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*Dear Mr Swann,*

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE EVIDENCE SESSION ON THE NORTHERN  
IRELAND AUDIT OFFICE'S REPORT ON MANAGING LEGAL AID

Thank you for your letter to the Taxing Master, Master McGivern, which has been forwarded to me for reply.

As a member of the Judiciary, it would not be appropriate for the Taxing Master to attend the Committee's meeting on 21 September 2016 to provide oral evidence. The Taxing Master must be independent and impartial in exercising her role and in determining the costs to be awarded in individual cases.

If it would be helpful to the Committee's consideration of this report, we would be happy to provide a written briefing in response to any specific questions the Committee would like to submit to us.

Yours sincerely

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