# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Over £25 million now committed to help Welsh businesses and public services prepare for Brexit** |
| **DATE**  | **24 September 2018** |
| **BY** | **Rt Hon Carwyn Jones, First Minister** |

Members will wish to be aware that the Cabinet Sub Committee for EU Transition has now committed over half of the £50 million EU Transition fund to help Welsh businesses and public services plan and prepare for Brexit.

The fund, announced in January 2018, is providing direct financial support to sectors across Wales to plan and prepare for the significant changes ahead. A number of projects have already benefited from £7.4 million including support to our agriculture and fisheries industry sectors, in particular £2.15 million for the development of the red meat sector in Wales.

We have also provided £150,000 to help deliver a Brexit support package to our local authorities in Wales and £200,000 to help the social care sector research into how Brexit could impact the Welsh workforce and help them plan for any eventualities. Wales’ universities also received £3.5 million to drive international partnerships and promote Wales as a study destination in a post-Brexit world.

Today we are announcing further business support for Airbus (£3 million), Ford (£1.6 million) and other automotive component manufacturers to ensure their workforce are up-skilled and prepared post-Brexit. Despite our skills support programmes to assist all employers to meet these challenges, the scale of training identified by the likes of Airbus and Ford cannot be supported from within existing budgets.

Airbus and Ford are part of global groups and our support will help significantly improve the chances of developing the Welsh-based sites as the preferred locations for any future and post-Brexit European investment projects and also in turn securing business for the aerospace and automotive supply chains in Wales.

Any opportunity to up-skill a workforce with transferable skills is imperative in order to continue showcasing Wales on the global stage as a desirable place for business, especially in a post-Brexit world.

It is important we are flexible and responsive to deal with the consequences of leaving the EU as details emerge during Brexit negotiations and over the whole period of the transition arrangements. Our support will help future proof our economy. The Fund is designed to help business and others, but while this investment will boost our resilience, it cannot insulate us from the effects of ‘no deal’ or a hard Brexit.

While there are ongoing levels of uncertainty around the nature of many aspects of Brexit we will continue to consider proposals which identify emerging issues that may become vital for Welsh interests depending on the nature of the exit – deal or no deal – and once we get clarity and certainty of the impacts and implications for our sectors.

We will be announcing the further financial commitments that have recently been agreed from the EU Transition Fund for other businesses and public services over the coming weeks.