

Press release: Changes to EU Withdrawal Bill to be discussed at Joint Ministerial Committee meeting

Proposed changes to Clause 11 of the EU Withdrawal Bill to ensure all devolved EU powers transfer directly from Brussels to Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh have now been shared with the devolved administrations ahead of a Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) meeting on European Negotiations (EN) in London on Thursday.

The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, David Lidington MP, who chairs the JMC meeting, said the new proposals represented a considerable offer that he hoped the devolved governments would engage with constructively.

The changes would mean that the vast majority of powers will automatically flow from the EU to the devolved administrations. As the UK government has made clear, we always expected that the process would result in a significant increase in their decision making abilities. The changes would also ensure the UK Government would have the ability to protect the internal UK market where necessary, in a small number of areas.

Speaking ahead of the JMC meeting, David Lidington said:

The proposal that we have put on the table is a considerable offer that I hope the devolved administrations will engage with constructively.

We have worked closely with the devolved administrations to find a way forward that respects the role of the devolved governments and ensures we are able to protect our vital UK internal market, worth around four times as much to Scotland as the EU's.

All sides agree certain areas will require common frameworks – and it's therefore imperative that we don't make life more difficult for businesses and families across the UK as we manage the process of bringing new powers back from the EU.

We have demonstrated a willingness to listen and adapt our approach in order to find an agreed way forward, and we encourage others to do likewise so we can make good progress.

The UK Government has been working extensively with the devolved administrations through the JMC process, as well as bilaterals and significant engagement between officials.