

06 June 2024

Mr Shane McAteer
Clerk to the Committee on Standard & Privileges
Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Dear Mr McAteer

In reference to your letter of 10th May 2024 which relates to separate reports from the Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards. I am writing to you in your capacity of Clerk of the Standards and Privileges Committee to set out some comments in respect of matters raised within the reports and connected with that time period.


At the outset I am disappointed with the conclusions reached by the Commissioner and would again reiterate my position as set out during the investigation by the Commissioner. As you will be aware, there was High Court hearings on these matters upon which the Judge arrived at his conclusion. I think it is entirely inappropriate and I am disappointed that the commissioner has reached her conclusions based on assumptions.

My work on North South matters as a Minister is unquestionable. Having worked with health colleagues previously to ensure the new cancer unit at Altnagelvin proceeded, and the cooperation with Beaumont Children's Hospital was prioritised to ensure that paediatric cardiac surgery could continue for patients in NI. More recently, I worked extensively with my counterparts for regional identified grass fed beef to be recognised for Ireland. I have always taken cooperation with the ROI when publically beneficial very seriously.

I welcome the fact that the Commissioner has completed her work. It is worth noting that the period and backdrop during which the events being investigated took place were politically fractious and difficult. With the collapse of confidence across some element of our society, it is well understood that when sufficient political progress was secured leading to the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive, all parties were able to fully participate in the democratic institutions to which we have been elected.

I always sought to carry out my ministerial duties with fairness and integrity it has always been my aim to carry out my duties in the NIA on this basis.

Kind Regards



Edwin Poots MLA

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