I am writing in response to the Committee’s request to receive a comprehensive list of the Department’s EU Exit projects, specifically the Day 1 projects.

As my Permanent Secretary outlined to the Public Accounts Committee on 6th March, my department recently reviewed the scope of its EU Exit Portfolio. Whilst our original 43 EU Exit project were focused on readiness for exit in March 2019, our review has recast our portfolio to include the full range of my department’s existing EU exit related activity, including activities that are enabled or triggered by EU exit. Bringing this all together will provide a more comprehensive and consistent approach to governance, reporting and oversight of this work, but does not mean we have identified significant ‘new’ activities. This refresh of the portfolio’s scope also means that all our EU Exit activities are cross-cutting work is also brought into this portfolio structure including, for example, our legislative preparations and our trade and negotiations activities. We will keep the scope of the portfolio under continual review so we are regularly testing our assumptions about the work that needs to be done.

The Public Accounts Committee’s report of 7th February makes a similar request to that of the EAC – that the details of the 300 plus work streams to support EU Exit are published by April 2018. The Government’s response to this report on 26th March stated that the Government is committed to a reply to this request, once careful assessments have concluded on what it will be possible to provide and on what terms. Discussions on this basis are currently underway, and we anticipate that they will have concluded by the end of April. We will share this information with you in parallel.

I have also noted your concern about Defra’s capability to deliver a growing amount of EU Exit related work. As of 28th February, Defra had recruited around 1150 additional staff, including fixed term appointments and interims, to support our comprehensive EU Exit work. Over 1050 have already taken up post, with the remainder progressing through our pre-appointment processes.

I look forward to continuing to discuss Defra’s EU Exit work with you further in the coming months. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Exiting the EU.

With every good wish,

Michael Gove