



HOUSE OF LORDS

Select Committee on the Constitution

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Neil O'Brien MP
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
2 Marsham Street
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9 November 2021

Dear Mr O'Brien,

Future Governance of the UK inquiry: invitation to provide oral evidence

I write on behalf of the Constitution Committee about its inquiry into the future governance of the UK, which is nearing an end and the Committee intends to publish its report by the end of this year. The inquiry is considering English devolution and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, among other matters.

As you may be aware it is customary for select committee inquiries to receive evidence from the relevant Government minister last, before the committee prepares its report. While we were grateful to receive oral evidence from Michael Gove before the summer recess. As English devolution and the Shared Prosperity Fund did not form part of his ministerial portfolio at that stage, we have not yet had an opportunity to scrutinise the Government's position on those matters. I would therefore like to formally invite you to provide evidence to the Committee. I understand the Committee Clerk has already contacted your parliamentary team to find a convenient date. The Committee meets on Wednesday mornings, but we can be flexible on timings to accommodate your diary.

We note that the spending review included a commitment to publish the levelling up white paper by the end of this year. While the Committee would welcome an opportunity to discuss the white paper with you, we would also be happy to proceed in its absence, depending on the timings.

In the meantime, with respect to the Shared Prosperity Fund, we would be grateful if you could update us on the proposed governance arrangements for the Fund, including the role of the devolved administrations. Alternatively, we can consider this as part of the evidence session.

Yours sincerely,

Baroness Taylor of Bolton
Chair of the Constitution Committee