

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE JUSTICE MINISTER



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Máinnystrie O tha Laa

www.justice-ni.gov.uk

Minister's Office
Castle Buildings Block C
Stormont Estate
Ballymiscaw
Belfast
BT4 3SG

JCP\25\303

Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee for Justice
Room 242
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast BT4 3XX

4 December 2025

Dear Kathy,

JUSTICE BILL – WINDSOR FRAMEWORK

I refer to your letter dated 25 November 2025 regarding the views of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC).

The proposed biometrics related amendments to the Justice Bill were shared with the NIHRC on 22 November 2024. The NIHRC acknowledged the proposed amendments but no substantive comments were provided.

Regarding the issue of compliance with the Windsor Framework, the NIHRC, as part of its broader advice on the Justice Bill (including the paper it submitted to the Committee), encouraged the Department to consider Article 2 compliance, particularly in relation to the proposed amendments to be made at Consideration Stage.

As referred to in the letter of 10 November 2025, the Department engaged with the Departmental Solicitor's Office in order to assess Windsor Framework compliance. As explained in the previous letter, the Department is satisfied that there is no conflict between the proposed biometric amendments and the requirements of the Windsor Framework.

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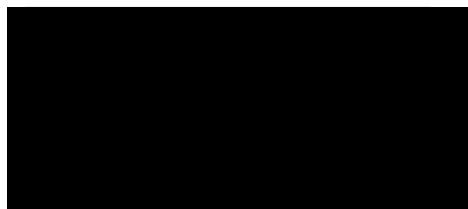
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Yours sincerely,



**CAOIMHE MCKEOWN
DALO**



**Northern Ireland Assembly
Committee for Justice**

Caoimhe McKeown
DALO
Department of Justice
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

25 November 2025

Justice Bill – Windsor Framework

Dear Caoimhe

At its meeting on 20 November 2025, the Committee for Justice considered correspondence from the Department (JCP\25\280) in relation to the Justice Bill and compliance with the Windsor Framework and EU Directives.

Members noted that the Department has advised there is legal uncertainty as to whether data protection constitutes a right, safeguard or equality of opportunity matter, but that, if the issues surrounding data protection do apply, the Department is satisfied that there is no conflict with Regulation 2016/679/EU (General Data Protection Regulation) and Directive 2016/680/EU (Law Enforcement Directive). The Committee agreed to ask the Department to clarify if it had consulted the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) in addition to the Departmental Solicitor's Office on this matter and, if so, what their views are.

I should be grateful for a response by 9 December 2025.

Yours sincerely

Kathy O'Hanlon

**Kathy O'Hanlon
Clerk to the Committee for Justice**

Room 345, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast, BT4 3XX
Telephone: (028) 905 21033

E-mail: committee.justice@niassembly.gov.uk