

British Irish Chamber of commerce reception December 2025

I attended the reception at the request of the chamber. I have worked with the chamber as a minister and since leaving the government. The event was hosted by Neale Richmond TD, Minister for International Development and Diaspora.

A number of TDs from across the political spectrum attended and the opportunities between Ireland and Wales were discussed from the platform and more importantly during the remainder of the event and the following day. Businesses recognised me as an MS and from the pandemic, the economy ministry and as a former FM. There was real interest in Wales and the nature of devolved influence and decision making.

The chamber has good links into Westminster and an appreciation of the importance of devolution. What was especially helpful was to be able to discuss the decision making role for the Senedd and Welsh Government across a range of opportunities in economic development, environmental permitting, the future of energy production [renewables and nuclear in particular] and transmission, the ongoing reform of health, social care and education and the opportunities for life sciences.

My conversations with a range of professional services firms highlighted the ongoing need for a Welsh voice to highlight learning opportunities in each area for Wales and Ireland. Some Irish firms have increased their presence in Wales but further opportunities are possible. Without continued presence and engagement from both the Senedd and Welsh Government opportunities are likely to be lost.

Whilst Welsh ports are recognised as a likely source of delivering the renewable energy potential of the Irish Sea there remain alternative options if engagement on policy, supply chain and delivery is not maintained and built upon. The Wales international investment summit was mentioned proactively and favourably by a number of chamber members.

Since the event the UK Government announcements on AR7 – supporting development and deployment of renewable energy - has given welcome certainty to the Erebus floating off shore wind project. There is still much to do to maximise the mutual benefit to both countries.

Regards

Rt Hon Vaughan Gething MS

Cardiff South & Penarth

De Caerdydd a Phenarth