



HOUSE OF LORDS

Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee

House of Lords

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Edward Argar MP
Minister for Health
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
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Dear Edward,

Thank you for your letters dated 23 March and 22 April and the attached Blood Quality and Safety and Organs, Tissues and Cells (apart from Embryos and Gametes) Provisional Frameworks. As suggested in your letter we are content to wait for an updated version of these frameworks to be published before conducting formal scrutiny. We look forward to seeing more detail on how cross cutting issues, especially interaction with the UK Internal Market Act 2020, will be addressed in these frameworks. However, in advance of this we would appreciate greater clarity on the frequency of meetings between officials and on the interaction with the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The Provisional Frameworks state that there will be regular meetings of officials to share information and discuss policy. However, it does not state how frequent these meetings will be. The Provisional Frameworks also state that senior official meetings will be convened to provide strategic direction but gives no indication of how often this will occur. This is in contrast to other published frameworks which have established how often officials will meet. How regularly will meetings at official and senior official level occur to support cooperation in this framework? How will these meetings provide general oversight of this policy area and the risks involved?

Your 22 April letter states that it will be at the discretion of UK, Scottish and Welsh Government as to whether they wish to implement any changes made in Northern Ireland. The diagram in Appendix II of the Provisional Frameworks state that ministerial agreement is needed on whether to implement a decision on a UK-wide basis or to agree divergence. Will changes introduced through the Northern Ireland Protocol follow this same process and therefore require ministerial sign off to agree divergence?

We look forward to your response in 10 working days.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Andrews
Chair of the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee