

Wednesday 24 July 2019

Dear Mr Johnson,

I write to you on behalf of my party – Plaid Cymru – but also on behalf of the people of Wales, for whom the last decade will be defined as a decade of failure and countless broken promises on the part of the British Government. Time and time again the Conservatives have made a raft of promises to the people of Wales only to break them without even the courtesy of an apology for letting them down.

Your party's 2015 manifesto pledged to complete the electrification of the South Wales Main Line, promising to bring our woeful rail infrastructure into the twenty-first century. Following years of delays and diversions, the project was cancelled, leaving Wales as the only nation in western Europe without a single mile of electrified railway and leaving us behind in an age gone by.

The same manifesto promised to deliver the world's first tidal lagoon power plant in Swansea – an ambitious project that would see Wales leading the way in fighting the climate crisis through innovative clean energy. But that too was cancelled, again depriving Wales of crucial, potentially transformational investment.

It also promised to hand over more responsibility to the National Assembly for Wales, for which the Welsh people voted overwhelmingly in a referendum in 2011. Instead of keeping to that promise, we've seen a Conservative Government intent on grabbing back powers over agriculture and regional policy, all in the name of 'taking back control' for the out-of-touch Westminster system.

Now, Mr Johnson, you have the chance to prove that you are different from your predecessors; to prove that, unlike them, you do care about the people of Wales. But while you entertain crashing out of the European Union without a deal as a viable policy, any claims you make of caring about Wales or its people will fall flat like a tonne of bricks.

Wales will be one of the first casualties of a no-deal Brexit. It will endanger jobs, wages as well as the very way of life for the people that I and my party represent. Expert after expert, and even the British Government itself, has confirmed that the disastrous policy you are threatening to inflict upon us would lead to disaster for manufacturing jobs, for Welsh farmers and our rural communities.

Our economy is more reliant on trade with the Single Market than other parts of the UK, and our industries more vulnerable to potential constraints on exports. The combined hit of the loss of funding from the Common Agricultural Policy and the loss of their biggest export market will lead to unprecedented challenges for Welsh farmers, many of whom would be forced to give up farms that have been in their families for generations. The danger is so serious that in the Commons this week, a minister said openly that a no-deal Brexit would be the "largest risk" to Welsh agriculture.

On top of this, you are treating the lives of those who rely on medicines from the EU, the livelihoods of millions of EU citizens who have made their homes in the UK, as well as UK citizens in the rest of Europe, with contempt. You will be depriving young people who did not have a say in 2016 of opportunities to work, live and study in the rest of Europe – opportunities you yourself enjoyed unheeded.

You have the power to ensure that this doesn't happen, to put some sense back into our politics, through being honest with the people you are supposed to represent. That means committing to a People's Vote with an option to remain as full members of the European Union.

I cannot say I am hopeful that you will give much notice to this letter. Your misplaced comments saying that 'too often there are parts of our country ... where English is not spoken by some people as their first language' does not fill me with confidence that your policy-making will be designed with a consideration for the people of Wales or our culture. Nor do your recent remarks about regional funds in Wales needing to have a 'strong Conservative influence', despite twenty years of devolution and two referendums confirming Wales's right of power over economic development and despite your party's track record on denying Wales the investment it requires to flourish.

The time for reckless delusions about the land of milk and honey is over. I urge you now to be honest with the people of Wales and promise that you will not inflict the catastrophe of a no-deal Brexit on them.

Otherwise, I fear you will go down in history as the most irresponsible Prime Minister in a generation.

Yours sincerely,



Adam Price AC / AM
Leader of Plaid Cymru