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Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office
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Our reference: MC2021/20467

Your reference:

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs
Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

By email:

31 October 2021

Thank you for your letter of 21 October, regarding the Cabinet Office's Spending Review settlement. The Spending Review announcement and accompanying documents that followed your letter will have given you a great deal of information, and I have provided responses to your questions below. As you will appreciate, much of the Spending Review preparations were undertaken prior to HM Treasury's 13 September deadline for departmental bids, prior to my appointment.

- *What your policy priorities are for the Spending Review period, including how these differ from those published in the Outcome Delivery Plan in July 2021;*

The Spending Review includes the four Priority Outcomes for the Cabinet Office over the Spending Review period.

I had three specific priority spending programmes for the Spending Review period. First, to enable citizens to engage more easily with Government and receive more personalised digital services – this has been supported by the funding for Single Sign On. Second, the decentralisation of the Civil Service, to bring Government closer to the communities it serves – this was supported with funding for the Government Property Agency. Third, to deliver the Border Strategy published in December – this was supported by funding for the Single Trade Window.

- *Details of spending commitments already made for the period to 2024-25, by year, and by amount;*

The Spending Review settlement has provided funding to continue the work of the Department over the next three years. While the precise allocations of the settlement will be made later in the year within our annual business planning round, you will see from the table below that the Spending Review has provided additional support in key areas of the Department's work.

TDEL £m	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Core Department	603	577	560
Single Trade Window	40	60	90
One Login for Government	41	35	35
Hubs and other property programmes	303	332	335
Total SR settlement	987	1,004	1,020

- *How your department has analysed its priorities and work for this spending round, including how it identified areas of cost saving and the total resources dedicated to the spending round;*

As with all departments, the Cabinet Office undertook a rigorous process of prioritisation for our Spending Review bid to ensure we deliver the Government's priorities effectively and efficiently.

- *How departmental submissions for the 2021 Spending Review have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, including longer term changes to spending responsibilities and policy priorities as identified in the planning for the intended 2020 Spending Review;*

The pandemic has revealed both the challenges and the opportunities for reforming Government and anticipating and responding to national crises. We were funded in the Spending Review to continue the work of the National Situation Centre, which uses a variety of data sources to create a sophisticated picture of threats and issues across the United Kingdom. The pandemic has illustrated the need for resilient, responsive and adaptable public services, which our investment in digital services is supporting. It also showed the potential for a far more decentralised Civil Service, which has enabled the acceleration of our plans to move 22,000 civil service roles out of central London by 2030. This will be delivered through our investment in the government estate.

- *What impact leaving the EU has had on the department's spending and policy commitments during the forthcoming Spending Review period;*

This is part of the context of our work of modernisation and delivery. The specific responsibilities that we exercise now as a fully sovereign nation were funded as Sovereign Duties in our settlement.

- *Policy commitments (including those in legislation) made which may have a significant spending impact over the Spending Review period, with likely costs; and*

The Spending Review settlement reflects our major policy areas with spending impacts over the period.

- *How you intend to measure your performance given any funding settlement;*

Our Outcome Delivery Plan will set out how we monitor performance for our priorities over the Spending Review period.

I hope you will find this initial response helpful, and I look forward to discussing the department's priorities, and how the Spending Review settlement will support them, with you in the coming months.

Yours Sincerely,



**Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office**



PACAC (Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee)

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21 October 2021

Spending Review 2021

The Government has announced that the 2021 Spending Review will be published on 27 October, alongside the Autumn Budget. The outcome of the Review will have a significant impact on what departments can deliver over the next few years.

This Committee is appointed under House of Commons' standing orders to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Cabinet Office, amongst other things. To do this effectively, the Committee needs to scrutinise funding decisions which affect your department—whether taken as part of, or following, the Spending Review—and the impact which those decisions are likely to have on delivery of future outcomes.

The relatively short timeframe provided between the announcement and publication limits the Committee's ability to understand, scrutinise and influence those spending decisions and their consequences. To maximise the possibility of effective scrutiny, we need good information to understand the issues facing your department and the plans you have for spending public money in the future ahead of the 27 October announcement of the Spending Review settlement.

To begin this process, collaborating with the House of Commons Scrutiny Unit, we are seeking the following information from you, in relation to your department and associated arm's length bodies:

- What your policy priorities are for the Spending Review period, including how these differ from those published in the Outcome Delivery Plan in July 2021;
- Details of spending commitments already made for the period to 2024-25, by year, and by amount;
- How your department has analysed its priorities and work for this spending round, including how it identified areas of cost saving and the total resources dedicated to the Spending Round;

- How departmental submissions for the 2021 Spending Review have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, including longer term changes to spending responsibilities and policy priorities as identified in the planning for the intended 2020 Spending Review;
- What impact leaving the EU has had on the department's spending and policy commitments during the forthcoming spending review period;
- Policy commitments (including those in legislation) made which may have a significant spending impact over the Spending Review period, with likely costs; and
- How you intend to measure your performance given any funding settlement;
- Please indicate where answers to the above relate to the work of the Equality Hub.

Please supply this information by Friday 29th October.

Your response will be published and shared with the House of Commons Scrutiny Unit and Treasury Committee to enable Committees to work together to scrutinise overall spending plans.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yours ever' followed by a stylized signature.

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee