



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

25 June 2021

THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your contribution to the constructive meeting we had with colleagues on COVID-19 recovery earlier this month. I am pleased that you were encouraged by our discussion. For my part, I valued the opportunity to exchange perspectives and was encouraged by the areas of common ground our discussion revealed. As I said, working together in partnership across the United Kingdom will be essential if we are to deliver a sustainable recovery. This should build on the enormous successes of our established partnership work thus far, most notably the furlough scheme and rollout of the vaccination programme.

We discussed addressing the fiscal impacts of the pandemic, not by stepping backwards into austerity but instead by investing across the UK, supporting the labour market and helping those hurt most by the pandemic. We also addressed the great shared challenges we face in public sector recovery, in particular regarding physical and mental health and lost learning. We agreed that sharing our experiences, learning from each other and working together will be vital if we are to secure a strong recovery.

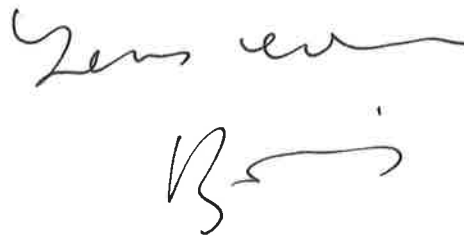
The UK Government is committed to close, meaningful cooperation with the Welsh Government on shared interests through structured engagement. Having heard your concerns about the financial assistance power, I want to reassure you that we intend to use that power in a way that complements rather than competes with your activities. I am pleased to hear of your continued involvement in the working of the Trade and Co-operation Agreement structures and in discussions regarding country listings for international travel.

I am keen to establish a regular pattern of further engagement and joint working between the UK Government and the devolved administrations, and agree with you that the best way to achieve this is by concluding the Inter-Governmental Relations Review. I am grateful for your engagement on this issue and have directed officials to discuss any outstanding concerns as a matter of urgency. Once in place, these new structures will allow for more meaningful engagement on shared interests.

Your Programme for Government sets out your twin goals of recovering from COVID-19 and moving Wales forward. We have in common a desire to build back a more equitable and greener United Kingdom in the years ahead.

In our response to this pandemic, I believe we have demonstrated the benefit of being a United Kingdom. We have shown what we can achieve when we work together. I hope that we can continue in a spirit of respectful partnership to face common challenges together. I look forward to meeting in person after the summer to continue this valuable discussion and assess our progress.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Drakeford', with a stylized flourish below it.