



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Rt Hon Nick Thomas–Symonds MP
Paymaster General and Minister for the
Cabinet Office
(Minister for the Constitution and
European Union Relations)

The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
EH99 1SP

By email

CEEAC.Committee@parliament.scot

16 July 2024

Dear Minister

Resetting the UK Government’s Relationship with the Devolved Governments

Firstly, congratulations on your appointment.

The Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee notes the commitment to reset the UK Government’s relationship with the devolved governments. The Committee would welcome an early opportunity to explore this commitment in more detail, including the proposal to strengthen the Sewel Convention by setting out a new memorandum of understanding.

The Committee has stated previously that the Sewel Convention is “under strain” following the UK’s departure from the EU. In our report on *How Devolution is Changing Post-EU*, we noted that devolution looks very different outside of the EU compared to when the UK was a Member State. Within this context, we recommended—

“The need for a new Memorandum of Understanding and supplementary agreements between the UK Government and the Devolved Governments. This should specifically address how devolution now works outside of the EU and based on a clear constitutional design including consideration of the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. This should be accompanied by new Devolution Guidance notes and other operational guidance notes.”¹

¹ [How Devolution is Changing Post-EU](#) paragraph 82

The Committee also recommended that the new MoU should include supplementary agreements on Common Frameworks and on the use of delegated powers by UK Ministers in devolved areas.

The Committee would welcome a written response from you on this recommendation and the other findings of the report followed by an early opportunity to hear from you in person at a meeting of the Committee as soon as practical after our summer recess. Our clerks are available to discuss a suitable date with your officials.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Clare Adamson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Clare Adamson MSP, Convener of the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee