

UK government hosts British-Irish Council in Blackpool to bring islands closer together

- Rishi Sunak the first Prime Minister to attend the Summit since 2007
- UK government holds positive talks with devolved governments in Blackpool for 38th British-Irish Council Summit
- Delegates discussed approaches to supporting sustainable growth and regeneration across these islands.

The UK government has hosted the 38th British-Irish Council Summit in Blackpool where the discussions included topics such as the war in Ukraine, the rising cost of living and sustainable economic growth.

Building upon the Prime Minister's calls to the First Ministers on his first day in office, and demonstrating the importance of pragmatic and constructive working, the Prime Minister travelled to Blackpool on Thursday to open the summit and welcome delegates – the first Prime Minister in 15 years to attend.

Established in 1999, the British-Irish Council was created two decades ago by the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement to promote positive, practical relationships among the people of the islands and to provide a forum for co-operation.

Membership includes the UK and Irish government, devolved administrations and crown dependencies. There were no devolved leaders in attendance from Northern Ireland due to the current suspension of the Northern Ireland Executive.

The Summit was chaired by the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, Rt Hon Michael Gove MP. He said:

This British-Irish Council has given us an opportunity to discuss the challenge all parts of these islands face with the rising cost of living and how we can do more to support the most vulnerable in our communities.

The Prime Minister's attendance and constructive conversations with the First Ministers is a clear signal of our renewed ambition to work more closely together, with an absolute focus on tackling the most pressing issues across the UK.

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement next year, which established the British-Irish Council, everyone in attendance agreed that restoring devolved government in Northern Ireland is an absolute priority over the

coming months.

Visit the [British Irish Council website](#) for more information on the Summit.

Whilst at the British-Irish Council, the Prime Minister held the inaugural meeting of the Prime Minister and Head of the Devolved Government Council, as set out in [working arrangements](#) established earlier this year.