Dear Joan,

I wrote to you on 30th November to give notice that there would be a meeting of the Joint Ministerial Committee on Europe [JMC (E)] on 07 December. I am now writing to report on the Scottish Government’s actions at that meeting.

Items on the agenda at this meeting were as follows:
1. Effective Joint Working on on-going EU business
2. European Commission Work Programme
3. Mid-term review of the Multi Annual Financial Framework
4. December European Council Priorities

With regard to the item *Effective Joint Working on on-going EU Business* this item emerged in response to the Scottish Government and the other Devolved Administrations request that the UKG prepare a paper which outlines the UKG’s approach to on-going EU business and the processes and principles that will ensure that there is meaningful engagement with the Devolved Administrations on on-going EU business.

During the meeting I made clear that the delays in receiving the paper for this item hindered our ability to engage fully with the discussion and I sought assurances that going forward, papers would be issued sufficiently in advance. I stated that whilst the paper received was a welcome first draft, further clarity was needed on the entry points available to the Devolved Administrations to influence negotiations. To that end, I requested that the paper was reviewed and this item returned to the agenda in March.

On the second item, *Commission Work Programme* I again welcomed discussion of this item and receipt of the DExEU paper which contained a broad overview of policy areas in the Commission Work Programme which the UKG is supportive of. However, I asked that ahead of the March JMC(E) the UKG considers developing a forward looking paper which outlines clearly the UKG’s offensive and defensive priorities for 2017. I explained that this would enable us to identify areas of mutual interest and potentially help frame future JMC(E) meetings.
On the Mid-term review of the Multi Annual Financial Framework I broadly welcomed the proposals but expressed concern at the lack of long term certainty for Horizon 2020.

Under discussion of the December European Council priorities I emphasised the importance of migration to Scotland and stressed the importance of ensuring that Scotland has a migration system which meets our needs.

I have requested that UKG report back to the Devolved Administrations on the outcome of items 3 and 4.

The next European Council will take place on the 9th/10th March. A date for the next JMC(E) has not yet been agreed. I will of course write to you once a date has been confirmed.

Alasdair Allan