



David Rees AM

Chair of the External Affairs and  
Additional Legislation Committee

03 August 2018

Dear David

Thank you for your letter of 19 July regarding the UK Government's engagement with the devolved administrations on developing trade policy post Brexit and in particular, the Welsh Government's involvement in the forward programme of work developed by the Department for International Trade (DIT).

As you will be aware during Oral Assembly Questions on 04 July 2018 Steffan Lewis AM raised a similar point with me and I offered to write to all Assembly Members to clarify what engagement has taken place between the Welsh Government and the UK Government. May I refer you to my response which I believe will provide you with the information you have requested; a copy is attached at Annex A.

I would like to also take this opportunity to restate that the Welsh Government believes it is absolutely imperative that the UK Government engages comprehensively and effectively with the devolved administrations on the development of trade policy, on mandates for specific trade negotiations and on the negotiations themselves to ensure the future UK trade relationships work in the interests of the whole of the UK.

To date DIT has not invited the Welsh Government to take part in any of the Trade Working Groups it has set up, consulted us on their work (despite them covering areas within devolved competence) or fed back details of the meetings. On 20 July DIT published a number of public consultations to inform its preparations for possible trade negotiations with Australia, New Zealand and USA as well as a possible accession to CPTPP once the UK leaves the EU. Neither the consultation questionnaires nor the accompanying information packs setting out the background evidence to support the consultations were shared with the Welsh Government in advance of publication.

Let me reassure you that I will continue to impress upon DiT Ministers the need to engage fully with the Welsh Government and other devolved administrations on UK trade policy to ensure that there is fairness and transparency in how future trade agreements are reached.

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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 and colleagues within the Welsh Government will also have no hesitation in raising these issues through inter-governmental discussions at the highest level, should the current unacceptable level of inter-action from DiT continue.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ken', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke above the letters.

**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a Thrafnidiaeth  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Transport