



HOUSE OF LORDS

Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee

House of Lords

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21 May 2021

The Rt Hon George Eustice MP
Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs
Seacole Building
2 Marsham St
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear George,

Thank you for your letter dated 23 March and the attached Food Compositional Standards and Labelling Provisional Framework. As suggested in your letter, we are content to wait for an updated version of this Framework to be published before conducting formal scrutiny. We are deeply concerned about the interaction between this framework and the UK Internal Market Act 2020 and the Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland. We look forward to seeing more detail on how these cross-cutting issues will be addressed in due course. However, in advance of this we would appreciate additional information to prepare for scrutiny.

This Provisional Framework was produced without a Framework Summary being sent in advance to the Committee as part of the previously agreed scrutiny process for frameworks. As a result, the department has not to date provided our Committee with a list of stakeholders consulted in the preparation of the Framework. Would you be able to provide such a list and a short summary of any feedback that you have received on this Framework? Can you also clarify your selection process and criteria for identifying stakeholders?

Concerning periodic reviews of frameworks, we are increasingly concerned that not permitting the discussion of a significant issue that has been resolved, within six months of a resolution, places harsh limitations on discussion and adds operational complexity to the review process and framework. Can you clarify the justification for this approach?

In the section on Domestic Arrangements in the Provisional Framework, it states that for a number of areas covered by existing domestic legislative arrangements, policy changes will be considered through the joint working process outlined in this Framework but will not be subject to the formal dispute resolution process. Would you be willing to provide more detail about these areas and the rationale for their partial inclusion in this Framework? Are the domestic legislative arrangements described here areas that were not previously subject to EU regulation? Are these areas outside of the list of regulations in Appendix C and if so, would you be able to provide the Committee with a list of the relevant legislation?

We are copying this letter to Chloe Smith MP as Minister for the Constitution and Devolution.

We look forward to your response in 10 working days.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Andrews
Chair of the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee