

On 21 June, we the Chairs, Conveners and representatives of Committees scrutinising Brexit-related issues in the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales, House of Commons and House of Lords, met at the House of Commons for the fourth meeting of the Interparliamentary Forum on Brexit, to discuss the future arrangements for intergovernmental relations and UK Common frameworks. Officials from the Northern Ireland Assembly were in attendance as observers.

We previously recognised that the current system of inter-governmental relations is not fit for purpose and is in urgent need of substantial reform. Today we discussed the need for intergovernmental mechanisms for UK common frameworks and the importance of effective scrutiny of these processes and considered in detail the concerns about existing intergovernmental relations that have been identified by a range of our respective Committees. We also heard from the Institute for Government, who outlined its proposals for establishing UK common frameworks.

We note that the UK Government is yet to outline its proposals for reform of intergovernmental mechanisms or how UK common frameworks will operate.

We urge the Government to publish these proposals as soon as possible to allow time for consideration and consultation.

In light of the concern that some of our Committees have already expressed, the Governments and Parliaments of the UK should consider the urgent need for the following:

- A significant and immediate overhaul of the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) structures.
- The Joint Ministerial Committee (Plenary) should meet no less than twice a year.
- Intergovernmental relations mechanisms should be set out in statute.
- The reformed JMCs should be the forum for discussion and decision making on common frameworks.
- Decision making structures for JMCs should be clearly set out. Possible structures for formal decision-making processes include qualified majority voting or joint decision-making or a combination of both.

- Clear arrangements for parliamentary scrutiny of intergovernmental relations mechanisms should be established, and interparliamentary working should be encouraged.
- The agreement between the Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament to circulate agendas of intergovernmental meetings to the relevant parliamentary committees in time for committees to discuss key issues in advance of the meeting, should be extended to all Parliaments and assemblies.
- The reformed JMC should have a permanent secretariat, that coordinates with the different governments of the UK.

The forum will meet again in September...

Lord McFall of Alcluith

Lord Jay of Ewelme

Lord Beith

Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope

Sir Bernard Jenkin MP

Tonia Antoniazzi MP

Graham Simpson MSP

Mick Antoniw AM

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