

Brexit Briefing



Plaid Cymru | Party of Wales



This is the eighth edition of the Brexit Briefing, we hope you enjoy. Much more information about all of these issues can be found on the [Brexit Section of our website](#).

There are three parts to the Briefing:

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If you have any feedback let us know by emailing post@plaid.cymru.

Summing up From the Senedd

By our Assembly Brexit Spokesman Steffan Lewis AM and the Assembly Team



A motion on the joint Plaid Cymru and Welsh Government White Paper on Brexit, [Securing Wales' Future](#), passed in the National Assembly for Wales on Tuesday 7th February. This means that Wales' national parliament will speak with one voice and has endorsed a Welsh set of priorities for the Brexit negotiations. This sends a strong message to Westminster that Wales has distinct needs and demands that must be listened to during the negotiation process. A Brexit settlement that works for England alone could be disastrous for Wales' economy.

The Scottish Parliament voted 90 to 34 to [oppose the triggering of Article 50](#) in Westminster in the same week. Following the ruling of the Supreme Court that there is [no legal duty to consult the devolved legislatures](#) before Triggering Article 50, this vote was largely symbolic. But it does make even more of a mockery of the Prime Minister's initial claim that she wouldn't trigger Article 50 until '[we have a UK approach and objectives for negotiations](#)'. Plaid Cymru tabled an amendment in the National Assembly opposing the Triggering of Article 50 without assurances of Wales' continuing participation in the single market when we leave the EU. It was [defeated by a coalition](#) of the UKIP, Labour and the Conservatives.

During the Assembly's debate on the White Paper, tempers ran high. Conservative Mark Isherwood AM described the First Minister as "the Private Frazer of Welsh politics" while describing Plaid Cymru as a 'gremlin' that exists 'only to weaken and divide our island through the destruction of our UK'. UKIP AM David Rowlands admitted that the Leave campaign lied to win the Brexit vote. He said, "I can assure you that the lies that took us into the European Union are greater lies than these lies that have taken us out." You can watch his startling admission [here](#).

Brexit Minister, David Jones MP, [gave evidence to the National Assembly for Wales External Affairs Committee last week](#). He was questioned on the likelihood of a hard customs border between Wales and Ireland, if a deal is struck to protect the soft border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, and the impact that would have on Welsh ports. When asked by Steffan Lewis AM about whether there would be customs and border checks at Holyhead and other Welsh ports, the Minister said that it "remained to be seen". He also admitted that he had not given the idea of a new shared structure to govern the UK's internal market "any consideration at all" and remained "unpersuaded" by a key priority in the joint Plaid Cymru and Welsh Government White Paper: to establish a new Council of Ministers to facilitate cooperation and resolve disputes in devolved policy areas.

[A British Chambers of Commerce survey](#) has found that over half of the businesses questioned said that they expect to have to increase the prices of their products and services over the next 12 months. When a majority of people in Wales voted to leave the EU last year, they did not vote to gut our economy, damage our businesses, and lose jobs. Brexit has not even happened yet, but Steffan Lewis AM has warned that the cost of Brexit is soon going to start being felt in people's pockets.

From the European Parliament

by Jill Evans MEP & the Plaid Cymru Europe Team



In this month's plenary session in Strasbourg, MEPs approved the **CETA** trade deal between the European Union and Canada by 408 votes to 254, with 33 abstentions. Jill voted against the agreement, as she disagrees with the way in which the markets for services, investments and goods will be opened up without having set strong social and ecological standards. Leaving the EU does not mean that CETA will not have an impact on us in Wales. David Davis, the UK Government minister for exiting the EU has called CETA "the perfect starting point for our discussions with the Commission" for a future trade deal between the UK and the EU. This is wrong for many reasons. Firstly, the negotiations for CETA were very lengthy and complex, taking seven years to complete – hardly a desirable timescale. Then, it faced several stumbling blocks, including being blocked by the Walloon Parliament. It is very likely that a trade deal similar to CETA for the UK would face many of the same obstacles, which would be disastrous for the economy, if nearly a decade passes before a trade deal between the UK and the EU is agreed. Additionally, CETA does not cover all services, such as banking, and imposes very strict rules of origin. Of course, what David Davis hopes for is for the deregulation and privatisation encouraged by CETA to go even further in a trade deal between the UK and the EU, something we should be very worried about.

Jill recently met with representatives from **NFU Cymru** to discuss the implications of exiting the EU on farmers in Wales. They highlighted the need for tariff-free access to the European Single Market as being of the utmost importance to any trade deal that is agreed between the UK and the EU. This once again underscores the dangers posed by the UK government's reckless hard Brexit policy, which could see Welsh farmers having to trade at 51% WTO tariffs, which would price them out of the market immediately. Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Government's White Paper is shown again to be the safest and most rational plan for securing Wales' future.

Several **reports** have been drafted by Committees in the European Parliament on the subject of the UK's exit from the EU, highlighting the issues facing their work. The employment committee, for example, highlights the rarely mentioned issue of the 27,000 people who either cross a UK border to get to work or divide their working time between the UK and another EU member state. The same committee report notes that 20,833 EU laws and rules will need to be scrutinised within the legal deadline of two years following the triggering of Article 50. The Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, in its report, identified 16 pieces of pending legislation in banking, capital markets and

taxation that could require redrafting depending on the negotiation outcomes. These figures display the enormity of the task ahead, to say the least.

The work in Brussels will become even more focused on Brexit over the coming weeks and months as **the Parliament will start getting increasingly involved in the process**. Of course, the EU is rather more democratic than the British press will have you believe, and so the European Parliament will be involved throughout the process and will debate before voting on the final agreement between the EU and the UK. The role of the European Parliament in the exit process will mirror that established for accession treaties in Article 49 of the Lisbon Treaty: MEPs' consent will be sought after negotiations have been finalised and before they are concluded with the signature of the Council.

News from the Imperial Capital

by Plaid Cymru's Brexit Spokesman in Westminster Jonathan Edwards MP and the Westminster Team



The Article 50 Bill (a Bill to give the Government the right to trigger Article 50) has passed through the Commons without amendment. The result of the vote was 498 v 114. Jonathan put out [this statement](#) in response to the final vote.

The process of getting the Bill through was farcical. Usually there would be a second reading, a committee stage, a third reading and a report stage - four stages for vital scrutiny, questioning and amendments - but the Government's desperation to get this through in time to trigger Article 50 by their own deadline of the end of March meant that they did not allow any time for report stage and the time allocation for all the other stages was so tight that votes on committee stage took up all the time for the third reading. The outcome is a rushed Bill that has not had adequate scrutiny.

During the debates on second reading, the debate was dominated by Labour and Tories. The Speaker avoided the SNP/Plaid/LibDem/Northern Ireland corner as much as possible but having waited in the chamber for around eight hours before being called, eventually both Liz Saville Roberts and Hywel Williams got to make very short speeches.

We tabled a reasoned amendment to decline to give the Bill a second reading as the Government failed to ensure continued full and unfettered access to the European Single Market but it was not

selected by the Speaker. Similar amendments from other parties were selected however and we voted for them and against the Government. [Hywel put out a statement explaining that position on the day.](#)

After the second reading, the UK Government published its white paper which confirmed all that was in the Prime Minister's speech. We will leave the single market and customs union and try to strike a bespoke free trade agreement with the single market. Our continued economic links with the continent has been Plaid Cymru's top priority during the Brexit deliberations so this White Paper confirmed the worst possible scenario for us.

For the committee stage, we tabled 24 amendments based mainly on promises made by the Vote Leave campaign. Full details of these can be found at the bottom of this Briefing. We also tabled amendments to protect Wales from the worst of this hard Brexit. One of our amendments was on the crucial Vote Leave promise that we would continue to receive current levels of EU funding after Brexit. This promise was made in a [letter](#) sent by 13 prominent Brexit campaigners in June last year which stated that "if the public votes to leave on 23 June, we will continue to fund EU programmes in the UK."

Having been told we would only be allowed to push one of our amendments to a vote, we prioritised this one, hoping that the clear and public promise would force those who made it to vote for it and therefore defeat the government.

We launched a social media campaign to build pressure around the amendment with many from across Wales and even across other UK countries tweeting their MPs with the hashtag [#NotAPennyLess](#) asking them to support the amendment.

Unfortunately, every single signatory on that letter who had a vote, voted against their own promise. The amendment was defeated by 267 to 330. We released a statement following that vote and you can read that [here](#).

In fact, the UK Government resisted and defeated every single amendment, including on protecting the rights of EU citizens, despite many thinking the government would concede on this.

While the result of the vote was disappointing, the nature of the debate was scandalous. Our amendment was called on day one of the committee stage, in a group of amendments related to devolved matters. Three hours was allocated to this group of amendments but in that three hours, 102 minutes were taken up by English MPs trying to filibuster the debate to avoid amendments being pushed to a vote. Two MPs alone (John Redwood and Mark Harper) spoke for a combined 45 minutes on irrelevant matters. A video of John Redwood's speech about England has been uploaded to our [Facebook page](#).

We have also uploaded a video of John [Redwood outlining his plans to strike trade deals with emerging market countries](#), offering to buy their cheap food in return for having better access to their services market where "we have products that they might like to buy". He is challenged by Jonathan Edwards and others on whether he is suggesting we sacrifice our agriculture sector for the interests of London and he fails to answer.

After these debates came the final vote in the House of Commons on this Bill, and having witnessed the shameful way the Bill had been railroaded through Parliament, we had no choice but to vote against it. The Bill was passed on February 9, 2017 thanks in part to the Labour Party's decision to support it even though none of their amendments were accepted.

We released a statement following the vote which you can read [here](#).

Dafydd Wigley has now started on the work of defending Wales as the Bill makes its way to the **House of Lords**.

He made a powerful contribution to the Second Reading debate, urging the UK Government to deliver on Wales' White Paper demands. Unequivocal commitments have been made by the Westminster Government time and time again to listen to the devolved administrations when forming their Brexit plans. So far, there has been little evidence of these commitments coming into fruition.

Wales needs full and unfettered access to the Single Market. That's the basis of the White Paper produced by Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Government, with Liberal Democrat support. He has tabled amendments to that end for debate during the Committee Stage of the Bill.

You can watch Dafydd Wigley's speech [here](#).

We will not hand the UK Government a blank cheque when it comes to Brexit and will fight tooth and nail to secure Wales' future.

Follow [@JonathanPlaid](#) and [@Plaid_Cymru](#) on Twitter to keep up to date with the Parliamentary Group's work on Brexit.

The next steps in Westminster

The Bill has now completed its journey through the Commons and has started its journey through the Lords

Following the same timescale as in the Commons, the second reading will be in the first week and the committee stage and third reading in the second. There will once again be no report stage.

Unlike in the Commons, there is no Speakers' Selection of amendments. Any peer can submit amendments on a first come first served basis. We are currently working with Dafydd Wigley drafting two amendments to be submitted before the end of the week in order to ensure we are as high as possible on the list of amendments:

- One calling for continued full and unfettered access to the Single Market through participation in the EEA and/or membership of EFTA.
- A second on allowing students to continue to study abroad and for EU students to continue to study here

There is a greater chance of a government defeat in the Lords. There is talk that the Government will lose on allowing EU citizens already living here to stay here. The Lords also give a lot of weight to manifesto pledges and one pledge in the Conservative manifesto is to remain within the Single Market.

A Government defeat or any government amendments will force the Bill back to the Commons.

Annex 1 – Amendments pushed to a vote

Amendment	Put Forward By	Final Vote Count
NC110: Give MPs a veto on the final deal	Labour	326-293 against.
A11: Prove that the NHS will get £350m a week	Labour	337-288 against.
A43: Second EU referendum	Liberal Democrats	340-33 against.
NC180: Remain in the EU if Parliament failed to back an exit deal	SNP	336-88 against.
NC7: Force ministers to have regard to maintaining all anti-tax avoidance laws that currently exist in the EU	Labour	336-289 against.
NC4: Devolved nations approval before Article 50 can be triggered	Labour	332-62 against.
NC2: Protecting EU workers' rights	Labour	336-291 against.
NC3: Prime Minister must update Parliament every two months.	Labour	333-284 against.
NC158: Report to Welsh Assembly outlining the effect of withdrawal on Welsh finances.	Plaid Cymru	330-267 against.
NC5: Require the Treasury to publish its impact assessment of Brexit before Article 50 was triggered.	Labour	337-281 against.
NC143: Force the government to estimate how much Britain would have to continue to pay to the EU.	SNP	333-79 against.
A29: Consult Gibraltar before Article 50	Labour	338-288 against
A86: Preserve rights established by the EU, and under the Good Friday Agreement, for people living in Northern Ireland	SDLP	327-288 against.
NC57: Guarantee EU citizens already in the UK can stay past 2019.	Labour	332-290 against.
NC192: Stay in Euratom	Labour	336-287 against.
NC26: The process of withdrawal cannot be started until the Joint Ministerial	SNP	against.

Committee on European Negotiation has agreed upon a process.		
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Annex 2 – Amendment NC158 record

Voted AYE

Kevin Brennan (Cardiff West)	Ian C Lucas (Wrexham)
Chris Bryant (Rhondda)	Madeleine Moon (Bridgend)
Wayne David (Caerphilly)	Jessica Morden (Newport East)
Geraint Davies (Swansea West)	Albert Owen (Ynys Mon)
Stephen Doughty (Cardiff South & Penarth)	Christina Rees (Neath)
Chris Elmore (Ogmore)	Nick Smith (Blaenau Gwent)
Chris Evans (Islwyn)	Jo Stevens (Cardiff Central)
Paul Flynn (Newport West)	Mark Tami – (Alyn and Deeside)
Nia Griffith (Llanelli)	Nick Thomas-Symonds (Torfaen)
David Hanson (Delyn)	Jonathan Edwards (Carmarthen East & Dinefwr)
Carolyn Harris (Swansea East)	Liz Saville Roberts (Dwyfor Meirionnydd)
Gerald Jones (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney)	Hywel Williams (Arfon)
Susan Elan Jones (Clwyd South)	Mark Williams (Ceredigion)
Stephen Kinnock (Aberavon)	

Voted NO

Guto Bebb (Aberconwy)
Alun Cairns (Vale of Glamorgan)
Stephen Crabb (Preseli Pembrokeshire)
Byron Davies (Gower)
Chris Davies (Brecon and Radnoshire)
David T C Davies (Monmouth)
James Davies (Vale of Clwyd)
Glyn Davies (Montgomeryshire)
Simon Hart (Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire)
David Jones (Clwyd West)
Craig Williams (Cardiff North)

Annex 3 – All Plaid Cymru amendments

Second Reading

That this House declines to give a Second Reading to the European Union (Notification of Withdrawal) Bill as the Government has failed to ensure continued full and unfettered access to the European Single Market, through participation in the EEA and/or membership of the EFTA; and has set out no requirement for the implementation of Article 50 to be endorsed by the devolved Parliaments.

Hywel Williams
 Liz Saville Roberts
 Jonathan Edwards
 Peter Grant
 Caroline Lucas
 Mark Durkan
 Margaret Ritchie
 Alasdair McDonnell

Committee Stage

Amendments for Day 1

NC67	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to automatically granting indefinite leave to remain in the UK for EU citizens already lawfully resident in Wales
NC158* Pushed to a vote	Hywel Williams	Report for Welsh Assembly outlining the effect of withdrawal on Welsh finances, before triggering Article 50
NC159	Hywel Williams	Consultation exploring a differentiated agreement for Wales to remain in EEA before triggering Article 50
NC160	Hywel Williams	Endorsement of the final deal for withdrawal from the EU by the devolved assemblies.
NC162	Hywel Williams	Review into UK Constitution when leaving the European Union before triggering Article 50
90	Hywel Williams	Report into the powers repatriated from the which do not fall within the Reservations listed in Schedule 7A of the Government of Wales Act 2006 before triggering Article 50

Amendments for Day 2 and 3

NC70	Hywel Williams	Free trade deal between Wales and EU
90	Hywel Williams	Report into the powers repatriated from the which do not fall within the Reservations listed in Schedule 7A of the Government of Wales Act 2006 before triggering Article 50
93	Hywel Williams	Continue to allow EU healthcare professionals to travel to the UK and work freely within the UK.
NC58	Hywel Williams	Education funding in Wales. Prime Minister must commit £23 million of additional funding to the Welsh Government to improve conditions in school.
NC59	Hywel Williams	Health and scientific research funding for Welsh universities.

NC60	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to £17.5 million a week of extra funding for NHS Wales.
NC61	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to maintaining all current funding from the European Union for universities, scientists, family farmers, regional funds, and cultural organization in Wales.
NC62	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to maintaining the level of financial support for farmers and the environment in Wales.
NC63	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to additional funding for the Welsh Government to spend on the building of new roads.
NC64	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to improving the railways in Wales.
NC65	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to improving Cardiff and other regional airports.
NC66	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to financially supporting the steel industry in Wales.
NC67	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to automatically granting indefinite leave to remain in the UK for EU citizens already lawfully resident in Wales
NC68	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to negotiating a UK-EU treaty to continue to cooperate on counter-terrorism measures for the security of Wales.
NC69	Hywel Williams	PM must outline a plan to raise wage levels in Wales.
NC71	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to ensuring Wales' trade with the European Union is not interrupted by the process of leaving the European Union.
NC72	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to maintaining the current level of trade Wales has with the European Union.
NC73	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to maintaining the common travel area between Wales and Ireland without security checks.
NC74	Hywel Williams	PM must commit to increasing financial aid for businesses in Wales.
NC75	Hywel Williams	PM must abolish current tax avoidance measures and work to reclaim that which is owed to the UK.