



Northern Ireland Office

The Rt Hon Chris Heaton-Harris MP

**Secretary of State for
Northern Ireland**

1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

Erskine House
20-32 Chichester St
Belfast
BT1 4GF

E: correspondence@nio.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/nio
Follow us on Twitter @NIOgov

Sir

Declan

By email: chief.commissioner@icrir.independent-inquiry.com

Morgan

14 December 2023

Dear Sir Declan,

I am writing on the day of the appointment of the ICRIR's Commissioners to set out how the Commission will be funded and to provide transparency about the future relationship between the Commission and the Government.

The Commission must operate independently of Government and all other organisations and interests, without fear or favour, to fulfil the objective and functions set by Parliament. It must also be accountable for how public resources are used, and in addition to the responsibilities on the Commissioners, there are requirements for external audit from the Comptroller and Auditor General and to provide financial and corporate data to Government. These should in no way conflict with your operational independence in carrying out your statutory functions. The Framework Document, attached, sets out these relationships so that they are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Funding is a key aspect of supporting your independence. Up to £250m is available for the Commission's work and it has been agreed that alongside an annual budget for the Commission's back office and administrative work, funding for the Commission's review, investigation and immunity work will be provided by way of Annually Managed Expenditure (AME), allowing you to draw what you need, when you need to fund such work, without recourse to Government approval. It is still important

that the requirements of Managing Public Money are adhered to and that public funding is used efficiently in this work.

I hope this underlines the Government's commitment for the Commission to operate independently and to successfully discharge its important responsibilities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Heaton-Harris".

**THE RT HON CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**