

**Democratic Services Section  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast  
BT1 5GS**



**Belfast  
City Council**

2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020

**MEETING OF BREXIT COMMITTEE**

Dear Alderman/Councillor,

The above-named Committee will be held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 8th October, 2020 at 5.15 pm, for the transaction of the business noted below.

You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

SUZANNE WYLIE

Chief Executive

**AGENDA:**

1. **Routine Matters**

- (a) Apologies
- (b) Minutes
- (c) Declarations of Interest
- (d) Correspondence - Response from The Cabinet Office (Pages 1 - 4)

2. **Presentations**

- (a) Presentation from Invest NI - Donal Durkan (Executive Director, Strategy) and David Roberts (Strategic Policy Manager)

3. **Update on Brexit Preparedness** (Verbal Update)

4. **Invitation to The Executive Office - Brexit Stakeholder Event** (Pages 5 - 8)





Subject:	Response from the cabinet office in relation to Brexit Negotiations between the UK and the EU.
Date:	8th October, 2020
Reporting Officer:	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services Manager
Contact Officer:	Eilish McGoldrick, Democratic Services Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
	Correspondence has been received from the Cabinet Office in response to the Council's Letter in relation to Brexit Negotiations between the UK and the EU.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
	The Committee is asked to note the response received from the Cabinet Office.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
3.1	The Committee is reminded that, at the Council meeting on 1st July, it was agreed that the decision of the Chief Executive on behalf of the Brexit Committee of 11th June, under the

	<p>heading “Update on the Negotiations between the UK and the EU on their future”, be amended to the following:</p> <p>“The Council notes with dismay the failure of the UK Government to request for an extension to the Brexit transition period before the end of June deadline and agrees to write to the Prime Minister, Taoiseach, President of the European Commission and the EU Commission’s Chief Negotiator outlining our concerns; noting the ongoing COVID-19 crisis and the extreme challenges facing businesses and workers in the city; and requesting that the UK Government and the European Union work together to enable the extension of the Brexit transition period.”</p>
3.2	Democratic Services wrote to the aforementioned persons on 28th July, 2020 to respond with any comments which they might wish to make in relation to the Council’s position.
3.3	A response from the Cabinet Office is attached at Appendix 1.
	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>None</p>
	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1 – Response received from Paymaster General, Cabinet Office.



Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP  
Paymaster General  
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London  
SW1A 2AS

Ms E McGoldrick  
Democratic Services Officer  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast, BT1 5GS

Our reference: MC2020/10658  
Your reference: EM280720

8 September 2020

Dear Ms McGoldrick,

Thank you for your letter of 28 July to the Prime Minister setting out the Council's position in relation to the negotiations on the future relationship with the EU. I am responding as the Paymaster General.

I appreciate the Council's concerns given the ongoing Coronavirus crisis. However, I can assure the Council that both the UK and the EU remain fully committed to the negotiations and to reaching an agreement before the end of the year.

We were explicit in our manifesto that 'we will not extend the transition period beyond December 2020'. This commitment is now enshrined in UK law, through the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020, and this Government is intent on honouring it.

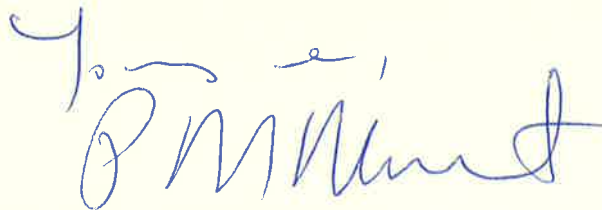
Extending the transition period would prolong business uncertainty and delay the moment of control of our borders. An extension would also mean having to make further payments into the EU budget and this would keep us bound by EU legislation, at a point when we need legislative and economic flexibility to manage the UK's response to the current pandemic. As the EU looks to deal with the impacts of the Coronavirus on the 27 member states, they will need to propose all kinds of new legislation and policies which will be designed for the 27 rather than being tailored in a way that suits the interests of the UK. We require fiscal and legislative freedom, which will allow us to drive the UK's recovery on the basis of what we decide is needed.

Given the ongoing crisis, the structure of negotiations has changed. On 15 June the Prime Minister met the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, by videoconference to take stock of progress with the aim of agreeing actions to move forward in negotiations on the future relationship. The Parties agreed to intensify talks in July and to create the most conducive conditions for concluding and ratifying a deal before the end of 2020.

Further negotiating rounds have been taking place in August and September. To accompany and complement the negotiating rounds, and in line with institutional and transparency arrangements in place on each side, the Chief Negotiators from both sides and their teams will meet as necessary in a more restricted format to ensure progress in the negotiations. Specialised sessions may also work under their authority on issues of particular difficulty in the negotiations to ensure that parallel progress is achieved across all workstreams.

There are large areas of convergence in many of the areas discussed and we will keep working to bridge the gaps where differences remain. Our assessment is that an agreement can be reached in September, and we will continue to negotiate with this aim in mind. However, the UK's sovereignty - over our laws, our courts or our fishing waters - is not up for discussion and we will not accept any proposals which compromise this.

While I recognise this reply may disappoint the Council, I hope it is helpful in clarifying the Government's position.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Penny Mordaunt', written in a cursive style.

**Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt MP**  
**PAYMASTER GENERAL**



Subject:	Invitation from Committee for the Executive Office: Brexit stakeholder event
Date:	8 October 2020
Reporting Officer:	John Walsh, City Solicitor / Director of Legal and Civic Services
Contact Officer:	Claire Sullivan, Policy and Business Development Officer

<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
	The purpose of this report is to inform Members of an invitation that has been received from the Committee for the Executive Office to a Brexit stakeholder event and to seek approval for attendance of two attendees; one senior official and one political representative.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>

	Members are asked to approve the attendance of the Chair of the Brexit Committee and the Chief Executive or their nominees at the Committee for the Executive Office: Brexit stakeholder event on 4 <sup>th</sup> November 2020.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<p><u>Key Issues</u></p> <p>Members are asked to note that an invitation has been received from the Committee for the Executive Office who have agreed to hold a Brexit stakeholder event to provide local councils with an opportunity to brief Committee Members on any issues and concerns they might have as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union. A copy of the invitation is attached as appendix 1.</p> <p>Each council will have an opportunity to meet with a small number of Committee Members for 30 minutes. Attendees will be given 10 minutes to brief Committee Members and this will be followed by 20 minutes for questions and answers. The event will take place on Wednesday 4 November 2020, in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, from 2.00pm to 5.00pm</p> <p>The Committee has invited two attendees from each council; one senior official and one political representative. This will allow for appropriate social distancing. It is suggested that the Chair of the Brexit Committee and the Chief Executive or their nominees accept the invitation to attend.</p> <p>It should be noted that confirmation of attendance has to be provided by 5pm on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p> <p>There are no financial or resource implications relating to this report.</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>There are no implications relating to this report.</p>
	<b>Appendices</b>
	Appendix 1: Invitation from Committee for the Executive Office





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Committee for the Executive Office

Suzanne Wylie  
Chief Executive  
Belfast City Council  
[wylies@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:wylies@belfastcity.gov.uk)

25 September 2020

Dear Suzanne

### **COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE: BREXIT STAKEHOLDER EVENT**

At its meeting on 16 September 2020, the Committee for the Executive Office agreed to hold a Brexit stakeholder event to provide local councils with an opportunity to brief Committee Members on any issues and concerns they might have as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union.

The Committee agreed to invite **two attendees from each council; one senior official and one political representative**. This will allow for appropriate social distancing.

Each council will have an opportunity to meet with a small number of Committee Members for 30 minutes. Attendees will be given 10 minutes to brief Committee Members and this will be followed by 20 minutes for questions and answers.

The event will take place on **Wednesday 4 November 2020, in Parliament Buildings, Stormont, from 2.00pm to 5.00pm**. Your 30-minute time slot will be allocated when the number of councils attending has been confirmed. Further details on the event will also issue at this time.

If representatives from Belfast City Council wish to attend the event, please confirm by **5.00pm on Friday 9 October 2020**. Your confirmation, which should include the names and positions of attendees, should be emailed to: [Committee.Executive@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:Committee.Executive@niassembly.gov.uk)

As mentioned above, further details will issue in due course. However, you should note that, if you wish to attend, you will be asked to submit a short written briefing paper, by **5.00pm on Thursday 22 October 2020**, outlining the issues you wish to raise.

Yours sincerely



**Colin McGrath MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**