# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **British Irish Council Planning and Places Ministerial Meeting** |
| **DATE**  | **25 November 2024** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Energy and Planning** |

On 8 November I attended The British-Irish Council Planning and Places Ministerial Meeting in Derry/Londonderry, hosted by the Northern Ireland Executive. This provided a useful opportunity to discuss issues of mutual interest with Ministers from the nations and administrations of the British Isles as well as representatives from the Irish Republic.

In the margins of the Council, I held bi-lateral meetings with Baroness Taylor of Stevenage, UK Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government; Ivan McKee MSP, Scottish Government Minister for Public Finance; and John O’Dowd MLA, Northern Ireland Executive Minister for Infrastructure. These meetings focussed on improving delivery and prosperity through the planning system, and offered a useful opportunity to exchange information on our respective priorities.

Discussions at the British-Irish Council Planning and Places Ministerial Meeting made it clear that whilst we each have our own priorities, we share many of the same challenges and concerns, and the British-Irish Council provides a very useful forum for the exchange of experiences, innovations, ideas and information between all parties. All contributors recognised how important it is to have an efficient and well-functioning planning system if we are to achieve our respective goals on issues such as decarbonisation, economic delivery, and social justice.

A copy of the Communique relating to the meeting, agreed by all members, is attached [https://www.britishirishcouncil.org/resources/planning-and-places-ministerial-communique-8-november-2024/planning-and-places-ministerial-final-communique-8-november-2024/](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.britishirishcouncil.org%2Fresources%2Fplanning-and-places-ministerial-communique-8-november-2024%2Fplanning-and-places-ministerial-final-communique-8-november-2024%2F&data=05%7C02%7Cjonathan.fudge%40gov.wales%7Cdd07627779cc4679eea708dd000238c9%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C638666732761630628%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=cDqNTyzVhmCSsZZ2t%2BFv9YftA2rsQKNESmvBz6Unu9c%3D&reserved=0) . It sets out the agreed Future Work Plan for the Planning and Places workstream and in particular identifies two areas as the focus for future work, namely:

1. Climate Change and the Biodiversity Emergency, and
2. Skills and Capacity for the Public Sector Planning Profession

Both of these issues are of significant importance to this Government, and I have endorsed the Future Work Plan and look forward to a productive ongoing working relationship with British-Irish Council colleagues on these matters.