

Keir Starmer letter to David Davis raising ongoing concerns about the impact of Brexit on Gibraltar

Keir

Starmer MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the UK, has written to David Davis this evening to raise ongoing concerns about the impact of Brexit on Gibraltar.

Keir's letter follows a conversation with the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, Fabian Picardo, earlier today.

In the letter Keir highlights three major concerns:

1.
The application of any new UK/EU trade deal on services to Gibraltar.
2.
Agreement on the continuation of access Gibraltar's access to the UK market.
3.
Agreement on the application to Gibraltar of any new trade deals the UK does with third countries.

Keir

Starmer said:

"This afternoon I spoke with Fabian Picardo [Chief Minister of Gibraltar] and it is clear there are serious and ongoing concerns about the situation in Gibraltar. The Government need urgently to address this and to provide clear reassurances for British citizens in Gibraltar."

Ends

Notes

to editors:

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Full copy of the letter to David Davis below:

Dear David,

After

discussions this afternoon with the Chief Minister of Gibraltar, Fabian Picardo, I am writing to raise a number of important issues concerning the ongoing situation in Gibraltar.

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Chief Minister emphasised three outstanding concerns to me, all of which I hope you will consider and respond to as a matter of urgency.

1: Application of any new UK/EU trade deal on services to Gibraltar

A concern that the UK should be firm in continuing to defend the position that any new agreement which may emerge from these negotiations should cover Gibraltar.

The Chief Minister emphasised that the UK cannot just accept the Council's draft parameter, setting out Spain's position that any new trade deal can only apply to Gibraltar as a result of a bilateral agreement between the UK and Spain. A tough line needs to be taken and maintained.

2. Agreement on the continuation of Gibraltar's access to the UK market

A concern that the Government of Gibraltar needs to be able to finalise the agreement with the UK to demonstrate that Gibraltar will have continued access to the UK market. This is important in respect of all services but in particular, in respect of financial services (especially insurance) and online gaming services. I am told that the wording used to date has been very helpful as political commitment but that a proposed one page agreement has not yet been finalised despite finding considerable favour and traction with colleagues in the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) from the Department for Exiting the EU and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

3. Agreement on the application to Gibraltar of any new trade deals the UK does with third countries

I understand that this is also agreed but that Gibraltar need a very clear public statement of this. Clear language from yourself and The Secretary of State for International Trade on this point would be helpful to Gibraltar.

As you and I discussed over the weekend, the sovereignty of Gibraltar should not be used as a bargaining chip in Brexit discussions. It is vital that the interests of British citizens in Gibraltar are protected and that ongoing uncertainty over Gibraltar is resolved urgently.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

**Keir
Starmer QC MP**

**Shadow
Secretary of State for Exiting the EU**

**MP
for Holborn & St Pancras**

[Press release: £2.4 billion funding boost for England's schools](#)

Thousands of schools across England are to benefit from a £2.4 billion cash injection, Education Secretary Justine Greening announced today (3 April 2017).

It comes as new government figures show that almost 735,000 additional school places have been created since 2010 – with 92% of new primary places and 89% of new secondary places created in schools rated as ‘good’ or ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted in 2015 to 2016.

Local councils say they need to create over 230,000 primary and secondary school places nationally between 2017 and 2020. The funding announced today will provide a further boost to the government’s drive to help create over 600,000 extra places by 2021, which will generate additional capacity to meet local demand.

Schools, local authorities and academy trusts will also receive a share of £1.4 billion to invest in upgrading or improving their school buildings. As part of this, academies and sixth-form colleges throughout the country, will receive a total of £466 million to pay for almost 1,500 vital school building work projects.

As part of its [Plan for Britain](#), the government wants every child to have access to a ‘good’ school place, giving them the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in the future.

Alongside this multi-billion pound investment, the government is considering wider proposals to ensure school standards continue to rise by creating more ‘good’ places in every part of the country.

These proposals include lifting the ban on new grammar schools – on the strict condition they improve the education of other pupils in the system – as well as harnessing the expertise and resources of our universities, and our independent and faith schools.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

Our Plan for Britain is to build a fairer society, with a good school place available for every child.

This £2.4 billion investment, together with our proposals to create more good school places, will help ensure every young person has the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

The £2.4 billion allocated today is part of more than £24 billion the government has committed to investing in the school estate between 2015 to 2021.

1. We have announced £2.4 billion of capital funding allocations to create new school places across the country, and to maintain and improve the condition of school buildings.

This funding comprises [£980 million of funding allocations for local authorities in 2019 to 2020](#), to create over 60,000 school places needed. This is part of a wider investment of £7 billion in the course of this Parliament which, alongside our investment in the free schools programme, we expect to create an additional 600,000 places by 2021.

The funding also comprises [£1.4 billion of funding allocations for schools, local authorities and academy trusts](#) to invest in improving the condition of the school estate. This includes [£466 million through the Condition Improvement Fund](#) to fund 1,435 projects across 1,184 academies and sixth-form colleges.

2. The government's [‘schools that work for everyone’ consultation](#) closed in December last year (2016). The responses are currently being considered, and the government will respond shortly.
3. The government has also published today:

[Press release: Company owner jailed](#)

for 15 months

A waste criminal whose actions resulted in the closure of the M60, polluted a river and blighted communities has been disqualified from being a company director for 6 years and sentenced to 15 months in prison.

Barry Kilroe, Shareholder and Director of J25 Recycling Ltd, Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd and Asset and Land Group Ltd was sentenced at Manchester Court (on Friday 31st March).

Transport Manager and Company Director, Jane Williams was fined a total of £500 and Richard James Davies, Financial Director, was given a conditional discharge for 12 months.

Mr Kilroe pleaded guilty to ten charges relating to the unlawful operation of three waste sites, in Stockport, Salford and Warrington Docks.

Ms Williams pleaded guilty to 2 charges; 1 relating to the Salford site for storing waste in excess of its 10,000 tonne capacity, the second charge was for operating the Warrington site without an Environment Agency permit.

Mr Davies pleaded guilty to a charge relating to the Stockport site where he failed to provide and implement an adequate environmental management system.

Environment Agency investigation

The Environment Agency brought the case against Mr Kilroe and the other directors after a lengthy investigation. The investigation identified the unlawful operation and mismanagement of the 3 sites. Excessive amounts of waste were imported on to the sites, which breached their environmental permits, and the defendants failed to comply with Enforcement and Suspension Notices.

A major fire broke out in August 2013 at the J25 Recycling Ltd site in Bredbury, Stockport that lasted for 41 days. The manner in which the site was managed increased the impacts the fire caused to the environment and local community. The fire resulted in the closure of the M60 Motorway and 3 weeks of disruption to traffic as well as significant disruption to local residents and businesses. A nearby river was polluted by the fire-fighting water run-off.

A fire also broke out in March 2014 at the Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd site in Salford. This led to Network Rail closing the railway line in Salford. Local roads and main routes to Manchester City Centre were also closed. The manner in which the site was operated increased the impacts of the fire, which lasted for 19 days. It caused severe disruption to local residents and businesses, which were affected by smoke and ash. Mr. Kilroe failed to remove the waste following the fire, leaving the landowner to remove more than 14,000 tonnes.

Further waste was also transferred to Asset and Land Group Ltd at Warrington Docks, adjacent to the Manchester Ship Canal. The Environment Agency's modelling also advised that a fire at the site would have affected the Ship Canal, West Coast Railway, and also flights in and out of Manchester and Liverpool airports. There would have been a significant effect on UK PLC because industry from Manchester to Liverpool would have shut. There is still a significant financial impact to the landowner who now has to pay to clear the site which has an estimate of 75,000 tonnes of waste to clear with a cost in excess of £10 million to send to landfill.

Case results in 'significant financial impacts'

Lee Rawlinson, the Environment Agency's Area Director for Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, said:

This is one of the biggest cases the Environment Agency has prosecuted, we have been committed to do so because of the severity of the offence and cost and impact on the environment, communities and business. It has resulted in significant financial impacts to legitimate businesses.

The Environment Agency would like to thank partners including Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service (GMFRS) and United Utilities as the impact would have been even greater had it not been for their tireless effort and cooperation to get the fires under control.

We would also like to thank Excalon, Salford who assisted GMFRS at Recovered Fuels Shipping Ltd. The Environment Agency has also been offering advice and support to the landowner at Warrington Docks.

Following this case GMFRS has invested in an Aerial Imagery Reconnaissance (AIR) unit. Now working in partnership with the Environment Agency Enforcement Team they use the remote controlled AIR unit to take pictures and videos of waste sites and to detect elevated heat sources within waste piles.

During Barry Kilroe's sentencing Judge Driver said Mr Kilroe whilst on bail acted for financial gain and failed to comply with the Environment Agency's warnings. Summing up, Judge Driver thanked the Environment Agency for all its help with a complex case.

Anyone who believes any illegal waste activities are taking place is urged to report the matter to our incident hotline on 0800 807060 or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111 so that we can investigate.

Illegal waste activities pose a significant threat of harm to the environment and local communities, so it is important that everyone plays their part in stamping out waste crime.

[News story: British troops continue support to UN South Sudan mission](#)

Armed Forces Minister Mike Penning yesterday visited Bentiu and Malakal, where UK military personnel are deployed, and met those carrying out engineering tasks in support of the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).

With around 100 already in country, Royal Engineers are carrying out building tasks in preparation for the main deployment of nearly 400 troops over the coming months – making this one of the UK’s largest operational deployments across the globe.

UK personnel are carrying out engineering tasks at the UN’s camps in both Malakal and Bentiu to enhance UNMISS’s efforts, and as more British troops arrive in South Sudan, focus will move to Bentiu where a temporary field hospital will be set up, followed by a permanent hospital.

Minister of State for the Armed Forces Mike Penning said:

The UN is working hard to protect civilians and promote stability in South Sudan, and the UK continues to support this important effort.

This will be the UK’s single largest deployment to a UN mission with almost 400 of our troops carrying out vital engineering tasks on the ground and a number of key roles within the UN headquarters.

This permanent field hospital will support over 1,000 UN peacekeepers and staff, enabling them to continue working to improve conditions in South Sudan.

Armed Forces Minister Mike Penning arrives in South Sudan

Engineering tasks carried out by UK personnel could include a helicopter landing site in Malakal, facilities to improve water supply, drainage to prevent flooding. In addition to engineering and medical support, the UK also has a small number of staff officers in UNMISS’s headquarters in Juba.

Lt Col Jason Ainley, Commanding Officer Royal Engineers said:

We are very proud to be part of UNMISS. We look forward to continued work with our military and civilian colleagues to support the mission, which aims to improve conditions for the people of South Sudan.

My engineers are working in a tough operating environment to ensure our mission will be a success.

As part of his visit the Armed Forces Minister also met Lt Col Ainley in Juba, as well as Defence Minister Kuol Manyang Juuk, and UN Special Representative David Shearer.

British military support in South Sudan follows a commitment made in 2015 by the then Prime Minister to double the UK's commitment to global peacekeeping initiatives, including by deploying troops to South Sudan and Somalia.

Alongside the UK-hosted Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in London in September, these contributions underline the UK's leading role in support to peacekeeping operations.

Mike Penning visits UK personnel in South Sudan

More widely, the UK Government has committed life-saving support to tackle the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, including matching pound for pound public donations up to £10 million to the Disaster Emergency Committee's East Africa Crisis Appeal.

The Government also recently announcement that £100m will be spent on life-saving support in South Sudan in 2017/18, including:

- Food for over 500,000 people;
- Life-saving nutritional support to more than 27,500 children;
- Safe drinking water for over 300,000 people;
- Emergency health services for over 100,000 people;
- Livelihood support for over 650,000 people;
- Vaccinations for over 200,000 livestock.

[News story: New penalties for](#)

breaching financial sanctions now in force

From today (3 April 2017), the Treasury's Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) will start to use powers to impose penalties for serious financial sanctions breaches. These can be up to £1 million or 50% of the breach, whichever is higher.

This new power is one of a series of measures in the Policing and Crime Act which will strengthen the government's response to financial sanctions breaches. The penalty powers apply to offences committed after 1 April 2017. In 2016, just over one hundred suspected breaches were reported to OFSI, 95 of which were actual breaches, totaling around £75 million.

Economic Secretary, Simon Kirby, said:

Financial sanctions are a valuable tool against individuals, countries and terrorist groups who threaten UK foreign policy and financial services as well as our national security.

This government won't tolerate breaches of financial sanctions. We'll continue to place more emphasis on compliance and we will take tough action against those who deliberately flout the law.

Monetary penalties are a new way of responding to offences. The UK currently imposes financial sanctions in 27 sanctions regimes. Breaching sanctions is a criminal offence and the most serious cases could shortly incur prison sentences of up to seven years.

OFSI will normally publish summary details of penalty cases, to deter non-compliance and support compliance best practice.

In December 2016 OFSI consulted on guidance to support monetary penalties and [today publishes guidance](#) alongside a [summary of consultation responses](#).

Rena Lalgie, Head of OFSI, commented:

We'll continue to provide information and guidance to business, industry, the public and charitable sectors to facilitate compliance with financial sanctions. However, we will issue penalties for serious breaches and we won't hesitate in referring the most serious cases to law enforcement agencies.

OFSI, created on 31 March 2016, is the UK's Competent Authority for implementing financial sanctions. It works with a wide range of individuals, businesses and not-for-profit organisations who could be impacted by

financial sanctions to: raise awareness of financial sanctions, improve compliance, and detect and address breaches.