

Carl Sargeant AM
Minister for Natural Resources
Welsh Government
Cardiff
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17 February 2016

Dear Carl,

Thank you for appearing before us on 21 January 2016 in relation to the Welsh Government's draft budget for 2016-17.

In responding to the Finance Committee, we committed to seeking further information from you in a number of areas.

I would be grateful for a response to the following:

Natural Resources Wales

You mentioned the potential for NRW to use their land base better. Could you provide us with further details of what you envisage in this regard, please?

Implications of the United Kingdom withdrawing from the European Union

A substantial range of policy areas within your remit rely on financial support from the European Union (and European law). In the event that the United Kingdom decides to withdraw from the European Union, major programmes would require complete transformation and significant new funding streams. In particular, the impact on agriculture and rural communities would be significant due to the level of financial support provided through the Common Agricultural Policy.

We would be grateful for details of how this budget will support the need for contingency planning.



European Investment Bank (EIB)

During our evidence session, you referred to £350 million of funding that had been secured from the EIB for a loan-grant scheme. We would be grateful for more information on how such a scheme will work and the objectives you expect to see delivered with this additional money.

Flood risk management

You will recall that we discussed the recently announced a £3.3 million funding package for immediate repairs and maintenance of river and drainage schemes to assist communities to recover from flooding.

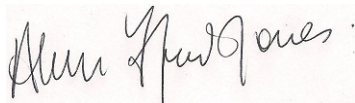
The First Minister has confirmed that £2.3 million has been provided as a consequence of increased funding from the UK Government for flood risk management in England.

During the meeting on 21 January, you were not in a position to confirm the exact source of the additional £1 million of funding, and whether it would come from the current budget (2015-16) or the future budget (2016-17).

We would be grateful if you could confirm the source of this additional £1 million.

Thank you again for appearing before us last month. I look forward to receiving your response to our additional questions.

Yours sincerely,



Alun Ffred Jones AM
Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee

