

Theresa May calls for 'grown-up' UK and Wales relations

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Theresa May has promised to strengthen relations with ministers in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland ahead of a meeting of the UK's top politicians.

The joint ministerial council (JMC), which includes first minister Carwyn Jones and the prime minister, meets on Monday for the first time since 2014.

Mrs May hopes it will be the start of a "new grown-up relationship".

Mr Jones said there needed to be more of a partnership rather than being told what was happening.

He told BBC Wales that the UK Government had not realised the scale of the challenge of reaching an agreement between the devolved nations over a future Brexit deal.

Mr Jones and Mrs May will be joined by Scottish First Minister Nicola Sturgeon and the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, Arlene Foster and Martin McGuinness, as well as Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns.

Mr Jones told the Sunday Politics Programme the UK Government needed to set out its red lines for the Brexit negotiations.

Mr Jones added that it would make no sense to push forward with a Brexit negotiation that Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales had not agreed on.

"The heart of the problem is the Brexiteers didn't think they were going to win, they did win, now they don't know what to do," he said.

"We need to have leadership we need to have a direction."

"Clear framework"

The UK government said Mrs May would seek agreement on strengthening ways of working between the UK and devolved governments, guaranteeing relationships will be built on a basis of "co-operation and consensus".

The prime minister is also proposing a series of changes for the JMC, with meetings taking place at least once every 12 months and committing to an annual report of the committee's work.

The council last met in December 2014.

Under the shake-up, the venue of the JMC, which will be chaired in Downing Street by Mrs May on Monday, would also rotate between each of the four governments on a revolving basis.

Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns said the prime minister had set a clear framework for Wales to be at the centre of Brexit negotiations.

A Welsh Government spokesperson said the UK's exit from the EU raised profound issues for all four governments.

"We must work together in a radically different way from before if we are to rise to the challenge we face and ensure the needs of all parts of the UK are properly addressed. The first minister looks forward to setting out our own vision for the future at Monday's JMC," they added.