



Welsh Affairs Committee

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA
Tel 020 7219 6189 Email welshcom@parliament.uk
Website <http://www.parliament.uk/welshcom/>



David Melding, Chair of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

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Dear David

Thank you, again, for hosting our committees' joint meeting to scrutinise the draft Wales Bill at the Senedd last week. I am sure that you will agree that the occasion was highly successful.

As you may know, our Standing Order No. 137A(3) states that the Welsh Affairs Committee "may invite members of any specified committee of the National Assembly for Wales to attend and participate in its proceedings (but not to vote)". Committees of the National Assembly enjoy a general power (17.54) to "meet concurrently with any committee or joint committee of any legislature in the UK".

Recommendation 54a of 'Silk II' stated that:

*there should be improved inter-parliamentary cooperation to increase mutual understanding of the work of the National Assembly and both Houses of Parliament, **especially in terms of committee-to-committee cooperation** (including attendance by Ministers from each administration at Committees of the other legislature); information-sharing should be improved; [...]*

Relations between the National Assembly and House of Commons have changed significantly since our Standing Order was passed by the House in July 2005. I am therefore minded to explore the extension of the specific power granted to the Welsh Affairs Committee to a more general power which might be enjoyed by other select committees.

I should be interested in your views, both as Chair of the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee and Deputy Presiding Officer, on the merits of the broader wording of your Standing Order, and whether you believe that inter-parliamentary cooperation between Cardiff and Westminster would be improved, were other Westminster committees able to meet as we have done. I may then explore the matter further with colleagues here in Westminster.

David

David T.C. Davies MP
Chair of the Welsh Affairs Committee