

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister
Sent: 03 June 2021 17:47
To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>
Cc: Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rogers D (David) (Constitution and Cabinet Director) <David.Rogers@gov.scot>; Cameron DA (Donald) (Constitution and UKR) <Donald.Cameron@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Crawford E (Ewan) <Ewan.Crawford@gov.scot>; McAllister C (Colin) <Colin.McAllister@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: SUBMISSION: BIC Summit papers for clearance

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

We are still waiting on clearance of the papers but FM has decided that we won't be travelling and will attend virtually. [Redacted – Out of Scope]

FM is happy to have the same set-up as we had for the Summit in November.

Many thanks,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] **Office of the First Minister**
5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

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From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister
Sent: 26 May 2021 10:04
To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>
Cc: Rogers D (David) (Constitution and Cabinet Director) <David.Rogers@gov.scot>; Cameron DA (Donald) (Constitution and UKR) <Donald.Cameron@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>
Subject: RE: THIRTY FIFTH SUMMIT MEETING OF THE BRITISH IRISH COUNCIL

Thanks [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)], this is very useful.

FM has reiterated that the decision will be made nearer the time so it would be useful for NIE to continue to keep the virtual option available. [Redacted– Out of Scope]

Happy to speak to FM/dFM NIE PO or [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)] directly if you feel it would be useful!

[Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)] **Office of the First Minister**
5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]

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From: [Redacted]@gov.scot >

Sent: 26 May 2021 09:52

To: First Minister [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >

Cc: Rogers D (David) (Constitution and Cabinet Director) <David.Rogers@gov.scot>; Cameron DA (Donald) (Constitution and UKR) <Donald.Cameron@gov.scot>; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >; [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot >

Subject: FW: THIRTY FIFTH SUMMIT MEETING OF THE BRITISH IRISH COUNCIL

Hi [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)],

Copying [Redacted– Section 38(1)(b)] for DFM, Mr Robertson, and Ms Gilruth's interests.

As you will see from the invite, NI has, despite concerns raised by a number of members of the Coordinator group, confirmed its intention to host the Summit physically. I know that FM has reservations about whether it would be appropriate in the current circumstances to attend in person and we are continuing to press for a virtual Summit, but NIE seems persuaded that an in person Summit can be held. We are of course happy to draft a response when FM has taken a decision, but in the meantime please see below some additional information about the Summit which might help inform decisions:

- [Redacted– Out of Scope]
- [Redacted– Out of Scope]
- Important to note is that each administration is asked to minimise delegations, to a **maximum of 5 attendees total** (this includes Ministers, PS, SpAds, Comms, and Security). There will be a virtual option for those who are not

attending in person. Each delegation will be assigned a Delegation Liaison Officer from Northern Ireland to assist them on the day.

- [Redacted – Out of Scope]
- We have been told by NI coordinators that their Department of Health are taking a paper on travel to the Executive for consideration on Thursday so we would expect that by Friday there will be more clarity on travel restrictions/exemptions for travel to NI from within the CTA. [Redacted – Out of Scope]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister

Sent: 21 May 2021 10:42

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: BICSummit - June 2021

Hi [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

FM is not willing to make a firm decision to attend in person at this stage and will consider nearer the time.

If the situation here and in NI is satisfactory, FM is happy to consider attending in person but if not, travel would not send a good message.

I would be grateful if the virtual option could continue to be explored and we will revisit nearer the time.

Many thanks,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] **Office of the First Minister**

5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

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From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 20 May 2021 17:06

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: BICSummit - June 2021

Sorry [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] 

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 19 May 2021 13:36

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: BIC Summit - June 2021

Hi all,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] and I attended the BIC coordinators meeting this morning. [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] took the note below by way of an update.

Just a quick readout on the logistics section of the BIC Coordinator meeting this morning:

- Intention to host in person at Lough Erne resort in Fermanagh on 11 June. **Expect Ministers to arrive on 10 June** to allow transfer time (it is up to 2 hours from Belfast so would be difficult to arrive on the morning). There will be a dinner on Thursday night, officials and Ministers will be seated in separate rooms.
- [Redacted – Out of Scope]
- NI were asked to share draft logistics note with info on Covid compliance, restrictions, travel, testing etc. NI have a draft and will populate and send – I will obviously share asap when we receive it. There is a decision being taken tomorrow on what restrictions may be lifted on 24 May
- Invites not issued as not yet agreed between Ministers
- [Redacted – Out of Scope]
- NIE have said it would be useful to know asap if people can't attend in person. [Redacted – Out of Scope]

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

Happy to discuss at any point – though we're a bit stuck until we get further info.

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)], in the event that the decision is taken to hold virtually, can we arrange access to the media centre for a tech run through on 3rd June?

Kind regards,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)].

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] *UK Relations Adviser*

UK Relations Team | Constitution and UK Relations Division | Directorate for Constitution and Cabinet | Scottish Government | 2 West, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 19 May 2021 12:49

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: NI BIC Summit

Thanks [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

I have asked for clarity on the travel restrictions – there is an exemption for Crown Servants carrying out essential business so I suppose it depends on whether this is being classed as essential business (particularly when it can be done virtually as we demonstrated in November). Or maybe they're classing it as a diplomatic conference. Either way, NI officials have said they'll get back to us when they know.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-within-common-travel-area-sector-exemptions>

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 19 May 2021 12:07

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: NI BIC Summit

Thanks [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

A few points – I think (?) the FM lives in Glasgow City so while the regulations of course allow travel for work, I am sure we'd want to be mindful of the risks associated with travelling from a Covid hotspot area.

I have checked and Fermanagh itself has a rate of 33 cases per 100k at the moment. Our Level 3 threshold is 50 cases per 100k.

In terms of entering NI, there are still likely to be isolation requirements in place for CTA arrivals in June so I can only assume NI have/are planning to make a sectoral exception covering Government Ministers and officials?

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister

Sent: 14 May 2021 10:04

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: NIE BIC Summit

Thanks [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)], this is very useful. I'll be back in touch ASAP with a steer.

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] **Office of the First Minister**

5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

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From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 14 May 2021 09:56

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: NIE BIC Summit

Morning [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)],

Just to make you aware of some further information from NI Coordinators.

As suspected, they are working on the Lough Erne Resort as the likely venue and are planning to hold the summit from 10 to 12 on 11 June with a press conference at 12.30 though these timings are to be confirmed.

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

To assist in planning transport, catering, accommodation etc for the Summit [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] is asking us to advise whether our Ministers are likely to travel to the summit or not. I have told him you may be waiting on the official invitation before a decision is made.

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] confirmed that they will accommodate those who choose not to be there in person due to current restrictions and will provide a secure feed for those who wish to observe the meeting, adding that he looked forward to seeing those who were able to travel.

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

Hope this is helpful.

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

UK Relations Team | Constitution and UK Relations Division | Directorate for Constitution and Cabinet | Scottish Government | 2 West, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot

Sent: 11 May 2021 08:48

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: NIE BICSummit

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

We don't have a confirmed venue though the last summit they were due to host in 2017 was also to be held in Fermanagh, at the Lough Erne Resort. This summit was cancelled as the Executive folded. It's unclear if they intend to use the same venue but there appears to be no available accommodation there at this time.

Some of the Crown Dependencies had pointed out that attending on a fly in/fly out basis on a single day wouldn't be possible due to flight availability. That may no longer be an issue if staying overnight but I think we'll get their views throughout the day!

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

UK Relations Team | Constitution and UK Relations Division | Directorate for Constitution and Cabinet | Scottish Government | 2 West, St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 11 May 2021 08:35

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Ingebrigtsen R (Ross) <Ross.Ingebrigtsen@gov.scot>

Subject: RE: NIE BICSummit

[Redacted – Out of Scope]

Do you have the name of the venue and is everyone going to be attending or will it be hybrid?

Cheers,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

[Redacted] **Office of the First Minister**

5th Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]

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From: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Sent: 11 May 2021 08:33

To: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Cc: [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

Subject: FW: NIE BIC Summit

Importance: High

Morning all,

Just a heads up, it looks as if NI intend to press ahead with a physical summit after all. To make matters worse, the venue is about an hour and a half drive from Belfast so they are now of the view that an overnight stay is necessary. There will no doubt be some discussion on this both internally and with the other administrations over the next day or two, we'll keep you informed of developments.

Kind regards,

[Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)] UK Relations Team | Constitution and UK Relations Division |
Directorate for Constitution and Cabinet | Scottish Government | 2 West, St Andrew's House,
Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG | [Redacted – Section 38(1)(b)]