



Prosperity UK to host Alternative Arrangements conference for elected representatives from Ireland, Great Britain and Northern Ireland

15 August, 2019 – The Prosperity UK Alternative Arrangements Commission is convening legislators from across Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland, together with key border stakeholders, to discuss how Alternative Arrangements could help break the Brexit impasse and avoid a No Deal Brexit scenario.

Invitations to the private conference, which will take place on the 13th and 14th September in Dundalk, are being sent out today from the Commission co-Chairs, Rt Hon Greg Hands MP and Suella Braverman MP¹. The aim of the private conference is to enable legislators from across Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland to set out their views, commence a dialogue and to consider the recommendations of the Alternative Arrangements Commission, as published in its Final Report on the 18th July.

The Alternative Arrangements Commission's final Report & Protocols lay out how Alternative Arrangements could be made legally operative in different Brexit scenarios. They were the result of work by a cross-party group of UK MPs and Peers and a technical panel of 23 experts on borders, trade and customs, drawn from around the world. The Protocols were drafted with the advice of Herbert Smith Freehills, the leading international law firm. The Report & Protocols, and an Executive Summary, can be found here: <https://www.prosperity-uk.com/aacabout/>

The Alternative Arrangements Commission, which launched in April, engaged with numerous stakeholders across the Island of Ireland before publishing its Report & Protocols on the 18th July. Central to its proposals is a commitment to protecting the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement.

Greg Hands, co-Chair of the Prosperity UK Alternative Arrangements Commission said: "Our work on Alternative Arrangements has revealed a worrying breakdown of trust between legislators in Belfast, Dublin and London.

"The aim of this conference is to bring people together and try to rebuild some trust. As elected representatives we all have an important role to play in any Brexit scenario. Each of our constituencies will be impacted by Brexit and I believe that we all share a responsibility to do our very best to avoid a No Deal.

¹ Suella Braverman, MP, has been appointed as co-Chair of the Commission following Nicky Morgan's appointment to the Cabinet.



“It is our hope that all parties represented in Westminster, the Oireachtas and Stormont will use this opportunity to set out their position and to engage constructively in a dialogue which will contribute to avoiding a No Deal Brexit.”

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Notes to editors

Prosperity UK is a politically independent, not-for-profit platform chaired by Sir Paul Marshall and Lord Hill of Oareford, bringing together business leaders, academics and policy-makers to seek solutions to Brexit issues and to look constructively at a future outside the EU and at how the UK can build an open, dynamic and balanced economy which maximises prosperity for all.

The Backstop, as drafted in the current Withdrawal Agreement text, is intended to avoid a hard border in Ireland but could permanently hive Northern Ireland into a separate regulatory and Customs jurisdiction from the rest of the UK. It is at the heart of the UK Parliament’s objections to the existing Withdrawal Agreement and of particular concern to Unionist opinion in Northern Ireland.

While the existing Withdrawal Agreement says the parties, “agree to agree a replacement to the Backstop”, our consultation has exposed how understandings of the Backstop, and how it will be replaced, vary vastly across policy makers and stakeholders.