, since there are a number of days during

that week that commemorate key milestones in European integration. A similar request would be sent to the First Minister.

## **7. Future meetings**

It was agreed that the CPG should meet every two months or so, with two further meetings before the summer break – early/mid March and late June/early July. Further meetings to be held during the autumn and winter, up to the end of the current Senedd term. A Forward Work Programme will be prepared.

Meetings will be held on Tuesdays between 12.30pm and 1.20pm. Future meetings to be hybrid, with Members and Supporters encouraged to attend in person where possible.

Diary requests to be sent to CPG Members and Supporters. Email to be sent to all Senedd Members informing them of future meetings and inviting them to attend.

Agendas and press notices to be issued bilingually, with translation shared between Wales for Europe Directors and Senedd Member Support Staff. The meeting noted that the Senedd is able to provide simultaneous translation for meetings, if required.