

It has been my enormous privilege to chair the Commission on Devolution in Wales that your Government established. Our First Report – *Empowerment and Responsibility: Financial Powers to Strengthen Wales* was published just over a year ago.

The Report's essential argument was expressed in its title: that with new fiscal powers Wales would be strengthened but that there would also be greater responsibility in its government. The report was unanimous. I was delighted that the Report was subsequently also endorsed unanimously by the National Assembly, and that it has since been warmly received by business representatives.

I fully appreciate that a detailed Report that proposes some radical changes needs proper consideration in government. But my colleagues and I are concerned that no response has yet been made by HM Government. We set out a realistic timetable in our Report for implementation - some at the time criticised this for being rather timid. The timetable has already slipped.

It would be most disappointing if the opportunity to legislate to implement our recommendations were missed. I am therefore writing to you directly in the hope that you will expedite the process and that we will see a positive response to our Report very soon. I do understand that there are political considerations, but I hope that the economic and governance benefits to Wales and the United Kingdom will be seen to transcend them.

If it is of benefit to meet, I am at your disposal.