

Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
First Minister of Wales

27 September 2018

Dear First Minister,

Hub Cymru Africa – request for more information

As part of ‘Wales in the World: an inquiry into the Welsh Government’s approach to external affairs’, we took evidence on the Hub Cymru Africa programme during the summer term. [A transcript of the session is available on the Assembly’s website.](#)

Since its launch in 2006, it is clear to us that the Wales for Africa programme has played an important role as Wales’ contribution to the wider United Nations campaign to ease poverty and promote sustainable development around the world.

In light of our evidence session with stakeholders, and our wider remit to examine the implications of Brexit for the external relations of Wales and the Welsh Government, we write to express the following views, questions and requests for clarification that have arisen as a result of our work.

The Wales for Africa programme

We note that the total annual budget for the Wales for Africa programme is £860,000 and that this amount has remained static for the last ten years. We understand from the oral evidence received that funding arrangements, and the broad split of the total £860,000 pot, have been changed. As of April 2018 the Wales Council for Voluntary Action will now be responsible for funding decisions



relating to the £230,000 Wales for Africa small grants scheme and that Hub Cymru Africa will be responsible for technical advice.¹

In response to questioning, Cat Jones of Hub Cymru Africa told us that it would be helpful to have greater transparency about how the total annual budget of Wales for Africa programme is allocated and spent.²

Commenting on how the scheme operated previously, Cat Jones told us that:

“At the moment, we are responding to the funding bid that was put out by Welsh Government, which came with a series of activities. So, within the application form that we filled out, there wasn’t a strategic direction as such, there wasn’t an overview of strategy, but there was a list of activities to be completed”.

Furthermore, Ms Jones stated that more thinking could be done in terms of what an international strategy for Wales could look like.³

In terms of measuring progress and success we heard that Hub Cymru Africa has a regular cycle of meetings, including quarterly reviews, with Welsh Government officials. It is clear to us, however, that the lack of an overall strategy could pose difficulties for measuring the efficacy of money spent. Furthermore, the range of measures cited by witnesses do not provide us with assurance that delivery organisations are measuring outcomes (as opposed to activities) sufficiently robustly.

We would therefore welcome clarification from you on:

- whether the Welsh Government will commit to undertake a review of its overarching strategy in the field of international development;

¹ Welsh Government, ‘[£230,000 for projects to improve the lives of people in Africa](#)’ – 27 April 2018

² Record of Proceedings, paragraph 149 – 25 June 2018

³ Record of Proceedings, paragraph 94 – 25 June 2018



- whether the Welsh Government has considered developing a more targeted approach to its international development activities, including limiting its geographical scope (in line with the example of the Scotland–Malawi programme);
- how you envisage the new funding arrangements operating in practice under the auspices of the WCVA, including your thoughts as to how outcomes can be measured better within the Wales for Africa programme.

We will also explore some of these themes in more detail in the second part of our inquiry into Wales’ relationship with Europe.

The activities of Fair Trade Wales

We are proud of Wales’ status as a Fairtrade Nation. However, we also note that a review is currently being undertaken by Fair Trade Wales. Aileen Burmeister, of Fair Trade Wales, told us that:

“The original criteria were set over 12 years ago, and they’re looking a little bit worse for wear. So, there was a meeting in 2016 in Glasgow with these different nations and regions, and we’re hosting another meeting in Cardiff in September, and we’re going to be having another talk about what a Fairtrade Nation means, what that looks like, what it could mean in the future, and we’re going to be feeding in the results of our review to that”.⁴

We therefore ask for you to outline what role the Welsh Government will have in the review, and how the Welsh Government will ensure that Wales continues to be among the leading countries in this field in the future.

⁴ Record of Proceedings, paragraph 91



In addition, you will be aware that we are currently undertaking work on the implications of future UK trade policy for Wales and we will be taking that work forward during the course of the current term.

Relationship with the devolved settlement

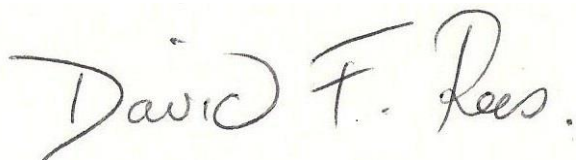
We note that the new devolution settlement – as set out in the Wales Act 2018 – expressly reserves “international relations, regulation of international trade and international development assistance and co-operation” from the Assembly’s competence (although the Assembly has competence to implement UK international obligations for Wales, in devolved policy areas). We also note that the Welsh Ministers’ executive powers in this area, under the UK International Development Act 2002, are both constrained in scope and require advance clearance from the Foreign Office before the Welsh Ministers can use them.

We heard from Cat Jones that it may be an opportune time for the Welsh Government to discuss with Westminster (and Whitehall) what it would like to take forward in the sphere of international development in this context.⁵

In light of this, we would welcome clarification from you on whether the Welsh Government has raised the issue of the Wales’ powers in the field of international development in the context of the new devolution settlement with counterparts in the UK Government.

I would welcome a response to our letter by 8 November 2018.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Rees." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

David Rees AM

⁵ Record of Proceedings, paragraph 102



Chair of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

