EU EXIT ANALYSIS

Thank you for your letter of 6 February to the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, where you set out your request for the 'EU exit analysis: Cross Whitehall Briefing' document, that we recently submitted to the Commons Exiting the EU Committee and Lords EU Committee, to be shared with the Scottish Parliament’s Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee. The Secretary of State has asked me to respond on his behalf.

As you may know, the House of Commons explicitly recognised the confidential nature of the material contained in this analysis in the motion it debated last month. During the debate on 31 January, I made clear that the material was preliminary, unfinished and had only very recently been presented to Ministers. It contains a large number of caveats, and sets out on every page that this is "draft analytical thinking with preliminary results". It does not reflect the Government’s policy approaches, and is not representative of the expected outcome of the negotiations. Placing this incomplete analysis in the public domain would not serve the national interest in the upcoming negotiations.

You will be aware that under the Osmotherly Rules the document is now the property of the aforementioned Committees. As you will know, though, a reading room has been provided for Members of the Scottish Parliament (including, of course, members of your Committee) to view the document in a secure environment. I understand that it remains available by appointment.

Regarding engagement with the Scottish Parliament, I recognise the importance of working closely with the devolved institutions throughout the EU exit process. I was pleased to have the opportunity to give evidence to the Finance and Constitution Committee and the
Committee on Delegated Powers and Law Reform last year. Following his previous appearances, I understand the Secretary of State for Scotland would be happy to give evidence to your committee. If a suitable date could be found, I would be happy to accompany him on behalf of the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union.

I am copying this letter to the the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union and the Secretary of State for Scotland.

ROBIN WALKER MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXITING THE EUROPEAN UNION