

This paper provides a general update to the TEO Committee on the Joint Committee meeting that took place on 30 April 2020

JOINT COMMITTEE

Under the New Decade New Approach agreement, the UK Government has ensured that representatives from the Northern Ireland Executive are invited to be part of the UK delegation in any meetings of the UK-EU Specialised or Joint Committees discussing Northern Ireland specific matters which are also being attended by the Irish Government as part of the European Union's delegation.

The inaugural meeting of the Joint Committee on the Withdrawal Agreement was held on 30 March and the Executive was represented by Junior Minister Gordon Lyons and Junior Minister Declan Kearney.

The meeting was co-chaired by the European Commission and the UK. The Irish Government was represented at official level as were a number of other Member States as part of the EU delegation. The focus of the meeting was to start work in a number of areas relating to the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement including the Ireland / Northern Ireland Protocol.

The four issues identified in the Protocol that require discussion and agreement at the Joint Committee relate to goods brought here from outside the EU that are considered not "at risk" of moving into the EU (Article 5 of the Protocol); the conditions for customs exemption for fishery and aquaculture products (Article 5.3 of the Protocol); the maximum exempted overall annual level of agricultural support (Article 10 of the Protocol); and the detailed arrangements for governance (Article 12 of the Protocol).

The Committee endorsed a decision to establish the Ireland / Northern Ireland Specialised Committee which would be the forum for more detailed discussions on the issues where the Joint Committee has still to make decisions as set out in the Protocol.