



10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 February 2026

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for the letter of 16 February 2026.

You have advised me that, in line with your duties under Managing Public Money and due to past precedent and uncertainty as to the value for money of the proposed settlement, you are required to ask for written direction to proceed. You further advised that, as a Minister, I am entitled to consider both the wider public interest in respect of bringing this matter to a conclusion and the prevention of distraction from the effective operation of Government.

I am satisfied that the public interest is met in this regard and direct you to proceed.

All best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keir Starmer'.

THE RT HON SIR KEIR STARMER KCB KC MP

Ms Catherine Little CB