

More work to be done despite Brexit progress – Mark Drakeford

Speaking ahead of a meeting of the devolved governments and UK government, Mark Drakeford has outlined the significant issues the Welsh Government want addressed as the 2nd phase of talks begin.

Mark Drakeford said:

“The progress we saw last week is to be welcomed but there is a huge amount of hard work to be done if we are to achieve the right sort of Brexit. This is just the green light for more talks, talks that will get to the heart of what our relationship with the EU will look like after Brexit.

“As the talks move on to discuss detailed issues related to the transition and to the long-term relationship, it is vital that the devolved administrations are fully involved with the negotiations in a way we have not been to date.

“These negotiations will involve questions such as agriculture support during and after the transition period, the sort of environmental regulation we will have in future and whether the UK will continue to be part of important European programmes for education and research, such as Erasmus Plus and Horizon 2020 – all issues which are firmly within the remit of the devolved institutions.

“It’s essential that the UK government agrees a common approach to these and many other issues – not least our future access to the Single Market – with the devolved administrations in advance of the negotiations, based on a proper consideration of the evidence.”

The Finance Secretary will be at the JMC (EN) meeting with First Secretary of State, Rt Hon Damian Green MP, who will chair the meeting, and other cabinet ministers.

“We also need firm proposals from the UK government on amendments to the EU Withdrawal Bill if a major constitutional battle – wasting time and energy on the part of all concerned – is to be avoided. The government needs to bring forward amendments before the bill leaves the House of Commons, as it has suggested is likely. If it does not, while we are clear that a UK-wide approach that respects devolution is the best approach, we are ready and able to put in place our own legislation: work on this has been underway for many months and everything will be in position, should it be needed.”