

Vaughan Gething AM/AC

Assembly Member for Cardiff South & Penarth

Aelod Cynulliad dros Dde Caerdydd a Phenarth



Monthly Report

Just over 2 years ago the electorate went to the polls to decide whether or not we remain a member of the European Union. In a column I wrote on the day of the Referendum I implored residents of Cardiff South and Penarth to vote to remain in the EU. For me, the advantages of being a member of the EU far outweigh the negatives. Despite residents in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan voting in relatively large numbers to remain, the rest of the country felt differently. As a result, the UK is currently on course to leave the EU.

People voted to leave for different reasons. Some people didn't feel they had a stake in society and had nothing to lose. Some worried about immigration. Some genuinely believed that the country would be wealthier outside the EU. It has become painfully clear to everyone that the £350million a week that was promised for the NHS is not going to materialise. Indeed we now know that the Remain campaign is less 'Project Fear' and more 'Project Fact'.

It was only in December last year that EU leaders agreed that sufficient progress had been made in phase 1 of the Brexit negotiations with the EU to allow the talks to move onto phase 2. Reaching this agreement has taken far longer than it should have done. The lack of clarity and realism on the part of the UK Government has been appalling. It has created uncertainty for the business community which has led to delays in making investment decisions and in some cases jobs relocating. Brexit campaigners claimed this would be the easiest trade deal in history. The reality shows that claim is simply not true.

As many of you will be aware the draft EU withdrawal plan was approved by the UK Cabinet last week. The next day there were high profile resignations from the Cabinet and the possibility of a no confidence vote in the Prime Minister. The process to get to where we are today has been a complete and utter shambles. Two years on we still have no real idea of what our future relationship with our biggest and most influential trading partner will look like. The Welsh Government has made it perfectly clear that we cannot accept Theresa May's deal. It does not protect our economic future. Theresa May's deal would cost jobs from families that I represent. Theresa May's deal would hurt our health service. No deal would be a catastrophe for our health service. Don't take my word for it, the Royal Colleges for GPs, Nurses, Midwives and many more agree with me.

I am angry and offended by the Prime Minister calling EU nationals queue jumpers. I'm married to an EU national who works here and has paid tax here all her life. Divisive rhetoric will not unite the UK on our future outside or within the EU.

I do not believe a divided UK Parliament can make a choice for the next generation of our divided country. We know there is precious little chance of a General election. I am backing the People's Vote not because I think it is the most popular option, but because I think it is the right thing to do. We should have a choice between Theresa May's deal or Remain with the deal we have now. We, the people, should have the final say.

New School Building for Fitzalan High

The need to replace the existing Fitzalan High School buildings has been identified as part of the 21st Century Band B Schools programme. This is a £284 million investment programme, jointly funded by the Welsh Government and Cardiff Council. The project will include state of the art facilities, including a new swimming pool, multi use game areas and access to 3G rugby and football pitches.

New Building for Ninian Park

Last week I had the pleasure of attending the official opening of the new extension at Ninian Park Primary. The continued investment in



our schools will ensure that students have the best possible environment in which to learn. I'm proud that

we are continuing to invest in the future. It was lovely to visit with the school team and be shown around by the Rights Respecting Ambassadors.

Volunteering with Marie Curie

Once again I was pleased to help Marie Curie with their Christmas collection. It was fantastic to meet so many constituents at the Asda store in Cardiff Bay. I am pleased that I



was able to do my bit in helping to raise awareness of the fantastic help and support the

charity provides. The money raise from

appeals like this will help Marie Curie Nurses provide care and support to people living with a terminal illness, and their loved ones, in homes across Wales, as well as in the charity's Cardiff & the Vale Hospice in Penarth.

Christmas Comes to Penarth

My family and I had a great time at the Penarth Christmas lights switch on. This year, the lights were switched on by Wales international rugby player Josh Navidi. There was plenty of activity to be enjoyed, from fairground rides and live music to refreshments and a magician- we were even lucky enough to receive a visit from Father Christmas and Mrs Christmas! It was great to see so many residents attend and take part in the festivities.

Welsh Labour Leadership

I would like to thank those who have supported me in the recent leadership election which saw Mark Drakeford AM elected as Leader of the Welsh Labour Party. I am proud to retain my post as Minister for Health and Social Services as part of a new team, but recognise there is still important work to be done in the Welsh NHS. I remain committed to working with colleagues in health, local government and the housing sector to deliver the improved integrated health and social care we all wish to see.

Seasons Greetings

I would like to give my best wishes to those in Cardiff South and Penarth over this Christmas Season. My office will be closed until January 7 2019. The office can be contacted on 0300 2007150 or at

Vaughan.Gething@assembly.wales