



Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP  
Minister for the Cabinet Office  
HM Paymaster General  
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London  
SW1A 2AS

Ciara Ferguson MLA  
Chairperson  
Windsor Framework Democratic  
Scrutiny Committee

Our reference: MC2026/06514  
Your reference: DSC 62/26

By email:  
windsorframework.committee@niassembly.gov.uk

14 May 2026

Dear Ciara,

Thank you for your letter of 27 March regarding the Committee's interest in Regulation (EU) 2026/405 on detergents and surfactants, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 648/2004. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you.

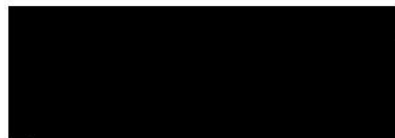
The Government continues to closely monitor regulatory activity in the EU. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor have set out that our approach to aligning with the EU should reflect the national interest and that will continue to be our approach.

Consistent with this position, the Explanatory Memorandum for Regulation (EU) 2026/405 sets out the Government's broader approach to chemicals legislation as being underpinned by aligning our regulatory decisions with the EU unless there are compelling reasons to diverge. It also sets out that the Government will use the 42-month transition provided for in the Regulation period to work with interested parties on the relevant policy issues as part of its implementation and on the detergents regime in GB more widely.

It is right that the Government proceeds with policy changes in Great Britain with due consultation and scrutiny, but this is balanced with the Government's commitment to protecting the UK internal market and supporting UK exports to the EU by breaking down unnecessary barriers to trade. Our approach to the transition period reflects that balance of objectives.

Thank you for taking the time to write about these important matters.

**Yours sincerely,**



**RT HON NICK THOMAS-SYMONDS MP  
MINISTER FOR THE CABINET OFFICE  
HIS MAJESTY'S PAYMASTER GENERAL**



Mrs Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson  
Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny  
Committee

**Ref:** DSC 62/26  
27 March 2026

**Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP**  
**Paymaster General and Minister for the Cabinet Office**

Issued via email to: [REDACTED]

Nick, a chara,

**Regulation (EU) 2026/405 on detergents and surfactants, and repealing  
Regulation (EC) No 648/2004**

At its meeting on 26 March 2026, the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee (DSC) agreed a report on its Inquiry into the above-mentioned replacement EU act, which can be found [here](#).

During its deliberations on the evidence received as part of the Inquiry, the Committee considered your response (dated 26 March 2026) to its request for an assessment of the likely impact of the EU act, and whether the British Government is committed to aligning with the replacement EU act within the 42-month transition period, or whether there may be divergence for a period of time.

Whilst grateful for the response and the information provided, the Committee had concerns about the lack of timelines in relation to your policy intention of aligning your approach with that of the EU. Not having definitive timelines made it more difficult for the Committee to assess whether it is likely that the EU act “would have a significant impact specific to everyday life of communities in Northern Ireland in a way that is liable to persist”.

Therefore, the Committee wishes to express its desire that for this, and other EU acts where there is the potential for divergence, more definitive timelines are provided by the British Government about its domestic policy intentions.

I would appreciate a response by 30 April 2026.

Le meas,



**Ciara Ferguson MLA, Chairperson, Windsor Framework Democratic  
Scrutiny Committee**