

# Lesley Griffiths to hear views on Securing Wales' future

Lesley Griffiths is undertaking a series of visits to businesses and organisations in South Wales whose operations are likely to be impacted by the UK's impending exit from the EU.

The Cabinet Secretary will visit the Eastern Valleys Uplands Project in Blaenavon, the Two Sisters Red Meat processing site in Merthyr Tydfil and the Food Innovation Centre in Cardiff Metropolitan University. The day will culminate in a round-table cross-sector meeting with key agriculture and environment stakeholders in Cardiff Bay.

Among the issues likely to be raised during the visits and meeting are the importance of Welsh businesses having full and unfettered access to the European Single Market and how to achieve a balanced approach to immigration, linking migration to jobs.

Also expected to be discussed are maintaining the level of funding currently delivered by the EU to Wales' farmers and continuing social and environmental protections once these are no longer guaranteed through the UK's membership of the EU.

These are key issues that were set out in Securing Wales' Future, the comprehensive Brexit White Paper published last week by the Welsh Government and Plaid Cymru.

Lesley Griffiths said:

"The Environment and Rural Affairs portfolio is, probably more than any other, hugely impacted by EU funding and legislation. Wales' thriving food and drink industry also benefits greatly from selling its produce into the EU and many are able to operate effectively by employing people from EU countries.

"The UK's withdrawal from the EU will undoubtedly have a major impact on individuals, businesses and organisations represented by my portfolio. Since the referendum result I have been eager that those who are going to be affected the most by Brexit have regular opportunities to feed their very real views and concerns into the highest levels of government.

"Through our White Paper, jointly produced with Plaid Cymru, we have clearly set out what we believe is a sensible starting point for negotiations. We believe our position balances concerns over immigration with the economic reality that makes full and unfettered access to the single market so central to Wales' future prosperity.

“I look forward to meeting a wide range of individuals and organisations and hearing their views on how we can deliver a Brexit that works for Wales, and for the rest of the United Kingdom.”