

Mark Drakeford MS  
First Minister  
Welsh Government

13 January 2023

## Scrutiny of the Welsh Government's Draft Budget 2023-24: International Relations

Dear Mark

Thank you for providing written evidence to the Committee on the Welsh Government's Draft Budget for International Relations for 2023-24. The Committee considered this evidence at its meeting on 11 January 2023 and would like to ask the following questions:

1. How has the current economic context, including the recession, inflation and the cost of living crisis driven the discussions within the Welsh Government in terms of the areas of spending which have been prioritised and de-prioritised in the International Relations Budget Expenditure Line in the Draft Budget?
2. What is the likely impact on the outputs and outcomes of the International Relations priorities that your department will be able to achieve in 2023-24 as a result of these decisions? In relation to this, can you please provide the Committee with copies of the relevant departmental delivery plans for 2023-24 funded from the International Relations budget, for example each international office?
3. The revenue allocations for the International Relations budget for 2023-24 is set at £8.383m, a reduction of £171,000 compared with the 2022-23 final budget. This reduction will also be compounded by inflationary pressures:
  - a. How will this reduction be managed and what activities and objectives are being prioritised to account for the reduced budget?
  - b. What criteria are you using to make decisions on prioritisation, and can you give a specific example of where this criteria has been applied?
4. Will any Welsh Government strategic partners see a reduction in the funding they receive as a result of the reduction in the International Relations budget? If so, what engagement has the Welsh Government had with these partners, and what support is being provided to help manage impacts?
5. Your written evidence to the Committee states that £1.21m from the International Engagement budget will be used to fund cross-cutting activity which supports your overarching



International Relations objectives and the International Strategy rather than be associated with a particular "Action Plan". Can you outline how this funding will be allocated, what criteria must be met to receive funding, and how you will ensure value for money?

6. Can you outline the process for overseas offices to bid for funding from the International Engagement budget and how you will ensure value for money? I would be grateful if this could include the criteria that must be met to access this funding.
7. Can you confirm the total allocation provided in the 2022-23 budget to support the Welsh Government's programme of activities at the FIFA 2022 World Cup, which MEG and BEL(s) in the budget it came from, and whether it was allocated from existing budgets or new funding?
8. Your written evidence to the Committee notes that you are forecasting a potential underspend of £524,000 in the International Relations budget for 2022-23. What budget management processes are being put in place to ensure budgets are better managed in future to avoid potential underspend?
9. Can you outline the rationale for the International Relations budget continuing to maintain funding which is ultimately transferred to the International Development budget to support the delivery of the Wales and Africa elements of the International Strategy?

As outlined to you in previous [correspondence](#) (dated 30 November 2022), I would be grateful if you could provide a response by 25 January 2023 to allow the Committee to consider the further evidence in advance of publishing its report at the start of February.

Yours sincerely,



Delyth Jewell MS

Committee Chair

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.