



**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
Secretary of State

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*30th*  
November 2021

*Dear Jeremy,*

### **Queen's Platinum Jubilee commemorative book project**

On 9 November 2020, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport wrote to the First Minister about how the devolved governments of the UK might work together to support celebrations of Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022.

I am writing to update you on plans for my Department to commission a commemorative book for over 5 million primary aged children in the UK. This will be an important and unique contribution to the Jubilee celebrations, to commemorate Her Majesty's 70 year reign through the story of inventions, notable events and successes of the four nations of the UK and the Commonwealth throughout that time.

I also wish to set out next steps so that we can continue to work in partnership over the coming months. In particular, I am keen to ensure that you are given every opportunity to contribute to the development of a book that seeks to 'speak to' every child in the UK. My ambition is to commission a book that is celebratory in tone and reflects the unique contributions of each of the nations of our country.

We are considering bids for a contract to develop, produce and distribute the book including a Welsh/English and audio versions. Our intention is for a contract to be awarded in December and for the book to be distributed to children before the end of this school year, recognising that this is earlier in Scotland and Northern Ireland than in England and Wales.

The book will be set at a reading level suitable for older primary school children and be a gift that parents can read with younger children or that these children can read themselves in future years. We are awaiting confirmation from the Palace that the Foreword will be written by a senior Royal.

Once a publisher is selected, there will be stages in the development and sign-off process during which we will seek feedback from the Palace, the Welsh Government and the other Devolved Administrations. This includes on the details of proposed content and on manuscripts of the book. These will be circulated, in full, for comment to your officials and they will engage you directly.

Once a publisher has been appointed and the details of the timetable have been finalised, my officials will liaise with yours to give them advance warning of when these requests for feedback will arrive and dates by which we will need your responses if the project is to deliver to timetable. Timescales for feedback and approval will necessarily be tight, but I hope that having advance notice will ensure that time for this can be planned in.

The leading official at the Department is Neil Lawson ([neil.lawson@education.gov.uk](mailto:neil.lawson@education.gov.uk)). He can answer any questions on the project and has been speaking to your officials over recent months to ensure that they are briefed on our proposals and progress. In addition to seeking feedback as the book is developed, Neil will also be asking for your officials' help in providing updated figures for the number of relevant pupils in relation to this new academic year. We will need this as early as possible after contract award in December so that the contractor can place an order for printing paper and plan for later distribution of the books.

I hope that you will agree that this is an exciting project which will enable us to present children in each of our nations with an engaging and lasting legacy of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and would be happy to discuss it further at future meetings.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Zahawi', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Rt Hon Nadhim Zahawi MP**  
**Secretary of State for Education**