



Northern  
Ireland  
Office

Northern Ireland Office  
Stormont House  
Stormont Estate  
Belfast BT4 3SH  
Telephone 028 9052 7888  
Facsimile 028 9052 7040  
www.nio.gov.uk

Minister of State

COMMITTEE FOR

14 DEC 2012

F & P

Mr Daithi McKay MLA  
Chairperson of the Committee for  
Finance and Personnel  
Room 419  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX

<sup>7<sup>th</sup></sup>  
December 2012

*Dear Daithi*

**CIVIL SERVICE (SPECIAL ADVISERS) BILL**

Thank you for letter of 28 November 2012 to the Secretary of State. As the matters raised fall within my area of responsibility your letter has been passed to me to reply.

In relation to your first question, I can advise that the Secretary of State has received no request for consent from the Speaker in regard to this Bill. If the Bill proceeds, the Secretary of State will of course need to consider whether any of its provisions deal with a reserved matter, as well as its compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights, prior to Royal Assent.

Turning to your second question, relating to the compatibility of the Bill with the Belfast and St Andrews Agreements and the OFMDFM Code on employment of ex-terrorists, the interpretation of the Agreements and guidance in this area is a transferred matter. It is therefore for the Assembly and Executive to consider this matter.

*Mike Penning*  
*MP*

**MIKE PENNING MP**  
Minister of State for Northern Ireland