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Lord Carlile of Berriew CBE KC,
Chair, Northern Ireland Scrutiny Committee,
House of Lords,
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20 March 2026

Dear Chair,

Update on the Government's progress in establishing the One Stop Shop: Business Engagement and Implementation Framework

Thank you for your letter dated 4 March and for considering the Government's response to the Committee's report on *Strengthening Northern Ireland's Voice in the Windsor Framework*.

You requested an update on the Government's progress in delivering the enhanced 'One Stop Shop' (OSS), which is being taken forward as part of the measures announced in the Government's response to the Independent Review of the Windsor Framework and Autumn Budget 2025. The £16.6 million funding envelope for this work commences in the Financial Year 2026-27 and the Government is actively preparing to deliver the enhanced service, which will help businesses to trade across the UK internal market and to benefit from Northern Ireland's unique dual market access.

I can confirm that the Government has already conducted early engagement with a suite of business representative organisations and stakeholders, including through the Northern Ireland Business Stakeholders Group. This engagement has sought to establish user needs, the breadth of support to be provided and mechanisms to provide that support - including considerations from Government on how digital and casework elements of the enhanced one stop shop might operate.

We will conduct further engagement activity with relevant stakeholders as we take forward this programme of work, including those from civic society, noting that some third sector organisations also use the Windsor Framework facilitations. This is important to ensure that the offering from the Government is effective in meeting user needs, and to inform any commercial activity undertaken by the Government to deliver the enhanced one stop shop service.

Our objective remains, as stated in the response to the Independent Review of the Windsor Framework, to have the core functionality of the one stop shop begin operation in the course of the next Financial Year.

Thank you for taking the time to write.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Thomas-Symonds', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath.

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