Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

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William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee
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16 July 2020

Dear William Wragg,

Launch of the UK internal market White Paper and consultation

The White Paper on the *UK Internal Market* was published today (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-internal-market).

Today, the UK Internal Market supports jobs and livelihoods across our country. Northern Ireland sells more to the rest of the UK than to all EU member states combined. Scotland sells more to the rest of the UK than to the rest of the world put together. And in some parts of Wales, a quarter of workers commute in from England on a daily basis.

Following the end of the Transition Period, the way we regulate labour, capital, goods and services in the UK will no longer be decided by the EU. Hundreds of powers previously exercised at EU level will flow directly to the devolved administrations in Edinburgh, Cardiff, and Belfast. The UK will be able to regulate our trade in goods and services in a tailored manner, specifically designed to benefit our businesses, workers and consumers while maintaining our high regulatory standards.

At this historic time, it is important that we provide businesses with certainty about how seamless internal trade will be upheld in the future.

Under the plans in this White Paper, the UK will continue to operate as a coherent internal market. A Market Access Commitment will guarantee UK companies can trade unhindered in every part of the United Kingdom, whilst maintaining our commitment to high regulatory standards.

Without this legislation, trade from one part of the Union to another could be disrupted through regulatory differences.

The proposals in the White Paper will protect the UK internal market for the long-term, including:

- The principle of **mutual recognition** – goods and services from one part of the UK will be recognised across the country to ensure the devolved administrations can set their own rules and standards in areas of their competence, but still welcome the trade of businesses based anywhere in the UK

- The principle of **non-discrimination** – so that there is equal opportunity for companies trading in the UK regardless of where in the UK the business is based.

These principles will prevent any part of the UK from blocking products or services from another part while protecting devolved powers, such as introducing plastic bag minimum pricing or introducing smoking bans.

The consultation launched at the same time as the White Paper will enable businesses, academics, consumer groups and trade unions to input their views of the proposals and consultation questions. Following the close of the consultation on 13 August, the evidence collected will be analysed and subject to those findings a Bill will be introduced.

If you have additional questions or would like further information, my ministerial colleagues and officials would welcome the opportunity to assist you.

Best wishes

THE RT HON ALOK SHARMA MP
Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy