

Sir Oliver Heald MP
Co-Chair of the UK-EU Parliamentary Partnership Assembly,
House of Commons

20 March 2024

Dear Oliver,

Cancellation of the 5th meeting of the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly

It was with deep regret that Adam Price MS and I were informed by Senedd Commission officials of the decision to cancel the fifth meeting of the Parliamentary Partnership Assembly (PPA) to be held from 18 to 19 March. We understand that this was due to the scheduling of business by the UK Government in the House of Commons that prevented Members of Parliament travelling to Brussels.

We were very much looking forward to further constructive and insightful conversations with our UK and European colleagues. It is a lost opportunity to cement the positive and constructive relationship that has developed through the PPA ahead of the European Parliament elections in June and likely change in delegation membership. I have no doubt that UK delegation members will have been equally disappointed by the cancellation.

As Senedd Members we have yet to receive any formal correspondence notifying us of why the decision was taken and why consultation with members from the devolved legislatures about the decision did not take place in advance.

In order to avoid a similar situation in future, it would be of assistance to us to understand on what basis the decision was made and why it was not possible to put alternative arrangements in place.

In addition, it would be helpful to know if there are any steps that could be taken and considered by both the UK and EU sides in future to avoid last minute cancellations due to changes to parliamentary business.

Given that there is likely to now be a considerable gap before the next meeting of a re-constituted PPA, it seems to be an opportune moment to ensure procedures are put in place to avoid a similar situation in future.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support and engagement over the last two years and for your work with Nathalie Loiseau and other PPA Bureau members to ensure that the PPA has continued to evolve into a meaningful forum for cooperation.

I hope both the UK Government and European Commission value equally the positive impact the work of the PPA has had on UK-EU relations and continue to recognise its value and support its work in future.

I am copying this letter to Clare Adamson MSP, Convener of the Scottish Parliament's Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee and Paula Bradshaw MLA, Chair of the Northern Ireland Assembly's Committee for The Executive Office.

Best wishes,

Huw Irranca-Davies

Huw Irranca-Davies
Chair

