



Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG
Minister of State
Cabinet Office 70 Whitehall London
SW1A 2AS

Dame Meg Hillier MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our reference: MC2021/16135
Your reference: MH70261

11 August 2021

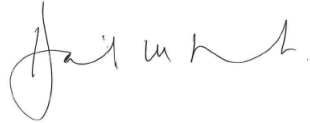
Dear Meg,

THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROTOCOL

1. Thank you for your email of 3 August, enclosing your constituent's letter regarding the Northern Ireland Protocol.
2. This Government is steadfastly committed to upholding the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions - North-South and East-West. That commitment was at the heart of the unique compromise that the Protocol represented, and we have worked in good faith to operate it in line with that overarching goal. However it has become clear that it is not delivering on its core objectives: not least to minimise disruption to everyday lives, and respect Northern Ireland's integral place in the UK's internal market.
3. That is why the Government's Command Paper '*Northern Ireland Protocol: the way forward*', referred to by your constituent, puts forward ambitious proposals that build on the foundations and concepts of the existing Protocol, and are intended to deliver on its core objectives in a more effective way. The proposals it contains are those we consider necessary to establish a more durable settlement, including to address the extensive customs and agrifood burdens that traders and consumers face today.
4. With regards to the specific issues raised by your constituent, since 1 January, the right solutions are not those that would look to tie us to EU rules, precluding the United Kingdom as a whole to take advantage of new freedoms as an independent nation. Nor should we simply be looking at partial solutions to the issues that businesses face in trading between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Instead, as our Command Paper sets out, it is now time to look at the fundamentals, and to strike a new balance. That is why we have proposed a new internal UK trade scheme, which would remove the costly burden of certificates and checks for goods remaining in the UK, while retaining a means for risk-based and intelligence-led checks where needed, and full controls for goods destined for onward movement into the EU.
5. These are ambitious proposals that require significant change to the Protocol, but they represent a huge opportunity to find durable arrangements moving away from argument and

mistrust, putting United Kingdom/EU relations onto a better footing, and delivering for Northern Ireland for the long term.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Frost', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Lord Frost CMG