# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE** | **Appointment of Welsh Government Representative on Europe** |
| **DATE** | **7 January 2022** |
| **BY** | **First Minister, Mark Drakeford MS** |

Following an open and competitive recruitment process under civil service rules, I am pleased to announce that Derek Vaughan has been appointed as the first Welsh Government Representative on Europe.

He will work as a specialist policy adviser in a new role alongside the existing Welsh Government office in Brussels, the Wales-based International Relations and Trade team and other stakeholders. He will play a significant role in connecting Wales to Europe and making sure Wales’ voice continues to be heard.

This is a new position which will support Wales in staying connected to the European Union and ensuring communities and businesses across Wales retain, as far as possible, the benefits of ongoing European links, access to programmes, and the legacy of nearly 50 years of co-operation.

Through this appointment, we will further develop our existing relationship with our neighbours in the European Union. This will be achieved through engagement, sharing perspectives and demonstrating solidarity across a range of European interests, including trade, education, research, environment, energy, maritime, culture and language.

The appointment of a Welsh Government representative on Europe role is a key commitment for Welsh Ministers.

Wales will always be a European nation.

The role of the Welsh Government representative on Europe has been developed to support our work in Europe, specifically to:

* Engage with politicians and officials in EU institutions and key stakeholders in Europe
* Promote the Welsh Government’s policy agenda in the EU, focusing on climate change, research, innovation, Horizon 2020, the International Learning Exchange and European networks
* Use information to inform and support Ministers’ objectives to benefit different policy areas
* Represent the Welsh Government in key European networks, such as the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)
* Support delivery of European aspects of the Welsh Government’s economic objectives
* Engage with European Commissioners and MEPs
* Represent the Welsh Government as required.

Derek Vaughan brings a wealth of experience to this new role. He was previously a member of the European Parliament, Leader of the Welsh Local Government Association and the Leader of Neath Port Talbot Council. He will take up this new role shortly. This is a two year contract, on a part-time basis equivalent to two days a week.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a further statement or to answer questions on this when the Senedd returns I would be happy to do so.