

From: [McCormick, Andrew \(DFE\)](#)
To: [Stewart, Chris \(DFE\)](#)
Cc: [Clydesdale, Alison](#); [Marten, Lucy](#); [Wightman, Stuart](#); [Hughes, Seamus](#); [Cousins, Heather](#); [McMurray, Stephen](#); [Coyne, Terence](#); [McCann, Brendan](#); [McEvoy, Colette](#)
Subject: FW: Letter to Chris Poulton from Andrew McCormick June 2016
Date: 20 July 2016 16:06:00
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
[Letter to Chris Poulton from Andrew McCormick re publication of the NIAO report.docx](#)

I missed a couple of chances to revise this after your email on Friday. Now proposing to finalise as attached, subject to any further comment.

Many thanks.

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Regards

Seamus

Seamus Hughes

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Cc: Wightman, Stuart
Subject: FW: Letter to Chris Poulton from Andrew McCormick June 2016

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Lucy Marten

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Do you need to include a response to (or a reference to a separate response to) the letter of 8 July from Chris Poulton?

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Regards

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Terence Coyne

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Email: andrew.mccormick@economy-ni.gov.uk

Chris Poulton
Managing Director
Ofgem E-Serve
9 Millbank
London
SW18 3GE

Xx July 2016

Dear Chris,

NORTHERN IRELAND AUDIT OFFICE (NIAO) REPORT ON DEPARTMENT OF ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT RESOURCE ACCOUNTS 2015-16

~~I refer to~~ your letter of 8 July 2016 ~~where~~ you raised the issue of the public announcement of the above report and the lack of prior notice to Ofgem of its publication.

As I said in my letter of 11 July, it is indeed the case that Ofgem colleagues should have been advised that the report was about to issue, so that you would be in a position to respond to enquiries. I agree with you that such notification would fall within the scope of the formal arrangements for the scheme, but it should not have been necessary to refer to the formality as this just should have happened on any reasonable definition of good practice. ~~To put it into context, DfE officials did not receive notification of the NIAO's intention to make a public announcement on Tuesday 5 July until late on Friday 1 July. Focus naturally was on ensuring that our new Minister was fully briefed and had the necessary lines to take and u~~Unfortunately the step of ~~formally~~ alerting Ofgem colleagues was inadvertently overlooked. I apologise once again for this oversight.

I note that those sections of the report that refer most directly to OFGEM were shared with you for input. However, in view of your concerns, and with the benefit of hindsight, I acknowledge that we could have sought the agreement of the NIAO to share the entire draft report with you prior to publication.

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~~I hope that this addresses your concerns and I know that, on the whole, communication between the Department and Ofgem is excellent.~~ My officials have reassured me that

Ofgem will be kept fully up to speed on all developments between now and the PAC, currently scheduled for ~~{28 September}~~.

In relation to the other points you raised regarding the Joint Review, I believe I have covered them in my ~~earlier~~ letter ~~to you~~ of 11 July, which had largely been prepared before we received your letter of 8 July.

Regards ~~Yours sicnerely~~ sincerely

Andrew McCormick
Permanent Secretary
Department for the Economy

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Date: 20 July 2016 16:25:00
Attachments: [image001.gif](#)
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Chris

There is one typo in the word “sincerely” at the end of the letter but I have no further comments.

Regards

Terry

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