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[REDACTED]

Senior Assistant Clerk, Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee
Room 382, Parliament Buildings
Stormont
Belfast, BT4 3XX

12 May 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability

Thank you for your letter dated 29 January and 13 March 2026.

The Government has noted the agreement of the provisional text by the European Union, and we continue to monitor developments.

The updated text, compared to the original proposal now includes foster homes, establishes administrative approval requirements for large-scale breeding operations and new registration requirements, imposes stricter welfare standards regarding physical traits and outdoor access, and looks to bolster traceability through interoperable index databases.

Any consideration of the EU's view on application of the act in Northern Ireland under the Windsor Framework would only be possible after the publication of the final act, and only if the UK was notified by the EU under Article 13(4). We also note that impacts of application could only be properly assessed following a notification. Further work is still needed on understanding the full implications of the new provisional text. This legislation could only apply in Northern Ireland following joint UK-EU agreement at the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee, which is subject to the statutory requirements in Schedule 6B to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The UK and the EU are committed to negotiating an SPS Agreement, which addresses standards related to live animals. The EU has accepted there will need to be a number of areas where the UK needs to retain its own rules. The details of these are subject to negotiation, but the Government has been clear about the importance of being able to set high animal welfare standards.

Kind regards,



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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WINDSOR FRAMEWORK TASKFORCE



██████████ Senior Assistant Clerk
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny
Committee (DSC)

Ref: DSC 24/26

29 January 2026

Edmund Ramsden
Windsor Framework Taskforce, Cabinet Office
Issued via email to: ██████████

Dear Edmund,

[Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the welfare of dogs and cats and their traceability](#)

At its meeting on 29 January 2026, the DSC noted that the Council of the EU and the European Parliament had reached a [provisional agreement](#) on the above proposed new EU act. The DSC is monitoring the proposed act as it progresses through the EU legislative process.

In its Explanatory Memorandum (EM) of 7 May 2024, the UK Government stated that it would engage with the European Commission on the proposed EU act, and in a previous response to the DSC, dated 7 November 2024, it stated that *“the Government will continue to monitor the Proposal and any amendment to its contents, and will continue to engage the EU as necessary”*.

In light of the provisional agreement, the Committee agreed to request an update on the UK Government’s engagement with the European Commission on the proposed EU act, as set out in the EM:

- What further information have you received on the operation of the proposed EU act?
- What evidence underpins the EU’s view that the proposed act is within the scope of the Windsor Framework?
- What are the potential impacts in Northern Ireland?
- Can you provide more information on the equivalency process and its application, and the potential for the UK to apply a specific agreement with the EU in this area?

Additionally, would an SPS agreement with the EU cover this policy area?

I would appreciate a response by 27 February 2026.

Yours sincerely,

██████████

██████████ Senior Assistant Clerk
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee



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