

Mick Antoniw AM and Bethan Sayed AM
The National Assembly for Wales' Committee of the Regions Members

David Rees AM

Chair of External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

23 January 2019

Dear David,

Report on 'Wales' future relationship with the Committee of the Regions'

We are writing in our capacity as the Assembly's representatives on the Committee of the Regions, in response to the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee's inquiry into Wales' future relationship with Europe and the World – part two. To inform the Committee's work in this area, we have enclosed our recently published report on 'Wales' future relationship with the Committee of the Regions' which the Committee may wish to consider as written evidence.

The Committee of the Regions is the unique voice of sub-national, regional and local government in the EU and provides an opportunity to engage widely across Europe. Our membership of the Committee of the Regions gives Wales a direct link to policy development and legislation going through the EU, including direct access to the European Parliament and Commission.

The UK's membership of the Committee of the Regions will cease after the UK's withdrawal from the EU on 29 March 2019. The UK Delegation to the Committee of the Regions is therefore working on the development of proposals for a mechanism to maintain a relationship between the UK and the Committee of the Regions after Brexit. The proposals include the establishment of a Joint Commission to ensure continuing dialogue and influence during any transition period.

As the Assembly's members on the Committee of the Regions, we have endorsed this approach as being the most efficient means of promoting arrangements which will enable continuing Welsh engagement to be put in place. It will also provide an initial framework within which the Assembly and Welsh Government can develop its own unique Welsh relationship with the Committee of the Regions.

The final plenary session of the Committee of the Regions before our membership comes to an end is on 6 and 7 February. We will both be attending this meeting in Brussels and will use it as an opportunity to make a strong case for a continued relationship between Wales and the Committee of the Regions to the UK Delegation and representatives from the other 27 EU countries. It is crucial that progress in relation to a future relationship is made as soon as possible before the UK formally leaves the EU on 29 March 2019.

To conclude, in our view, it is essential that the Assembly recognises the importance of a continued relationship between Wales and the Committee of the Regions, and that the Welsh Government supports the establishment of arrangements which will ensure continuing dialogue and collaboration between the Committee of the Regions and the Assembly and Welsh local authorities after Brexit.

Yours sincerely,



Mick Antoniw AM



Bethan Sayed AM

The National Assembly for Wales' Committee of the Regions Members