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Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog Brexit
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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Mick Antoniw AM
Chair, Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee
SeneddCLA@assembly.wales

13 September 2019

Dear Mick,

Thank you for your letter of 12 July 2019 regarding the Inter-Institutional relations agreement between the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government.

Firstly, I would like to assure you that the Welsh Government is fully committed the principles of transparency upon which the agreement is based and supporting the Assembly's scrutiny role. The agreement also recognises our responsibility for relations with other UK administrations and the need for confidential intergovernmental discussion. On behalf of the Welsh Government, I apologise for any confusion which has arisen regarding the provision of a written summary of ministerial meetings falling within the scope of agreement. We assumed that where we had previously provided written statements to the Assembly, outlining the outcomes of meeting which would now be caught by the agreement, it would remain helpful to continue this practice and would also be in compliance with our obligation under paragraph 14 of the agreement. We recognise that a written statement might not be appropriate in all circumstances and in those instances we would provide a written summary of the relevant meeting(s) by way of a letter directly to the CLA Committee and any other relevant committee(s).

I do however appreciate that we can do more to inform you in advance as to the method we will likely be using to report the outcomes of such meetings. Therefore, in future where a written statement is appropriate we will notify you in advance of/on its publication - specifically identifying the written statement itself and identifying it as being the written summary of the issues discussed at the meeting.

As you know I represented the Welsh Government at a meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee (European Negotiations) on 9 May; on 23 May I published a written ministerial statement summarising the discussions held at that meeting. The statement is available here:

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-joint-ministerial-committee-european-negotiations-0>

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I also represented the Welsh Government at a meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe) in London on 13 June. Please accept my sincerest apologies for the delay in updating you following that meeting. The meeting focused on the June European Council, the Finnish Presidency of the European Council and the Summertime Directive.

During the discussion on the June European Council, I welcomed the commitment to ongoing sincere cooperation and requested further update on Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) developments, whilst noting disappointment in engagement with the Devolved Administrations on this matter so far. The progress of the MFF was also considered during the discussion on the Finnish Presidency.

I made clear my disappointment in the UK's Government's approach to involving the Devolved Administrations in the design of the new funding system under the Shared Prosperity Fund and requested a substantive agenda item on this at the next meeting expected to take place in early October.

In relation to the discussion on the Summertime Directive, I sought a commitment from UK Government to further analysis of the evidence base before coming to a position on the Directive.

At Joint Ministerial Committee (Europe Negotiations) on 12 September I received no assurance that current negotiations with the EU would deliver a deal. As a result no deal remains our central planning scenario and we remain focussed on protecting Wales as best we can.

I am copying this letter to the First Minister and to the Chair of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JMiles', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeremy Miles AM

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