

Written Response by the Welsh Government to the report of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee entitled “The Withdrawal Agreement: Implications for Wales”

I would like to thank the members of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee for their report, recognising, in particular, the promptness of its publication in such a dynamic context. I have set out my response to the Report's recommendation below.

Recommendation 1.

The Committee recommended that:

The Welsh Government's analysis should include an assessment of the political, economic and legal implications for Wales of a Brexit on Withdrawal Agreement terms. In providing this analysis, the Welsh Government should offer a comparison with a 'no deal' Brexit and continued membership of the European Union. This assessment should be published before any debate in the Assembly on the Withdrawal Agreement.

Response: Accept.

The National Assembly debated and voted upon the draft Withdrawal Agreement on 4 December 2018. We were able to meet the recommendation to publish Welsh Government analysis of the draft Agreement in advance of that session.

On 27 November, the former First Minister issued a written statement on the draft Withdrawal Agreement legal text (as endorsed by the European Council on 25 November). That statement set out the Welsh Government's assessment of the deal reached between the UK Government and the EU – particularly in comparison to the Welsh Government's evidence-based proposals set out in the White Paper, *Securing Wales' Future* - and was intended to inform Assembly Members about the implications for Wales in advance of the debate and vote in the Assembly.

Further to that statement, on 4 December that Welsh Government published the Chief Economist's review of the economic analysis that the UK Government provided on the economic consequences of its preferred longer term arrangements for trade after Brexit. That document reviewed the UK Government analysis and compared it with analysis from other research organisations, including the National Institute for Economic and Social Research (NIESR) and the Centre for Economic Policy (CEP) at the London School of Economics.

We will continue to update the National Assembly on any significant developments.

Financial Implications: None.

Mark Drakeford AM
First Minister