

Earlier this week the legislation that allows the Prime Minister to trigger Article 50, which starts the process of negotiations in advance of leaving the EU, passed its final stages in Parliament. Having studied our constitution in great detail I have a huge amount of respect for the House of Lords who often act as a fundamental check and balance on the Commons and the Executive. However, it was right that when push came to shove they decided not to stall the process of the Bill any further.

So with Royal Assent, the Prime Minister now has the powers to start the negotiations at a time when she feels ready but expected this month. Her hands are free from parliamentary ties and this is important since she must have the freedom to get the deal that is best for Britain. We do not need constant parliamentary scrutiny of every "l" that potentially needs dotting or "t" that needs crossing. Instead she must be focused on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

In all the conversations I have had there has been more of a constructive dialogue about the future than perhaps we receive more generally from the media and political commentators. Regardless of how people voted most I talk to accept Brexit is happening and we therefore need to get on and make it work. This is what Government is focused on. Whether it is reflecting the concerns of my constituents or the sectors I represent as a minister, the discussion is wholly focussed now on overcoming the difficulties and turning them into opportunities. And so I am sure, whether you voted to remain or leave, you will now join me in wishing the PM the best of luck as she heads into the negotiations which will determine the future for all of us.