

Welsh and Scottish First Ministers to meet

First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones and First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon will meet today in Edinburgh to discuss how the 2 governments can work together to protect devolution from a “Westminster power grab”.

First Minister Carwyn Jones said:

“Our position is clear and unequivocal – the Withdrawal Bill flies in the face of devolution and we cannot accept it in its current form. It is quite simply a blatant power grab from Whitehall which is not in the interest of people in Wales and the other devolved administrations.

“We have been equally clear that we are prepared to come to the table, to work constructively with the UK government to try and reach agreement on future arrangements. Based on their behaviour over the last few months, we have seen no real desire to take up this invitation and unless we see a completely different approach we will not be recommending the Assembly gives its consent to this bill.

“I am looking forward to discussing with Nicola Sturgeon our shared concerns regarding the bill and wider Brexit issues which affects both our countries. By speaking with one voice, we will make it clear that the UK government cannot simply impose its will on the other constituent parts of the UK.”

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon said:

“Both during and after the EU referendum, new powers were promised to Holyrood but instead the UK government is planning to impose new restrictions on the Scottish Parliament.

“The UK government’s EU (Withdrawal) Bill returns powers, even in devolved policy areas, solely to Westminster. Both the Scottish and the Welsh Governments have been clear that this power grab cannot be allowed to take place.

“I am looking forward to discussing with Carwyn Jones how we can work together to change the bill so that devolution and the interests of the people of Scotland and Wales can be protected. As it stands it is inconceivable that we would recommend that the Scottish Parliament gives its consent to the legislation.

“We have said repeatedly that we are willing to talk constructively

with the UK government on future arrangements. But this has to be on the basis of agreement and partnership not imposition.

“The Scottish Government is doing all we can to prevent an extreme Brexit, keep the UK in the Single Market and protect devolution.”