



Chloe Smith MP
Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS

The Baroness Andrews OBE
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

Our reference: MC2021/15287

20 July 2021

Dear Baroness Andrews,

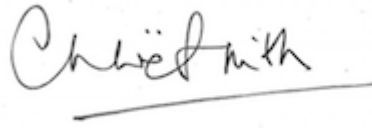
Thank you for inviting me to give evidence to the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee on 13 July 2021 to discuss the progress of the Common Frameworks programme. I appreciate the work the Committee has undertaken to support the programme. During the evidence session, I agreed to write to you with further details on two specific points.

During the session Bruno Williams, Deputy Director for the UK Common Frameworks Programme in the Cabinet Office, provided estimates of the number of officials across the UK Government and devolved administrations who are working on Frameworks. My officials are gathering further data from UK Government departments and the devolved administrations to provide the Committee with more specific information, including the number of employees involved in the programme. My officials will provide further information on this via Committee clerks over the summer recess.

The Committee stressed the importance of the UK Government providing updated timelines showing when the Committee can expect to receive Frameworks for Parliamentary Scrutiny. I understand this information is crucial for the effective planning of the scrutiny. I have asked my officials to work closely with CFSC clerks during the summer recess period to support the Committee's planning for scrutiny of Common Frameworks during the Autumn.

The UK Government remains committed to delivering the UK Common Frameworks programme, and I am pleased that the Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture in the Scottish Government and the Counsel-General for the Welsh Government reaffirmed their commitment to the programme in my discussions with them earlier this month. I agree that the resolution of cross-cutting issues is of paramount importance. Work is underway to resolve these issues as a priority in order to provide maximum clarity and certainty to the businesses and citizens who have interests in Common Frameworks. Parliamentary scrutiny remains a key stage in the delivery of each Common Framework and as I stated in the Committee session, we expect the next tranche of Common Frameworks to be shared with the Committee for scrutiny in Autumn.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chloe Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Chloe Smith MP
Minister of State for the Constitution and Devolution