

Interparliamentary Finance Committee Forum – 21 March 2024, Portcullis House, Westminster

The Interparliamentary Finance Committee Forum (IFCF) met for the third time on Thursday 21 March at Portcullis House, Westminster. Members from the Senedd's Finance Committee and the Scottish Parliament's Finance and Public Administration Committee were in attendance, with officials also present from the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The following informal sessions were held:

- A roundtable discussion with the Chair and Members of the House of Commons Treasury Committee;
- A meeting with former Treasury Minister, Rt Hon. David Gauke;
- A meeting with the Chair and a Committee Specialist, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee;
- A meeting with Mike Keoghan, Deputy National Statistician and Director General for Economic, Social and Environmental Statistics; and
- A meeting with Dr Hannah White, Director, Institute for Government.

Both the Chief Secretary to the Treasury and the Financial Secretary to the Treasury were invited to meet the IFCF but declined to do so.

The IFCF agreed to issue a joint letter to the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, as the Treasury Minister responsible for devolved matters, expressing disappointment that neither she nor the Financial Secretary were available to meet informally, and seeking action in the following areas:

- The Chief Secretary to the Treasury and/or the Chancellor give evidence to our respective Committees when asked, to enable more effective scrutiny of the overall funding position in the devolved nations. This would be a welcome resumption of the practice in previous parliamentary sessions.
- Greater consideration is given to the timing of the Autumn Budget and its impact on the scrutiny of devolved budgets, and
- More certainty for devolved governments, public bodies and the voluntary sector in Scotland and Wales regarding multi-year spending plans and the earlier sharing of information.

Both Committees also provided updates regarding their respective work programmes and identified areas of common interest as a basis for possible further collaboration. The Forum is due to meet again in the autumn.

Attendees

- Peredur Owen Griffiths MS, Chair of the Senedd's Finance Committee
- Peter Fox MS, Senedd Finance Committee Member
- Mike Hedges MS, Senedd Finance Committee Member
- Rhianon Passmore MS, Senedd Finance Committee Member
- Kenneth Gibson MSP, Convener, Finance and Public Administration Committee
- Michael Marra MSP, Deputy Convener, Finance and Public Administration Committee
- Liz Smith MSP, Finance and Public Administration Committee Member
- Michelle Thomson MSP, Finance and Public Administration Committee Member
- Ross Greer MSP, Finance and Public Administration Committee Member
- Jamie Halcro Johnston MSP, Finance and Public Administration Committee Member