



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

# **Intergovernmental Relations Quarterly Report Quarter 3 2022**

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**Reporting period 1 July – 30 September 2022**

Reporting on intergovernmental working  
between the UK Government, Welsh  
Government, Scottish Government  
and Northern Ireland Executive.

**December 2022**

**LEVELLING  
— UP —**

This information is also available on the GOV.UK website: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/intergovernmental-relations](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/intergovernmental-relations)



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# Foreword

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As the country came together to mourn the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Government worked in lockstep with the devolved governments to ensure everyone, wherever they live, could pay their respects, and welcome the accession of His Majesty King Charles III. The commemorations, visits by the Royal Family and the funeral arrangements were planned, organised and reviewed in countless round-the-clock meetings throughout the mourning period. I commend all my ministerial colleagues and public servants in each of the home nations for all the amazing work and collaboration during a very difficult time. The smooth running of the 10-day operation was a credit to the collegiate relationship of our four governments.

That collegiate approach will be at the heart of how we take on challenges we all face. Global inflation and rising costs of living pressures. The aftermath of the pandemic which still hangs over us. The war in Ukraine sending shockwaves through the world's energy supplies. We want to fix the problems these have made for our country. We need to do it right, and we need to do it together. Only together, by combining our governments' expertise and resources, can we achieve our common goal - to serve the people of the United Kingdom. As Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, I commit to taking this work forward with my cabinet colleagues.

There are notable achievements in the period covered by this report. These achievements, as ever, have been a team effort from across the nations. The first meeting of the UK Islands Forum in Orkney in September was an exciting innovation that will help us tackle shared challenges and share best practice for our island communities across all parts of the UK.

The regular publication of these Intergovernmental Transparency Reports demonstrate our shared endeavour to improve all parts of the UK, ensuring we remain accountable to the public we serve. No matter where you live, intergovernmental relations are crucial to bringing opportunity and prosperity to all.

As we head into winter, we commit to working together to face the challenges that confront us at home and around the world.



**Right Honourable Michael Gove MP,  
Secretary of State for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities and Minister  
for Intergovernmental Relations**

## **Quarter 3 in Data (1 July - 30 September 2022)**

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Regular and extensive work between the four governments was essential during this quarter, particularly on issues such as addressing cost of living pressures and the response to the war in Ukraine. Set out in this report is an analysis and snapshot of some of this work in action.

**Set out on the next page is an analysis and snapshot of some of the meetings that took place.<sup>1</sup>**

**There were 50 intergovernmental meetings in Quarter 3 of 2022.<sup>2</sup>**

Four inter-ministerial group (IMG) meetings took place this quarter. The IMG on UK-EU Relations by the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office; the IMG for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; the Sport Cabinet by Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport; and the Interministerial Group for Trade.

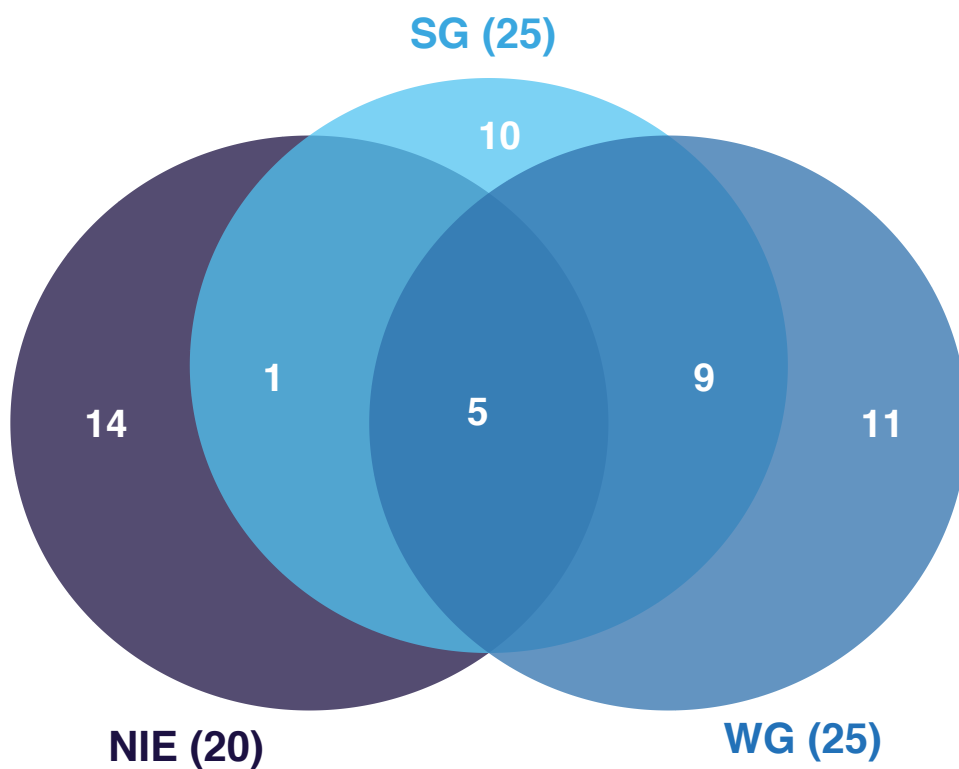
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<sup>1</sup> To note, from 11 February until the end of this quarter, the Northern Ireland Executive was not in place and, as such, senior civil servants attended in the absence of ministerial representation.

<sup>2</sup> The data was collected through a proforma completed by departments. The analysis was quality assured by an independent analyst.

**Number of meetings between UK Government (UKG) and Welsh Government (WG), Scottish Government (SG), or Northern Ireland Executive (NIE) in Q3 2022**

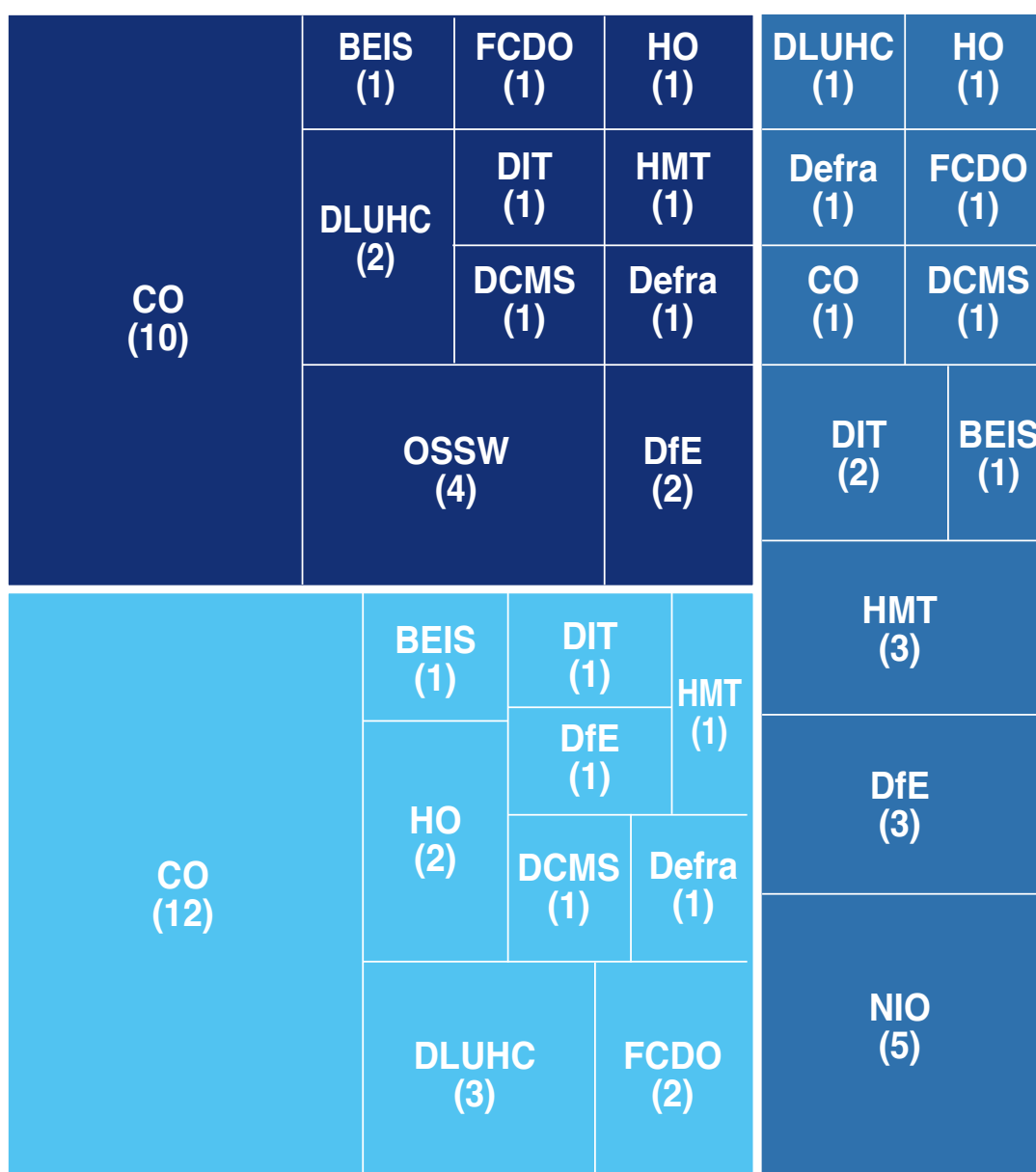
A total of five meetings took place between UKG, WG, SG, and NIE.



**Number of meetings between UK Government departments and Welsh Government (WG), Scottish Government (SG), or Northern Ireland Executive (NIE) in Q3 2022**

Multilateral meetings are counted for each government section. The size of the blocks reflects the number of meetings.

■ SG ■ WG ■ NIE





## Key Activities in Quarter 3

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### Case Study One - Commemoration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II



*Pallbearers carry the coffin of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, draped with the Royal Standard of Scotland outside the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh.*

Operation LONDON BRIDGE and Operation SPRING TIDE are the names given to the planning and delivery of the ten-day series of events following the sad announcement of the passing of Her Majesty The Queen and the succession of King Charles III respectively. These were truly a national effort. Years of advance planning brought together the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, the NI Executive Office and the Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales Offices, as well as local authorities, to deliver one of the largest and most complex events the UK has ever held. At a time of immense national sadness, and with the attention of many around the world focussed on the UK, teams and operational command hubs were stood up in London, Windsor, Edinburgh, Belfast and Cardiff to support the delivery of Operation LONDON BRIDGE and Operation SPRING TIDE.

In the years and months preceding the announcement of the death of Her Majesty the Queen, teams across the UK met and drew up plans to ensure the operation could be delivered safely and securely, and that it was a fitting tribute to Her Majesty's extraordinary life and legacy. Monthly National Steering Groups and Operations Groups, which included devolved governments' teams, considered readiness, risk and priority areas, looking at everything from floral tributes to public safety. A comprehensive programme of testing and exercising had been ongoing in key locations across the UK. During the delivery of the operation, daily ministerial calls were chaired by the then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP. The UK Government and representatives from the devolved governments met several times per day via both civil servants and ministerial coordination calls.



*Personnel from 3rd Battalion The Royal Welsh, wearing ceremonial uniform and marching with their regimental goat.*

Scotland had an important and memorable role in the events, with the Scottish Government and partners delivering the first stage of the operation, known as Operation UNICORN. This included supporting Her Majesty's final journey from Balmoral to Edinburgh, and organising Her Lying-at-Rest in St Giles Cathedral, including a procession to St Giles with The King and the late Queen's children, a Service of Reflection and an overnight Vigil. We saw The King and Queen



Consort visit Hillsborough and Belfast, followed by Llandaff and Cardiff. The King held audiences with the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, as well as the leaders of the five Northern Ireland parties. All locations saw large crowds of people who had come to mourn and commemorate The Queen and pay tribute to her life of service.

The successful delivery of the operation to such a high standard earned recognition from both those in the UK and from across the world, particularly recognising the role of civil servants across the UK who stepped up to deliver such complex events at short notice.

“Years of advance planning brought together the UK, Scottish and Welsh governments, the NI Executive Office and the Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales Offices, as well as local authorities, to deliver one of the largest and most complex events the UK has ever held”.



*His Majesty The King and The Queen Consort greet crowds outside of Hillsborough Castle.*

## **Case Study Two - The Thomas Commission: Joint working between the UK Government and Welsh Government**

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) works to protect the public and make sure that everyone in the UK has access to their rights, equality and fair treatment. Cooperation with the devolved governments is therefore essential, and works according to each administration's processes and structures. While policing and criminal justice are devolved matters in Scotland and Northern Ireland, the criminal justice system in England and Wales, is overseen by Westminster. This means that work and engagement between the UK Government and the Welsh Government is extensive and ongoing.

In 2017, the Welsh Government announced a Commission on Justice in Wales, chaired by the former Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd. Known as the 'Thomas Commission', its purpose was to review "the operation of the Justice System in Wales and set a long-term vision for its future". The Commission published its report in October 2019 and recommended that more justice and policing powers be devolved to Wales, with 78 further recommendations relating to justice policy. Although there is no agreement between the UK Government and the Welsh Government on the devolution of justice to Wales, earlier this year, MoJ and Welsh Government ministers decided to work together on some of the recommendations to ensure the reserved justice system operates effectively in Wales. Welsh Government civil servants then set about identifying which of the 78 to prioritise and working with their MoJ colleagues to see how to achieve them.

Some of the recommendations are already in motion, for example the introduction of Problem Solving Courts (PSCs). PSCs are different from traditional courts as they focus on a particular type of offence or offender. The Thomas Commission recommended they be established in Wales, and along similar lines to those in Northern Ireland. The MoJ committed to trialling up to five PSCs, focussing primarily on substance misuse, but also others for female offenders and domestic abuse perpetrators. As well as implementing PSCs in Wales, planning has already started for three courts in England. These pilots will be funded by the Cross-Whitehall Drugs Strategy with a focus on staff resourcing, judicial backfilling, drug and alcohol testing, training and evaluation. Alongside this, a Domestic

Abuse PSC in Merthyr Tydfil is being explored in talks between HM Prison and Probation Service Wales and civil servants from the Welsh Government.

These ongoing successes demonstrate how vital it is for good engagement between the UK Government and the devolved administrations, to ensure that devolution meets the needs of citizens in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

# Intergovernmental Activity during Quarter 3

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Intergovernmental working between the UK Government and devolved administrations continued throughout this period, delivering for people across the UK.

## Economic

The cost of living has significantly increased in the last year, hitting household budgets up and down the UK. Tackling these pressures is an absolute priority for all four governments and working together has been vital in addressing the challenges that face the UK public in their commitment to support them.

In August, the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP, met with the then Northern Ireland Minister for the Economy Gordon Lyons MLA and former Minister for Communities Deirdre Hargey MLA during a visit to Northern Ireland. In this meeting, both governments looked at options for delivering the Energy Bills Support Scheme in Northern Ireland and as a result, agreed to establish a joint task force.

“Both governments looked at options for delivering the Energy Bills Support Scheme in Northern Ireland and as a result, agreed to establish a joint task force.”

The first Northern Ireland Sprint Taskforce, chaired by the former Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP, met on 25 August to look at providing the promised equivalent support to Northern Ireland for the Energy Bills Support Scheme. During these discussions, the then Secretary of State at the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Right Honourable Kwasi Kwarteng MP, the former Minister for Finance for the Northern Ireland Executive, Conor Murphy MLA, and now former Minister for the Economy Gordon Lyons MLA, as well as the Chief Executive of Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator John French met to implement the UK Government-led Energy Bills Support Scheme in Northern Ireland.

In September, the former Chief Secretary to the Treasury, the Right Honourable Chris Philp MP, held bilateral calls with former finance minister for the Northern Ireland Executive, Conor Murphy MLA, Welsh Government Minister for Finance Rebecca Evans MS, and Scottish Government Deputy First Minister John Swinney MSP to give an overview of the Plan for Growth.

## Ukraine

UK Government engagement with the devolved governments was also vital in responding to the widespread and cross-cutting challenges resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine and providing UK-wide support. The former Minister for Refugees, Lord Richard Harrington, regularly engaged with the devolved governments on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, meeting the Welsh Government Minister for Social Justice

Jane Hutt MS and the Scottish Government Minister with special responsibility for refugees from Ukraine, Neil Gray MSP. Thanks to the close collaboration between all four governments, the UK has welcomed over 100,000 Ukrainian guests under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Between March and May, under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, the UK Government has allocated over £21 million to councils for tariff payments and over £170,000 in Thank You payments to Wales. For Northern Ireland, over £7 million has been allocated to councils for tariff payments. For Scotland, the UK Government has paid almost £24 million to councils for the tariff payments and over £115,000 in Thank You payments.

"Thanks to the close collaboration between all four governments, the UK has welcomed over 100,000 Ukrainian guests under the Homes for Ukraine scheme."

At the Inter Ministerial Group for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA IMG), held on Wednesday 20 July, ministers discussed the implication of the invasion of Ukraine and wider increased costs on agriculture businesses. They were also presented with the modelling of the impact of agriculture-inflation in Wales to consider how the governments can respond to changes and share experiences.

## **Islands Forum**

The Islands Forum was established earlier this year and breaks new ground in bringing together leaders from island communities, the UK and devolved governments, in order to share the knowledge, solutions and successes, as well as discuss opportunities and challenges, faced by islanders across the UK.

The former Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, the Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP, chaired the first meeting in Orkney on 28 September. It focused on the potential for islands to support net zero commitments and renewable energy projects. The then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster was supported by Levelling Up Minister Dehenna Davison MP and Scotland Office Minister Lord Offord of Garvel. Island authorities also had the chance to engage with the energy regulator, Ofgem, on how the regulatory framework can support net zero ambitions on the UK's islands. The Forum remitted a number of actions and will continue to look at ongoing work to consider future items for discussion including digital connectivity.





*The first meeting of the Islands Forum held in Orkney in September, chaired by the then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP, attended by representatives from island communities, devolved administrations and UK Departments. Welsh Government Minister for Climate Change, Julie James MS attended remotely.*



*Scottish Government Minister for Just Transition, Employment and Fair Work Richard Lochhead MSP, Chief Executive of North Ayrshire Council Craig Hatton and UK Government Minister for Levelling Up Dehenna Davison MP.*





*Former Northern Ireland Minister for Infrastructure John O'Dowd MLA, the Second Permanent Secretary to the Cabinet Office Sue Gray, and the then Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Right Honourable Nadhim Zahawi MP talking at the Islands Forum in Orkney.*

## Freeports

The Freeports programme has been a flagship of intergovernmental working over the past year and Quarter 3 was no different. In August, the former Secretary of State for Wales, Right Honourable Robert Buckland KC MP, met with the Welsh Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, to discuss their shared ambition for a new Freeport programme in Wales.

“Applications to set up at least one Freeport in Wales opened in September and agreements were made that these will be jointly assessed by civil servants in the UK and Welsh Governments.”

Applications to set up at least one Freeport in Wales opened in September and agreements were made that these will be jointly assessed by civil servants in the UK and Welsh Governments, and that decisions will also be taken jointly by UK Government and Welsh Government Ministers.

In September the former Secretary of State for DLUHC, the Right Honourable Simon Clarke MP, met with John Swinney MSP, Deputy First Minister in the Scottish Government to discuss their commitment to agreeing and announcing winners of the Green Freeports programme as soon as possible.

## **Agriculture, Biodiversity, and the Environment**

In August, the then Secretary of State for Wales, Right Honourable Sir Robert Buckland KC MP, met with the First Minister of Wales, Right Honourable Mark Drakeford MS, on two occasions, to discuss issues such as Coal Tips Safety and opportunities for floating offshore wind and nuclear projects in Wales.

In July, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs held an Inter-ministerial Group (IMG EFRA) in Wales. Here the Welsh Government presented their published Sustainable Farming Scheme proposals, which aim to support farmers in producing food sustainably whilst building on the high standards already in place. Ministers also discussed the upcoming Biological Diversity COP15 summit in Montreal later this year.

## **Health and COVID-19 Recovery**

Health continues to be a prominent focus in intergovernmental working, with attention on post-pandemic recovery, particularly with projected winter pressures and the impact on those with health vulnerabilities. The Chief Medical Officers for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland met regularly to discuss public health issues across the UK. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations Board, chaired by Dr Jenny Harries the Chief Executive of the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), covered UKHSA strategy, Lateral Flow Test stock and purchases and Asymptomatic Testing in High-Risk Settings.

## **Education and Skills**

Education was another area which highlighted how effective engagement between all four governments works for the benefit of people living across the UK.

In July, the former Secretary of State for Education, the Right Honourable James Cleverly MP, spoke with the former Minister for Education in the Northern Ireland Executive, Michelle McIlveen MLA, and the Minister

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for Education and Welsh Language in the Welsh Government, Jeremy Miles MS focusing on exam grading and qualifications in 2022.

In September, the then Secretary of State for Education, the Right Honourable Kit Malthouse MP, spoke to the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP, the Minister for Education and Welsh Language, Jeremy Miles MS, and Michelle McIlveen MLA and Gordon Lyons MLA, the former Minister for Education and former Minister for the Economy respectively in the Northern Ireland Executive. The calls covered wide-ranging and important issues such as exams, higher education reforms and cost of living implication on education and children's services, including the support provided through the Energy Price Guarantee. There was agreement amongst all ministers to work together in the future on other shared priorities.



*First Minister of Wales Right Honourable Mark Drakeford MS and the then UK Government Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Wales Right Honourable David TC Davies MP attend Bangor University's Digital Signal Processing Centre of Excellence in July. This is one of the projects receiving funding from the North Wales Growth Deal.*



## Delivering Cultural Programmes across the UK

In August, a meeting between The Right Honourable Mark Drakeford MS and the then Secretary of State for Wales, Right Honourable Sir Robert Buckland KC MP took place looking ahead to the men's football World Cup in Qatar this winter. At this meeting, Welsh and UK Government ministers agreed to work together to use this as an opportunity to promote Wales on the global stage.

In September, the then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales, Right Honourable David TC Davies MP, met with Welsh Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, and local leaders to discuss progress made on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal.

In August, the former Minister for Safe and Legal Migration, Kevin Foster MP, met the Scottish Government Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Neil Gray MSP, and the Director for Festivals Edinburgh, Julia Amour. This meeting discussed visa arrangements, including for artists over the festival season.

Between 26 and 29 August, the Minister for Arts Lord Parkinson, Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal Lord Mendoza, and Angus Robertson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture participated in the Edinburgh International Culture

“Welsh and UK Government ministers agreed to work together to use the men's football World Cup in Qatar as an opportunity to promote Wales on the global stage.”

Summit. The UK and Scottish Governments, together with the British Council, Scottish Parliament and Edinburgh International Festival, hosted international culture ministers, artists and arts leaders in the Scottish Parliament building to discuss cultural policy. The Summit was an opportunity for the UK and Scottish Governments to showcase the whole of the UK as a global leader in cultural diplomacy and to promote Scottish and British culture to an international audience.

At various points, the Summit was also attended by the Deputy First Minister for Scotland, John Swinney MSP; former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, Rehman Chishti MP, and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Scotland Office, Lord Offord.

Whilst in Edinburgh, the Minister for Arts Lord Parkinson and Commissioner for Cultural Recovery and Renewal Lord Mendoza took the opportunity to visit several festival shows during the Festivals' 75th anniversary year and met with several festival directors.

The former Secretary of State for the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport, the Right Honourable Nadine Dorries MP sent Ministerial letters in the second quarter to outline our appetite to work together on the Creative Industries Sector Vision. Although initially expressing concern around the Sector Vision's UK-wide scope, progress was made this quarter by agreeing with devolved officials to add a public body representative from each nation to the Creative Industries Council. We have also agreed to include text in the Sector Vision to demonstrate our commitment to collaboration in devolved areas and to highlight policies, programmes and best practices from across the nations.

## **Safety and Security**

Building on the previous quarter, Quarter 3 saw UK and devolved government ministers continue to engage on the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Act 2022.

In September, the then Minister for Security, Stephen McPartland MP, met with Welsh Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, and Counsel General and Minister for the Constitution, Mick Antoniw MS, to discuss the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill. There was discussion about specific measures in the Bill, in particular that relate to crypto assets, and agreement to changes to Part 5 of the Proceeds of Crime Act.

## **International**

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Developmental Office continued its collaboration with the devolved governments in both the UK and overseas. The Foreign Secretary's Lead Liaison for Consuls General in Scotland, Simon Mustard, visited Edinburgh in September for meetings with the Scottish Government and Consuls General based there. FCDO Heads of Mission continue to visit Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with the most recent visit from Heads of Mission Geneva to Scotland.

The UK-EU Interministerial Group met in July, chaired by the former Cabinet Office Minister of State and Paymaster General, the Right Honourable Michael Ellis KC MP. The meeting was attended by Scottish Government Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Neil Gray MSP, and Welsh Government Minister for Economy, Vaughan Gething MS, as well as senior civil servants from the Northern Ireland Civil Service who attended as observers. The meeting focused on continued implementation of the Trade and Cooperation Agreement, identifying areas where the agreement is operating effectively and where there is room for continued progress. This was followed by a discussion on the interests of devolved governments surrounding the Northern Ireland Protocol, and the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill progressing in UK Parliament, where the UK Government recognised the importance of continued engagement with devolved governments as the legislation makes progress through Parliament. The review of retained EU law was also highlighted as a concern for devolved governments.

## Common Frameworks

Since leaving the EU, the UK Government has been working with the devolved governments to develop UK Common Frameworks. These are agreed ways of working between the governments to support management of powers returned from the EU to ensure that the same set of rules and practices are followed where powers returned from the EU overlap with devolved policy areas. Two Common Frameworks - Resources and Waste, and Emissions Trading Scheme - are currently undergoing clearances across all four governments so that they can be published on GOV.UK. Getting these Frameworks to this position has been a result of effective collaboration between governments. Work also began on ensuring that Common Frameworks can cover divergence from the Retained EU Law (REUL) Bill, including what approach the four governments will be taking to specific pieces of REUL.

The Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee produced their second report on the Common Frameworks programme in July. The governments have since been working together to draft a response on an agreed cross-governmental basis, which is in the process of being shared with the Committee and will be published by them in due course.

## Annex A - Glossary of abbreviations

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|              |   |             |   |
|--------------|---|-------------|---|
| <b>AGO</b>   | Attorney General's Office                               | <b>DWP</b>  | Department for Work and Pensions              |
| <b>BEIS</b>  | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy | <b>EU</b>   | European Union                                |
| <b>CO</b>    | Cabinet Office  | <b>FCDO</b> | Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  |
| <b>DCMS</b>  | Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport        | <b>HMT</b>  | Her Majesty's Treasury                        |
| <b>DEFRA</b> | Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs      | <b>HO</b>   | Home Office                                   |
| <b>DfE</b>   | Department for Education                                | <b>MoD</b>  | Ministry of Defence                           |
| <b>DfT</b>   | Department for Transport                                | <b>MoJ</b>  | Ministry of Justice                           |
| <b>DHSC</b>  | Department of Health and Social Care                    | <b>NIO</b>  | Northern Ireland Office                       |
| <b>DIT</b>   | Department for International Trade                      | <b>OSSS</b> | Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland |
| <b>DLUHC</b> | Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities    | <b>OSSW</b> | Office of the Secretary of State for Wales    |



