

First Minister: Take no deal off the table

The First Minister will today say that the Prime Minister must show flexibility to break the deadlock in Parliament instead of presenting a “tweaked” version of a deal which has already been completely rejected by MPs.

Mark Drakeford will warn that while the UK government refuses to take ‘no deal’ off the table, the UK faces an uncomfortably high-risk of a no deal Brexit by default.

In response to these unprecedented circumstances, today’s government business in the National Assembly has been amended to make way for a series of emergency statements on the impact of a no deal outcome on Wales and the work that is underway to prepare for this.

Ministers will outline the real risks of a no deal Brexit on health, the economy, transport and farming which include:

- concerns about the future supply of radioisotope, which is essential for diagnostic and therapeutic use by our NHS
- the risk of severe disruption to freight transport, with knock-on effects for businesses and consumers
- tariffs and non-tariff barriers on exports to the EU which would damage our manufacturing and agriculture sectors, with sales of processed foods attracting tariffs of around 15% and other products exceeding 50%, with red meat attracting particularly high tariffs, if we move to WTO rules.

Speaking ahead of this afternoon’s statement in the Senedd, the First Minister said:

“Last week the Prime Minister’s Brexit deal was defeated, and the scale of that defeat provided the clearest proof yet that her deal is dead. Yet the Prime Minister continues stubbornly to push ahead with only a tweaked version of her failed deal.

“No UK government should be capable of consciously allowing a catastrophic no deal outcome, and the Prime Minister must take this option off the table and extend Article 50. This would allow time for the UK government to change direction and commit to re-entering negotiations with the EU to secure a Brexit that protects jobs and the economy.”