

The Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP
Secretary of State for Wales

22 June 2018

Dear Secretary of State,

Inquiry into preparations for replacing EU funding for Wales

Thank you for your letter of 20 May 2018. The Finance Committee considered your response during our meeting of the 13 June 2018.

On behalf of the Finance Committee, I express our deep regret that you have declined our invitation to provide evidence on the Committee's inquiry into the preparations for replacing EU funding for Wales after the UK leaves the EU. Furthermore, we did not receive a written response to our consultation from your office. Brexit remains the biggest issue facing Britain, and will impact hugely on Wales and the Welsh people. Obtaining the best possible deal between the UK and the EU on financial obligations will establish the economic context for Wales for years to come.

We have started taking evidence to inform this inquiry, much of which has focussed on the role of the UK Government and there has been a reoccurring theme from organisations and stakeholders regarding the lack of information from the UK Government on the Shared Prosperity Fund and the uncertainty around its shape and future governance.

As Secretary of State for Wales with responsibility for ensuring that the interests of Wales are fully taken into account by the UK Government in making decisions that will have effect in Wales, we are extremely disappointed with your lack of engagement on this issue of significant importance to Wales.

Given the uncertainty we are still facing, we would be grateful to receive a written update on the position and would urge you to re-consider your attendance at Committee so Members can pursue this issue further. We appreciate the political sensitivities around the withdrawal negotiations and therefore we would be open to a private briefing or discussion with yourself or your officials, if this would be more suitable at this stage of



the negotiations. We would be happy to accommodate your attendance via video conference, or if attending Cardiff is problematic for you we would facilitate a meeting of the Committee in London.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Thomas'.

Simon Thomas AM

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English

