



HOUSE OF LORDS

European Union Committee

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Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
Cabinet Office
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26 November 2020

Dear Michael,

In our 1 June 2020 report on *The Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland*, we set out the concerns of business and other stakeholders in Northern Ireland over the lack of clarity over the implementation of key elements of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, and the potential economic impact on Northern Ireland. These include:

- Detailed information on the processes that businesses moving goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland will need to undertake;
- The Joint Committee's decision on the criteria for considering that a good brought into Northern Ireland from outside the EU is not at risk of subsequently being brought into the EU;
- The impact of the Protocol's provisions on the viability of businesses based in Great Britain supplying or trading in Northern Ireland, including UK supermarkets servicing the Northern Ireland market;
- The impact of the Protocol on businesses providing goods via complex supply chains crossing between Great Britain and Northern Ireland, between Ireland and Northern Ireland, or both;
- The steps necessary to ensure that the necessary infrastructure for sanitary and phytosanitary controls, including at Northern Ireland ports, is in place by 1 January 2021;
- The impact of the Protocol's State aid provisions on the UK's state subsidy regime; and
- Whether Northern Ireland businesses will be required to complete exit summary declarations for goods moving to Great Britain;

We welcome the joint letter sent by the First Minister and deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland to Commission Vice-President Šefčovič on 5 November, which also expressed concerns about the economic impact of the Protocol, and the need to provide businesses with clarity as soon as possible.

In your letter of reply to our report, dated 13 August, you stated that “some details of the applicable regime for traders will need to take account of Joint Committee discussions. In others, the position is the subject of ongoing consultation or consideration. Where that is the case, the Government recognises that further guidance will need to be provided in due course.”

There is now just over one month to go until the Protocol becomes operational, and the need for clarity on these matters is acute. I am therefore writing to ask for an urgent update, including on the current status of relevant discussions in the Joint Committee.

I would be grateful for a response by 10 December 2020.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Kinnoull', with a horizontal line underneath.

Lord Kinnoull
Chair of the European Union Committee