

# News story: UK Government holds 'helpful' Brexit talks with First Minister of Wales

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster David Lidington MP is encouraged by the bilateral discussion he had in Cardiff today with the First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones AM on the UK's preparations for leaving the EU.

Mr Lidington said the talks were helpful and thanked the Welsh Government for their constructive efforts in trying to find an agreed way forward in relation to the EU Withdrawal Bill that is currently going through the UK Parliament.

The talks were also attended by the Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns MP and Welsh Government Minister Mark Drakeford AM.

## **Speaking after the meeting David Lidington said:**

I would like to thank Carwyn and the Welsh Government for their constructive approach on the EU Withdrawal Bill.

We both agree it is absolutely essential that all parts of the UK are ready for the day that we leave the EU. We need to protect the benefits of the UK internal market, making sure that there are no new barriers to living and doing business for people in Wales and other parts of the UK on the day we leave the EU. And as we've always been clear on, we expect that as powers are returned from the EU a substantial number will transfer directly to the Welsh Government.

We want to do all of this in a way that takes account of the concerns that have been expressed by the Welsh Government. We have had a helpful discussion today and I am encouraged that we can make progress in trying to find an agreed way forward on the EU Withdrawal Bill. Ministers and officials from both Governments will continue to work closely on these issues over the coming weeks.'

## **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

I have always been optimistic that we would be able to work constructively with the Welsh Government to address any concerns about the detail of the EU Withdrawal Bill. That conversation continued today in the most positive spirit.

We will reach an agreed solution that respects the devolution settlements, but moreover that is right for the people of Wales.

Work will now intensify over the days and weeks ahead as we take further positive strides towards achieving that goal.