

Huw Irranca-Davies

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Climate Change and Rural Affairs

6 February 2026

Dear Huw,

Written Statement: Deposit Return Scheme – Application for Deposit Management Organisation

In your written statement of 27 November 2025, you confirmed the Welsh Government has formally proposed an exclusion for the Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) in Wales under the UK Internal Market Act 2020.

We note that Welsh Ministers have previously stated to Senedd Committees that exclusions from the Act were not considered necessary for Senedd legislation to be fully effective, despite Senedd committees, including our own, coming to different conclusions.

While we welcome this change in approach, we are seeking further clarity on the process that the Welsh Government is now following in making this request for an exclusion. In particular, we would welcome information on the following matters:

1. The previous UK Government agreed a process with devolved governments for the consideration of exclusions in Common Framework areas. Can you confirm whether this is the process the Welsh Government is following?
 - If so, through which Common Framework is the Welsh Government seeking the exclusion, and when was it discussed at the relevant forum?
 - Has this matter been discussed at an Interministerial Group meeting? If so, which one and when?



- Does the process reflect any of the commitments made by the UK Government in its response to the review of the UK Internal Market Act, particularly regarding consideration of environmental protection impacts and benefits?
2. When does the Welsh Government expect the exclusion process to conclude and the necessary regulations made by the Secretary of State, enabling the Welsh Ministers to make the subordinate legislation needed to introduce a DRS in Wales?
 3. Will you commit to keeping this Committee, and other Senedd committees, updated on progress to ensure transparency and accountability throughout the process?

Separately, we would welcome an update on the expected timetable for the introduction of the second phase of the bans on single-use plastic products provided for in the Schedule to the Environmental Protection (Single-use Plastic Products) (Wales) Act 2023. In particular, we seek confirmation of whether the Welsh Government intends to request an exclusion for the phase 2 products, in line with the approach taken in relation to the DRS.

In order to assist in our timely scrutiny of this matter, we would appreciate receiving a response by 20 February 2026.

I am copying this letter to the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hedges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mike Hedges
Chair