

For tabling at meeting with Jo Churchill MP (Con) Bury St Edmunds – Fri 10 March 2017

David Crowther

Thank you for meeting me. My concerns have deepened since I wrote to you on 26 Jan. Your generic reply (9 Feb, also on your website) and subsequent events raise issues and questions for me. I set these out below and look forward to you addressing them.

You say (website; letter)	I say
Majority of people in constituency, county and country voted to leave the EU	This is deceitful. Only a small majority of those who voted did this. 73% of people, 63% of electorate, did not vote for this. You should please: Be honest about the result and its meaning
MPs felt decision should be taken by the people.	This is misleading. It is not for MPs to ‘feel’ but to discharge duty as Legislature. Whatever campaign rhetoric said, EU Referendum Bill guidance made it advisory*. You should please: Work to ensure HoC approve next steps via debate, scrutiny and exercising good judgement. You own this mess. Don’t be passive. * a) Briefing Paper 07212; b) Hansard 16 June 2015: Minister for Europe, David Lidlington: <i>“the legislation is about holding a vote; it makes no provision for what follows. The referendum is advisory”</i>
You describe... a) Govt assurance to prioritise status of EU citizens living in UK once A50 triggered; and b) an agreement to allow Parl an opportunity to debate and vote on this issue ... as concessions.	This too is deceitful. These are not ‘concessions’ but obligations: a) to avoid abuse as bargaining chips EU citizens living in UK should have rights assured before A50 triggered, not after; b) this is required by Supreme Court (very opposite of ‘agreement’) in a judgement brought against a disgraced government. You should please: a) vote to accept HoL amendments to the Bill (ie EU citizens; parl vote) b) work to uphold parliamentary sovereignty following spirit and letter of the Supreme Court judgement
My role as ‘critical friend to our negotiations’... ...want to ensure we deliver assurances for businesses and workers especially in:	Yes, good, but not enough. Your role is more than that. Parliament owns the final outcome. Yet you are supporting Brexit-at-any-cost. You therefore bring nothing to the process other than as a consultee and whipped rubber-stamper. You need to ensure results (not assurances) on behalf of all your constituents, not just your party or those that elected you. You should please: a) take ownership of the process of scrutinising government progress and approving final decision; and b) ensure a meaningful process of parliamentary approval. I think this should allow for any of the following decisions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. exit with deal2. exit with no deal3. Approve govt proposal to remain4. Reject govt proposal to exit and so remain

You say (website; letter)	I say
a) health	<p>I welcome your interest in health. My family know and value Bury St Edmunds hospital. But we fear for its future given the rising demands and the haemorrhaging of talent and resources it faces.</p> <p>Your party's chronic starving of the NHS is doubly unforgivable given the hitherto-unfunded ?£50billion for short term costs of Brexit. How does your 'critical friend' role enable you to challenge this and champion health (or indeed social) care?</p>
b) education	<p>I welcome your interest in education. Our educational hubs (eg University of Suffolk) have received and channelled EU investment. How will you sustain this?</p> <p>Industry, enterprise, and infrastructure across our county are hugely important. Your Brexit position statement should champion them too.</p> <p>Over £365m of EU grants and £1.54billion from European Investment Bank has come to Norfolk and Suffolk since 2007 to stimulate economic growth, leveraging total investment of £7.34billion.* How will you sustain this?</p> <p>*Report: EU Investment in New Anglia (New Anglia LEP: February 2017). "This report considers potential consequences for loss in funding in New Anglia" (ibid p 2). Funding sources include: European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF); The 7th Framework Research Programme (FP7); Horizon 2020 research and innovation programmes; Connecting Europe Facility (transport programmes)</p>
c) agriculture	<p>The above figure does not include agricultural subsidies paid through the Single Payment Scheme. Our farming and sustainable countryside management depends on EU funding. Environmental protections (water quality; biodiversity; air quality) and flood risk management benefit from EU regulatory and funding frameworks.</p> <p>How will you sustain all this?</p>
My priority to champion science and innovation	<p>The region's strengths in agri- and bio-sciences, telecommunications and creative sectors have helped attract £91.8million since 2007* How will you sustain this?</p> <p>*source as above.</p>
Mindful of need for transitional arrangements, or indeed...	<p>There will be no transitional arrangements until the exit terms are settled.</p> <p>How will you influence timely and equitable exit terms so that timely and equitable transitional arrangements will be possible?</p>

You say (website; letter)	I say
... short term protections for sectors under pressure	EU funding leverages other ££. All is jeopardised. How will you champion local needs and fund their protection?
My efforts to make process a success, ensure values of tolerance, respect and hard work reap just rewards	At what point – as the evidence of economic catastrophe grows, as relationships with our EU neighbours fracture, as bigotry and anger infect civil life ever deeper – will you stop trying to ‘make the process a success’ and commit to a new process? One that is viable and accountable?
In delivering a Brexit that works for everyone, we must be sure we deliver outcomes for UK altogether	Yes, I agree. To do so we need a process which leads to a full understanding of the consequential outcomes upon ‘the UK altogether’ and ensures the benefits and burdens of Brexit, if the nation still wants them, are shared fairly. Or there will be no UK for much longer.
Therefore, however you voted we need to work together, starting now	<p>That’s impossible, right now. First, Parliament has to create and own a process that commands the trust of the nation.</p> <p>A process that learns and shares knowledge about the outcomes that are coming.</p> <p>You build unity across a divided nation by earning its trust.</p> <p>So far MPs like you have lamentably failed to do that. By failing to hold this government to account, by becoming increasingly supine in the face of a relentless Brexit-at-any-cost, against all you know and believe to be in people’s best interests, you have alienated millions nationally. Locally you have alienated me, my friends and family.</p> <p>It is not too late to fix this. Please start next week by voting to retain or indeed strengthen the House of Lords amendments – for humanity to EU citizens in the UK, and for meaningful parliamentary scrutiny of progress towards a conclusion that will be your sovereign right to approve, amend or reject.</p> <p>Will you do that?</p>