



19 March 2026

Dear Llyr,

At the general scrutiny session at the Climate Change, Environment and Infrastructure Committee on 5 March, I committed to write to the Committee on two issues, set out below.

Apprenticeship Levy

The apprenticeship levy is a tax collected by HMRC on all employers with an annual pay bill of over £3m – as noted in the session, this applies equally to public and private sector employers. The levy system operates differently in Wales compared to England. Employers in England have an allocation of levy funds that they can use directly for apprenticeship training. In Wales, whilst employers pay the levy on the same basis, the Welsh Government does not receive the actual funds collected in Wales. We receive a percentage share of the levy funding release by HM Treasury to comparable spending programmes, via the Barnett formula. Welsh Ministers then decide how the total available funding is allocated through the annual budget process. All employers in Wales are able to access apprenticeships.

Recognising the impact of the apprenticeship levy on larger employers in Wales, and concerns about accessing funds paid into the levy, the Minister for Culture, Skills and Social Partnership asked CBI Wales for proposals on how to strengthen the apprenticeship system in Wales. He asked them to consider how the levy could be made to work more effectively for Welsh employers. CBI Wales has recently published its policy manifesto for 2026-2030, which includes calls to replace or reform the Apprenticeship Levy to support modular, lifelong learning, and to strengthen Regional Skills Partnerships to align provision with local demand.

Minerals Technical Advice Note (MTAN) Wales 1: Aggregates

In relation to the question from Carolyn Thomas MS on MTAN 1, I wrote to her in her capacity as Chair of the Petitions Committee on Petition P-06-1476 1000 metre mandatory buffer zone for all new and existing quarries on 3 March.

More specifically, there is no working group for MTAN 1. However, there are Regional Aggregates Working Parties (RAWPs), which are technical working groups split between North Wales and South Wales. Membership is drawn from officers of all local planning authorities, representatives of the Mineral Products Association, British Aggregates

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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.

Association, Natural Resources Wales, Welsh Government, British Geological Survey and The Crown Estate. The RAWPs co-ordinate the aggregate sales information received from all mineral operators via the local planning authorities which make up the South Wales region and North Wales region.

I would like to reiterate that any review or update to MTAN 1 needs to be evidence led and we are yet to receive evidence that there is a need to update it. I would be happy to consider new evidence, but I would stress the need for it to be of a robust nature and to have sought scientific consensus.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS

Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi, Ynni a Chynllunio