# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **End of Transition Action Plan 2020** |
| **DATE**  | **11 November 2020** |
| **BY** | **Jeremy Miles MS, Counsel General and Minister for European Transition** |

Today, with approximately 50 days until we enter into a new relationship with the European Union, I will be publishing the Welsh Government’s End of Transition Action Plan.

The End of Transition Plan identifies the issues facing Wales and our strategic priorities as we approach the end of the Transition Period and beyond, taking into consideration the on-going impacts of the current Covid-19 pandemic and the pressures our economy currently faces. It describes the actions we are, and have been taking, both independently and jointly with the UK Government and partners in Wales, to ensure that the public, private and third sectors, individuals and communities are as prepared as feasibly possible. It also sets out where our actions as a government depend on the steps for which the UK Government is responsible.

Regrettably, as of today, we still lack clarity on the UK’s future relationship with the EU. All that remains clear is that, whether or not the ongoing negotiations result in an agreement, there will be very significant changes from the current Transition Period arrangements. Our extended participation in the EU single market and customs union will end as of 1 January 2021.

We were clear at the beginning of the negotiations that the timetable should not be artificially constrained by an arbitrary deadline. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic made a case for extending the transition period even more compelling. The UK Government did not listen.

As a result we are still having to plan for the worst case scenario – leaving the Transition Period without an agreement with the EU on our future relationship – at a time when devolved Governments and the UK Government, as well as public services, businesses and other organisations, all have limited capacity to prepare adequately. There is an immediate critical need for businesses, the public and Devolved Governments to focus on the implications of the pandemic and the immediate threat this poses to lives and livelihoods, all of which are inevitably redirecting current resource from the end of transition preparations.

In September 2019 the Welsh Government published its ‘Preparing for a No Deal Brexit’ document in preparation for the possibility that we would leave the EU without even a formal Withdrawal Agreement. That document set out the Welsh Government’s overview of the main strategic risks of such an outcome.

The situation now, however, is different. On the one hand, some of the risks captured in that no deal planning have been mitigated by the Withdrawal Agreement and on the other, some of the risks have been intensified by the ongoing pandemic. As the negotiations progress, it has become clearer that even with a negotiated outcome, there will be significant new barriers to trade and co-operation with the EU from 1 January 2021.

Many of the actions we had in place for a no deal exit last year have helped shape our response to the Covid pandemic. We have provided significant funding for the economy and put in place a range of measures to support those most vulnerable in our communities. These have been essential in dealing with the consequences of a situation of this nature. By contrast, the consequences of leaving the Transition Period at this time and in this way, are the choice of the UK Government and the result of their approach to the negotiations with the EU. Many of the actions we have set out in the End of Transition Action Plan would have been unnecessary had the UK Government chosen a less dogmatic approach to the negotiations in line with the positions we have long advocated.

Over the coming weeks we will continue to develop the actions in the plan in light of the outcome of the negotiations. With approximately 50 days to go until the UK’s relationship with the EU fundamentally changes, we ask everyone in Wales to prepare using the information, advice and support that is available.

The Welsh Government’s End of Transition Action Plan is available at:

[https://gov.wales/end-of-transition-action-plan-2020](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fgov.wales%2Fend-of-transition-action-plan-2020&data=04%7C01%7CKayleigh.Sweet%40gov.wales%7Cd45a358078a14ff64bb008d884bea854%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637405301681114843%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=scleZBC6o5d1WzE6WxyGiCcqsJrtY%2FMSOgYa4wFGFc0%3D&reserved=0)