



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom  
The Deputy Head of the Task Force

Brussels, 13 January 2021  
uktf(2020)5610852

Dear Ms McGoldrick,

The President of the European Commission, Ms Ursula von der Leyen, has asked me to thank you for your letter of 28 July 2020 and to respond to you on her behalf.

In your letter, you seek our comments on the Belfast City Council's views related to the "*failure of the UK Government to request for an extension to the Brexit transition period before the end of June deadline (...)*". You also request that the "*UK Government and the European Union work together to enable the extension of the Brexit transition period*".

The European Union has always been very concerned about the unique situation of Northern Ireland. Throughout the withdrawal negotiations, the EU made it a priority to avoid the re-establishment of a hard border between Ireland and Northern Ireland, to preserve the all-island economy and to safeguard peace on the island of Ireland, in full respect of the Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement. The Withdrawal Agreement, which is in full application since 1 January 2021, delivers on these commitments.

The European Union and the United Kingdom agreed on 24 December 2020, before the end of the transition period, a Trade and Cooperation Agreement, which is currently in provisional application, pending the finalisation of the EU ratification procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Clara Martinez Alberola

Ms E. McGoldrick  
Democratic Services Officer  
Legal and Civic Services Department  
Democratic Services Section  
Belfast City Council  
City Hall  
Belfast BT1 5GS  
United Kingdom

[generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@belfastcity.gov.uk)