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*Per Zelin,*

Thank you for your letter of 10 July inviting me to give oral evidence to the Committee for the Executive Office. I sincerely apologise for the delay in responding to you.

As you set out in your letter, the role of the Committee for the Executive Office is to scrutinise the work of the Northern Ireland Executive on issues relating to the future relationship with the European Union. As a UK Government Minister, I am not in a position to give evidence on the work of the Northern Ireland Executive as you request.

I have given evidence to the UK Parliament on a range of issues relating to Northern Ireland. For example, on 18 June I attended the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee alongside the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to give evidence on unfettered access in Northern Ireland after EU Exit. The Secretary of State gave further oral evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee on 16 September, discussing issues relating to the UK Internal Market Bill. I also refer you to my letter to the Chair of the Commons Future Relationship with the EU Committee of 7 October, available here:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/2908/documents/28078/default/>

I would be happy to provide written evidence on issues related to the future relationship with the European Union. I would be grateful if you could inform my officials of which themes such written evidence should cover, to ensure it is of best use for your Committee.

**With every good wish,**



**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP  
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster  
and Minister for the Cabinet Office**



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

**Committee for the Executive Office**

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10 July 2020

Dear Michael

**EU-UK FUTURE RELATIONSHIP**

Thank you for sight of your response, dated 21 June 2020, to David Rees MS, Chair of the External Affairs and Additional Legislation Committee, regarding the UK-EU future relationship negotiations.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Committee for the Executive Office welcomes the UK Government's commitment to regular engagement with the devolved administrations regarding the negotiations with the EU, to ensure an agreement works for the whole of the UK.

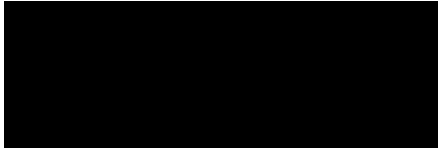
Under *New Decade New Approach*, the Committee for the Executive Office scrutinises the work of the Northern Ireland Executive on Brexit-related issues. To help inform its scrutiny, the Committee agreed at its meeting on 8 July 2020, to invite you to attend a Committee meeting to update Members on negotiations on the future relationship between the European Union and the UK Government; engagement with the devolved administrations; and, plans for the implementation of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.

I very much appreciate the difficulties that the current COVID-19 pandemic has created around attendance at meetings and therefore I am not suggesting a specific date for your attendance or whether your attendance should be in person or by video-conferencing.

However, I should be grateful if your Secretary could contact Marie Austin, Clerk to the Committee for the Executive Office, to discuss the matter. The Clerk can be contacted by telephone: 028 9052 0302 or by email: [Committee.Executive@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Committee.Executive@niassembly.gov.uk).

I look forward to your response and the opportunity to engage as early as possible in the new Assembly session which begins in September.

Yours sincerely



Colin McGrath MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office