Dear Secretary of State,

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE CAIRNCROSS REVIEW: A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR JOURNALISM

I am writing to you, on behalf of the Scottish Parliament’s Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee, with regard to recent evidence we have taken, on the sustainability of the newspaper industry in Scotland, 1 October 2020.

The evidence session focussed on three areas: the industry pre-pandemic; the impact of the pandemic; and possible future direction for the industry to enable it deal with the long-term challenges it is facing and still contribute to a well-functioning democracy.

As part of the evidence session, the Committee discussed the recommendations of the Cairncross Review: a sustainable future for journalism and how the UK Government had responded to these recommendations in January 2020. The Committee would be grateful if you could provide information on what actions have already been taken by the UK Government in response to the Review recommendations and are planned in response to recommendations that the UK Government has already accepted but not yet implemented.

The Cairncross Review made recommendations on some aspects of policy that are clearly reserved and others where the Scottish Government would have competence in Scotland. The Committee would be grateful if you could outline what, if any,
discussions have taken place with the Scottish Government to explore how the Governments could co-operate in supporting high quality public interest journalism.

The Committee would appreciate a response to this letter by 9 November 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Joan McAlpine MSP
Convener, Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee