

Jeremy Miles MS
Counsel General and Minister for European Transition
Welsh Government

23 October 2020

Dear Jeremy,

Preparedness in Wales for the end of the transition period

Throughout the Brexit process our Committee has taken a keen interest in preparedness issues and has actively involved key stakeholders at every stage in its consideration of these issues. Over the course of the autumn term we heard from a range of stakeholders from key sectors including ports and logistics; food, drink, fisheries and agriculture; and medicines. A full schedule of the oral evidence sessions including links to transcripts, and links to written evidence received during our consultation, are provided as an annex to this letter.

Some of the themes raised by stakeholders are familiar and many are consistent with the issues raised during the Committee's [earlier work on Brexit preparedness](#). However, they take on an added significance given both the very short timescales between now and the end of the transition period and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We heard that uncertainty about the eventual outcome, including whether or not there will be a deal between the UK and the EU, is posing difficulties in terms of sector preparedness. The COVID-19 pandemic has also reduced the resilience of sectors to withstand further economic shocks that may arise as a result of the Brexit process.

Stakeholders stressed the importance of clear communication from government particularly for smaller and medium-sized enterprises that may not have the capacity and resources to dedicate to planning for European transition. This includes ensuring that the information and guidance provided by the government via its online platforms such as Preparing Wales, is both comprehensive and easy to navigate.



Senedd Cymru

Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

✉ SeneddMADY@senedd.cymru

☎ 0300 200 6565

Welsh Parliament

Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

✉ SeneddEAAL@senedd.wales

☎ 0300 200 6565

We note that on 18 October, the Prime Minister Boris Johnson MP urged business leaders to **step up preparations for a 'no deal' exit** at the end of the transition period.

As a Committee, we have consistently expressed concerns about the potentially very damaging consequences of leaving the European Union without a negotiated deal and the disproportionate impacts such an outcome could have on key sectors of the Welsh economy.

We also recognise, however, that reaching a negotiated deal with the European Union is not within the Welsh Government's gift and have welcomed the proportionate actions taken by the Welsh Government, and others, to prepare for all Brexit scenarios.

We write at this time to draw your attention to our most recent sessions in the hope and expectation that their concerns, and the issues that stakeholders have raised with us, can be reflected in your preparedness work, and in the End of Transition Plan that we are expecting later this autumn.

We also wish to express our clear expectation that both Welsh and UK governments will redouble their efforts to engage with each other at both ministerial and official-to-official level in the coming weeks to make the necessary preparations for the end of the transition period.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Rees." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'R'.

David Rees MS

Chair of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



Annex - schedule of oral evidence and written evidence

Date	Sectors	Witnesses	Link
1 October	Ports and logistics	Richard Ballantyne, British Ports Association Duncan Buchanan, Road Haulage Association Mags Simpson, Logistics UK	<u>View the transcript</u>
8 October	Food and drink	Julie Byers - Food and Drink Federation Andy Richardson - Food and Drink Wales	<u>View the transcript</u>
	Fisheries	Jim Evans - Welsh Fishermen's Association	<u>View the transcript</u>
	Agriculture	Nick Fenwick – Farmers’ Union of Wales Huw Thomas – National Farmers’ Union	<u>View the transcript</u>
15 October	Medicines	Dr Richard Greville - Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry	<u>View the transcript</u>



		Judith Vincent - Swansea Bay University Health Board on behalf of Welsh NHS Confederation	
--	--	--	--

The Committee received the following written responses to its **consultation**:

- [EUP01 Cruelty Free International \(English only\) PDF 1 MB](#)
- [EUP02 Arts Council Wales - Wales Arts International PDF 147 KB](#)
- [EUP03 Colleges Wales \(English only\) PDF 298 KB](#)
- [EUP04 Welsh Women's Aid \(English only\) PDF 110 KB](#)
- [EUP05 British Veterinary Association \(English only\) PDF 162 KB](#)
- [EUP06 FSB \(English only\) PDF 376 KB View as HTML \(6\)51 KB](#)
- [EUP07 ABPI \(English only\) PDF 312 KB View as HTML \(7\)47 KB](#)
- [EUP08 Cytûn – Churches together in Wales PDF 204 KB View as HTML \(8\)25 KB](#)

