



Welsh Affairs Committee

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From the Chair

21 May 2024

Jeremy Miles MS
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Welsh Language
Welsh Government
Cathays Park

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Welsh Affairs Committee inquiries into the impacts of population change in Wales and on the defence industry in Wales

Thank you for taking the time to appear before the Welsh Affairs Committee on Wednesday 1 May. It was an informative session and will help us greatly going forward in our inquiries into the defence industry in Wales and the impact of population change in Wales.

The Committee appreciated your comments on the broad range of policies discussed during our meeting. We would welcome your response on the following further points we were unable to raise during the session due to time constraints:¹

Wales's economy

1. What challenges has the Welsh Government encountered when working with the UK Government to progress existing and new economic programmes, such as Freeports and Investment Zones?
 - a. Are there any Welsh Government economic programmes which the UK Government has not been prepared to support?
2. In response to Q6 and Q7, you referred to skills mapping at a national level to identify existing areas of strength and areas where further focus is needed across the renewable energy sector. Could you please tell us about any further mapping exercises that the Welsh Government is undertaking to identify what combination of skills will be needed to fulfil its economic ambitions, across all sectors?

Impact of population change

3. What is the role of housing as a policy tool in the Welsh Government's response to slowing growth in Wales's population?

¹ References to question numbers are taken from the transcript of the session available on the Committee's website: <https://committees.parliament.uk/event/21377/formal-meeting-oral-evidence-session/>

4. What consideration is the Welsh Government giving to the aspirations of young people who want to be able to afford a home in their local area?
5. In response to Q2, you said that it is important for the UK Government to take the needs of Wales into account in the design of its immigration policy. Could you please elaborate further on this point, particularly how immigration policy in the UK could better take account of Wales's needs?

Defence industry

6. What is the Welsh Government doing to support innovation in defence-related sectors, and to encourage partnerships between Welsh universities and defence companies based in Wales?
7. As part of our defence inquiry, we've heard more could be done to raise awareness of the range of careers available in defence and the benefits jobs in the industry can offer. Would the Welsh Government be supportive of this?
8. Pursuant to the undertaking you gave at the end of the session (Q44) to review the relevant remarks by the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment have you made of Wales's potential contribution to the scaling up of UK defence industrial manufacturing, and how the Welsh Government might support these efforts?

Thank you again for taking the time to contribute to the Committee's work. The Committee would be grateful if responses to the questions above could be provided by Wednesday 5th June.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen', followed by a small horizontal dash.

Rt Hon Stephen Crabb MP