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The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Secretary of State for Environment Food and Rural
Affairs
Nobel House
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29 March 2018

Dear Michael,

I am writing to invite you to a Ministerial summit to develop an ambitious and coordinated approach to deposit return schemes for drinks containers.

As you know, Scotland was the first part of the UK to commit to introducing a deposit return scheme for drinks containers, in our Programme for Government 2017/18. Our work over the last six months to develop design options has built on the expertise and experience built over some time in Scotland and I believe we have a great deal of knowledge to share.

Our work in Scotland has been informed by four principles; these are that a deposit return scheme should:

- 1) Increase the quantity of target materials captured for recycling;
- 2) Improve the quality of material captured, to allow for higher value recycling;
- 3) Encourage wider behaviour change around materials; and
- 4) Deliver maximum economic benefit.

While Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland each have devolved responsibility for the environment, there are likely to be areas where working together offers the opportunity to deliver greater benefits across the nations of the UK. The time is now right for Environment Ministers, and senior officials in Northern Ireland, to come together to ensure we realise those opportunities.

If you are in agreement, I will make the practical arrangements for a summit in Scotland on a mutually convenient date. I will also ask my officials to explore with yours the key areas where the summit could add value to the work of each of our administrations.

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I look forward to hearing from you, and to welcoming you to Scotland to take forward this important work. I am writing to Hannah Blythyn AM and David Sterling, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, in similar terms.

Yours

Roseanna

Roseanna Cunningham

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