From the Chair, Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP

Edwin Poots MLA,
Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety,
Room C5.10
Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
Belfast
BT4 3SQ

6 February 2013

Dear Mr Poots

The Armed Forces Covenant in Action? Part 1: Military Casualties

As you are aware, the Defence Committee carried out an inquiry into military casualties to which you kindly submitted a statement to the Committee. The Defence Committee published its Report into military casualties in December 2011 and the Government Response to that Report in February 2013. We followed up the Government Response with the Ministry of Defence in July 2012.

We are now undertaking further work in this area and, recognising the importance of the Devolved Administrations in meeting the health needs of former Service personnel, we would like to understand further the work you are doing on veterans’ mental and physical health needs and your interaction with the MoD, the Department of Health and the Scottish and Welsh Governments.

In particular, we would like your assistance in addressing the following topics:

- **The implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant in Northern Ireland** What aspects have you introduced? Have you a programme for educating health professionals in the medical needs of the former Service personnel?

- **The Northern Ireland Government’s involvement in the MoD Transition Protocol** How many ex-Service personnel passed through the Transition Protocol into civilian life in Northern Ireland? The continuing support delivered by the Aftercare Service for former members of the Ulster Defence Regiment and the Royal Irish Regiment.
• The approach taken by the Northern Ireland Government to the mental health needs of the former Armed Forces personnel. Is the MoD working with you to implement the recommendations of the Murrison Report “Fighting Fit”?

• The Northern Ireland Government involvement in implementing the Murrison recommendations on Veterans’ prosthetic services. Have you accepted these recommendations? If so, how will you implement them in Northern Ireland?

• Specific policies in place to provide the long term cares needs of those veterans with serious brain injuries

• Does the Northern Ireland Government exclude Guaranteed Income Payments made under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme when determining the funding of publicly arranged social care?

I look forward to hearing from you on the good work being undertaken in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

CHAIR