



Communiqué

28th Summit – Cardiff, 25 November 2016

The British-Irish Council held its 28th Summit meeting today hosted by the Welsh Government in Cardiff. The heads of delegation were welcomed to the Vale Resort by the First Minister of Wales, the Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM, on behalf of the Welsh Government. A full list of Ministerial participants is attached.

The United Kingdom's exit from the European Union

This was the first meeting of the Council since it convened in Cardiff in July 2016 for an extraordinary Summit to discuss the outcome of the United Kingdom's (UK) referendum on membership of the European Union (EU). Ministers used the discussion today to reflect on developments since that meeting.

Ministers updated the Council on their activity in respect of the UK's exit from the EU, particularly with reference to relations between Member Administrations, and arrangements that have been put in place to facilitate and strengthen engagement.

They also further discussed some of the themes identified in July, including in relation to specific sectors such as the agriculture, agri-food and fisheries industries, economy and trade, free movement of goods and people, the Common Travel Area and relations with the EU.

Ministers noted an update on implications for the Council work sectors of the UK's exit from the EU. They mandated officials to keep this under review and to report back to the Council.

In concluding their discussions, the Council again reiterated their commitment to facilitating harmonious and mutually beneficial relationships among the people of these islands as set out in the 1998 Agreement. Ministers agreed that the forthcoming developments underline the importance and value of the Council as a unique forum to share views, enhance cooperation and strengthen relationships.

Early Years: Investing for the Future

Ministers with particular responsibility for early years policy met in advance of the Summit meeting to consider a paper prepared by the Council's Early Years work sector. This discussion was subsequently taken forward by Heads of Administration who welcomed the progress made by Member Administrations in taking forward the early years agenda since the 2012 Summit. The Council agreed that the early years play a critical role in creating strong foundations for children and families to thrive. They also recognised the importance of investment in the early years to generate better value for money in the public sector by moving from curative to preventative models of service delivery and supporting social mobility.

Responding to the paper prepared by the work sector, Ministers had a detailed discussion about the key challenges and opportunities ahead. All administrations affirmed the significant benefits gained from their collective participation in this work sector and endorsed proposals for future collaboration, particularly in relation to the following priorities: the Workforce; Supporting Families; Parenting; and Quality Assurance and Assessment of Developmental Progress.

Review of Work Sectors

The Council noted progress on a review of its activity, including analysis of emerging and established Programmes for Government across Member

Administrations. A number of areas and emerging topics, such as Public Health and Raising Attainment, are under review and a further report will be provided to the Summit in June 2017.

Ministers also welcomed the implementation by the existing work sectors of the Task and Finish approach adopted at the Glasgow Summit and they endorsed the Forward Work Plans proposed by the Environment, Early Years and Transport work sectors. Work on the final stages of the review will now be progressed in advance of the next Summit which will be hosted by the Northern Ireland Executive .

BIC Secretariat

The Council noted the Secretariat's mid-year report and welcomed the relaunch of the Council's website.

Date and Location of the Next Summit Meeting

The Council noted that the next BIC Summit would be hosted by the Northern Ireland Executive in June 2017.

BIC Secretariat

25 November 2016

List of Ministerial Delegates

Welsh Government	
First Minister	Rt Hon Carwyn Jones AM
Minister for Lifelong Learning and Welsh Language	Mr Alun Davies AM
Irish Government	
An Taoiseach	Mr Enda Kenny TD
Minister for Children and Youth Affairs	Dr Katherine Zappone TD
UK Government	
Secretary of State for Wales	Rt Hon Alun Cairns MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland	Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Exiting the European Union	Mr Robin Walker MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Women, Equalities and Early Years	Ms Caroline Dinenage MP
Northern Ireland Executive	
First Minister	Rt Hon Arlene Foster MLA
deputy First Minister	Mr Martin McGuinness MLA
Minister of Education	Mr Peter Weir MLA
Scottish Government	
First Minister	Rt Hon Nicola Sturgeon MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs	Ms Fiona Hyslop MSP
Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe	Mr Mike Russell MSP
Minister for Childcare and Early Years	Mr Mark McDonald MSP
Isle of Man Government	
Chief Minister	Hon Howard Quayle MHK
Minister of Education and Children	Hon Graham Cregeen MHK
Government of Jersey	
Chief Minister	Senator Ian Gorst
Minister for External Relations	Senator Sir Philip Bailhache
Minister for Education	Deputy Rod Bryans
Government of Guernsey	
Chief Minister	Deputy Gavin St Pier
Minister for Education, Sport and Culture	Deputy Paul Le Pelley