



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

TITLE Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee – 19 October 2023

DATE 28 November 2023

BY Mick Antoniw MS, Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution

I represented the Welsh Government at the fifth meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC) on 19 October. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy First Minister of Scotland and Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Shona Robison MSP.

A joint [communique](#) was published following the meeting, which contains full details of other attendees. The agenda enabled discussion of a range of issues including: the continuing cost of living crisis; the situation in Israel and Gaza; the International Development White Paper, UK legislation and the planned King's Speech, and intergovernmental working in relation to smoking and vaping.

As referred to in the communique, the Committee noted the ongoing cross-government work on the cost of living. In doing so we noted a proposal to set up a bilateral Inter-Ministerial Group between the Department for Work and Pensions and the Welsh Government. I outlined the importance of continuing joint work on this given the concerning situation of ongoing inflationary pressures being felt widely across the UK.

As part of the discussion relating to international issues and the International Development White Paper, I pressed for further consideration be given to an Inter-Ministerial Group for international relations. It was agreed to consider how best to ensure international matters are appropriately considered in the IGR system, including through ministerial level engagement. I also expressed my sadness at the ongoing situation in Israel and Gaza, and the impact it is having on our communities here in Wales. I explained that we are working with our police and crime commissioners, as well with faith groups to ensure that people feel secure in what is a very worrying time for many of our communities.

In relation to UK Bills, I put forward my strong concerns around the repeated recent breaches of the Sewel Convention and the unacceptable and damaging constitutional implications of this. As I have stated in that forum before there is simply no justification for this. We discussed preparations for the King's Speech on 7 November, and I subsequently

issued a Written Statement on 10 November providing our initial views on the programme of UK legislation announced.

The Committee also discussed intergovernmental work in relation to smoking and vaping, and I welcomed the ongoing joint work on this.

I will be chairing the next IMSC in line with rotating chair arrangements.