

Devolved administrations call for clarity on future funding post-Brexit

Welsh Finance Minister Rebecca Evans, said:

“I will be calling for clarity about our budgets, and pushing for ongoing and meaningful dialogue between the UK government and the devolved administrations about the challenges we are facing.

“With the clock ticking as we approach EU exit day, it is absolutely vital we are at the heart of decision making and are able to prepare for the impact of Brexit.

“Alongside this, I will also be pressing for further clarity and assurances about the cost associated with the UK government’s changes to public sector pensions and how it intends to fund it.

“Only last week, the First Minister and local government leaders wrote to the Chancellor seeking clarification. Worryingly, even as local authorities are finalising their budgets, there is still some uncertainty about funding.”

Finance Secretary Derek Mackay said:

“Today’s meeting is an opportunity for the UK government to provide much needed clarity around future funding as well as details on what support will be made available to help protect Scotland’s economy against the consequences of the UK’s exit from the European Union.

“Funding from the EU supports jobs in Scotland, from major infrastructure projects to sustaining rural communities and delivering research funding for our world-class universities. That is why the Scottish Government is determined to defend its hard-won fiscal responsibility and maintain the benefits that EU funding has provided to many sectors and individuals in Scotland.

“With just weeks to go until the planned EU exit day, we remain deeply concerned about the lack of detail regarding replacement arrangements for EU funding streams given their importance to individuals, businesses and communities across Scotland.

“Today I will be calling on the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to provide reassurance that Scotland should not be financially worse off as a result of EU exit and to guarantee that all lost EU funding will be replaced in full.

“As the Scottish Government Chief Economist’s State of the Economy report set out, Brexit uncertainty is already impacting key economic indicators and a no-deal Brexit would lead to a major dislocation to the Scottish economy.

“The UK government must immediately rule out the possibility of a ‘no-deal’ Brexit and extend the Article 50 process. However, as a responsible government we will also continue – and indeed intensify – our work to prepare for all outcomes as best we can.

“Alongside the Welsh Finance Minister, I will urge the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to take an even handed approach in meeting all costs associated with the UK government’s changes to public sector pensions. We need urgent clarity and agreement around future funding, in order to plan and focus on delivering efficient and effective public services”.