

**Jeremy Miles AC/AM**  
Y Cwnsler Cyffredinol a Gweinidog Brexit  
Counsel General and Brexit Minister



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

David Rees AM  
Chair of the External Affairs and Legislation Committee  
National Assembly for Wales  
Cardiff Bay  
CF99 1NA

14 February 2020

Dear David,

Thank you for your letter of 6 February, in which you sought additional information following the scrutiny session on 27 January 2020.

I can confirm that Welsh Government officials shared the Welsh Government document, *The Future UK/EU Relationship: Negotiating Priorities for Wales* with their EU contacts, including the Cabinets of Commission President von der Leyen and Trade Commissioner Hogan, as well as with Michel Barnier. UKRep (now the UK Mission to the EU, Brussels) were also sent a copy.

Due to time constraints during the meeting, we did not cover questions that the Committee wished to raise in relation to my response to the Committee's report on changes to freedom of movement after exiting the EU, which I will now address in this letter.

You asked for more information about the reference in the response to "a summit on visa issues". The International Festival Visa Summit is being held on 27 February in Edinburgh. The aims of the summit and workshop are to develop workable solutions to the current barriers facing festivals across the UK. It will be an opportunity to engage with stakeholders from across the UK as well as Ministers and officials from the Devolved Administrations. The Welsh Government fed into the invitation list and the event will include appropriate Welsh representation.

In relation to the arrangements that will be in place for the mutual recognition of medical education and training qualifications at the end of the transition period, you asked for

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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.

information about the reciprocal arrangements for UK health workers operating in the EU 27. This is, of course, very important issue but at present we have no firm assurance of the position at the end of the transition period. We do, however, welcome the shared appetite between the UK and the EU to agree a comprehensive and reciprocal system of recognition of professional qualifications after exiting the EU. The Welsh Government is engaging regularly with the UK Government to ensure details are developed.

UK Government Departments are also working closely together to ensure that after exiting the EU any mutual recognition of qualifications' systems negotiated with the EU do not create artificial barriers and undermine each other.

You also asked for an update on the anticipated timescales for the publication of a new Community Cohesion Plan. The Welsh Government is currently exploring the best method of outlining our priorities around community cohesion in Wales. The Deputy Minister and Chief Whip expects to publish the Welsh Government's Strategy Equality Plan (SEP) 2020-2024 on 31<sup>st</sup> March this year, where there is a specific community cohesion objective, and we are currently considering how a strategy around community cohesion should link to the new SEP.

Finally you asked for information the Welsh Government has received from the UK Government on the impact of the Immigration Skills Charge (ISC) on Welsh employers. The ISC was introduced in April 2017 as part of the series of visa changes brought in under the Immigration Act 2016. It requires employers who sponsor an employee on a Tier 2 visa to pay an additional, mandatory £1,000 charge, or £364 for small companies or charitable sponsors.

An impact assessment was not prepared for the ISC Regulations 2017, as the UK Government class this charge as a tax and therefore out of scope of the Better Regulations Framework. The Welsh Government has repeatedly raised the issue of the financial costs and administrative burdens of Tier 2 visas with the Home Office, but unfortunately have not received any clarification about the impact of the ISC on businesses.

Yours sincerely,



**Jeremy Miles AM**

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