



David Rees AM
Chair
External Affairs & Additional Legislation Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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Dear David

I wanted to write to clarify my position regarding the attendance of Ministers at Committee on a Monday.

As you know I hold Cabinet meetings in Cathays Park every Monday afternoon starting at 3pm. I expect Ministers to prioritise attendance at Cabinet wherever possible and it is clearly set out in the Ministerial Code that Cabinet meetings take precedence over all other business, although there may occasionally be *exceptional* circumstances which mean that a Minister may have to be absent.

Requests for Ministers to attend Committee meetings on a Monday at times that mean they will miss Cabinet, or be late arriving, are becoming more frequent. We will do our best to accommodate requests from Committees, but it is not practicable for Ministers to arrange government business around Committee timetables, particularly at short notice.

You will know that I have rearranged my diary and changed the timing and venue of Cabinet meetings occasionally in order for me to attend EAAL Committee but it will not always be possible for me to do that.

I can assure you that we will continue to be as flexible as possible but when Ministers are required to attend on a Monday, it would be helpful if the Committee would consider starting at 1.30pm so Ministers can be away after an hour.

You have invited me to attend the Committee meeting on Monday 29 April. In order to attend I am arranging for the Cabinet meeting that day to be moved to the Bay but I will need to be finished in Committee by 3pm.

With give and take on both sides I am sure that we can continue to find ways to accommodate the different diary pressures we all face.

Yours sincerely

MARK DRAKEFORD