

Alun Cairns MP

Secretary of State for Wales

3 May 2019

Dear Secretary for State,

### **Inquiry into Capital Funding Sources**

Thank you for your response of 10 April in relation to the Committee's invitation to attend a meeting on its inquiry into Capital Funding Sources.

The Committee is once again extremely disappointed and concerned that you do not feel it appropriate to attend as part of the inquiry. Furthermore, it demonstrates your complete unwillingness to engage with the Finance Committee on yet another matter of significant importance to Wales.

Over recent months we have issued several invitations for your attendance at a number of extremely important inquiries, including preparations for replacing EU funding for Wales, the Implementation and Operation of Part 2 (Finance) of the Wales Act 2014 and currently on the Welsh Government's capital funding sources.

We have made every effort to accommodate you by offering to facilitate meetings in London or via video conferencing but you have refused our requests.

I appreciate the Wales Act 2017 sets out in the annual reporting arrangements that the Secretary of State reports to Parliament and Welsh Ministers to the Assembly. However, I would also draw your attention to the [Devolution Guidance Note 4](#), which states the Secretary for State is "to act as guardian of the devolution settlement in Wales". The Note continues:

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"the Secretary of State has always presented the UK Government's policy on matters that are of significance to Wales even if lead responsibility is formally with one of his colleagues. This should remain the case for issues which have not been devolved but in which the Assembly has a strong interest either because matters which are its responsibility are affected by UK Government actions – eg negotiations with Europe on the Assisted Areas map, Structural Funds and the CAP – or because it has responsibility for implementing all or part of UK policies – eg New Deal and Social Inclusion."

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As Secretary of State you are responsible for ensuring the interests of Wales are fully taken into account by the UK Government in making decisions that will have effect in Wales and we are strongly of the view that it is entirely appropriate that you should provide evidence to the Committee. I should be grateful if you would reconsider our invitation and as always we could facilitate video conferencing if necessary.

However, if you are not willing to attend a meeting, we would be grateful if you could provide written evidence to inform the Committee's considerations. The terms of reference for the inquiry are available:

<http://senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=24564>

It would be helpful to receive your response by 17 June 2019, to ensure we can take your views into account when reporting.

Yours sincerely,



Llyr Gruffydd AM  
Chair of the Finance Committee

