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Dear Edward Davey Esq MP

Many congratulations on your appointment as Minister for Employment Relations, Consumer and Postal Affairs.

Yours is a wide-ranging brief covering many important areas. We share an interest in a number of these areas - not least employment relations, consumer affairs, competition policy, corporate governance and trade policy - and I believe there is some considerable scope for us to work together on them.

We have always been forceful advocates of competition and have a strong record of bringing competition into new markets and being on the side of the consumer. So I share the importance you attach to protecting consumers and promoting greater competition across the economy. This can be achieved in a number of ways and the Programme for Government rightly identifies the need to protect in particular the most vulnerable consumers. A regulatory system that promotes competition and an effectively functioning competition regime will also be important in delivering this goal and we would be very happy to share our thoughts and experience in this area.

Open and competitive markets are obviously also vital to Britain's interests overseas. With operations in 14 countries and a global supply chain, we also have a strong interest in trade policy and would be keen to work with you in this important area.

Good employee relations are also of course essential to our business. We are the UK's largest private sector employer and are committed to treating our people well. This includes giving them the opportunity to get on, an industry-leading partnership agreement with our union Usdaw, rewarding them properly for the work do and supporting flexible working. I know removing the barriers to flexible working is a particular priority for the Government and is another area we would be very happy to work with you on.

I am therefore keen to meet you and if I may will ask my secretary to contact your office to arrange a convenient time. In the meantime, all best wishes for your new role.

Yours sincerely

David North

DAVID NORTH
Community and Government Director



