



Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall London SW1A 2AS

Dame Meg Hillier MP
Chair, Public Accounts Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Our ref: MC2024/03984

2 April 2024

Dear Chair,

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE ORAL EVIDENCE SESSION ON NON-EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS - 18 MARCH: TRANSCRIPT CHANGE REQUESTS**

Thank you for sharing the transcript of the Committee hearing on NED appointments on 18 March 2024.

There are some minor changes to the transcript that I would suggest to the Committee.

- During your opening remarks at Q1, you (Chair) noted that, “*We have three active non-executives*” [among the witnesses]. In fact, there were only two active non-executives, Michael Jary and Elizabeth Passey.
- In relation to Q3, the section that currently reads:

“They sit on the appointment boards of senior officials. Very often they are arm’s-length body chairs.”

should be amended to:

“They sit on the appointment boards of senior officials and very often arm’s-length body chairs”.

- In relation to Q13, there is an incorrect ‘and’ in the final sentence of the response from Sir Alex Chisholm. The sentence should read:

“In response to the Boardman review into governance, the Government are committed to publishing a list of all direct ministerial appointments and to producing a specific piece of guidance about how that should be done correctly”.

There are also some minor corrections to the evidence given during the hearing that I would like to draw to the Committee's attention:

- In relation to Q50, which covered when people are expected to declare donations as part of the application process, I said that there was a £5,000 threshold over which political donations should be declared. The Governance Code on Public Appointments states (at paragraph 9.2) that 'significant donations' should be declared, and it defines significant donations as those which are reported to the Electoral Commission. While the threshold for reporting permissible donations to the Electoral Commission used to stand at £5,000, it was most recently amended on 1 January 2024, and now stands at £11,180.
- In relation to Q56, you asked about the period of time within which political activity would need to be declared. I said that I thought that it was two years; the Governance Code (also at paragraph 9.2) states that certain political activity within the last five years should be publicly disclosed.

As this letter is now being sent following the departure of Sir Alex Chisholm from his role, I am sending this letter on behalf of the Cabinet Office. The Committee should note that Sir Alex was content with the minor amendment regarding his evidence. I am copying this letter to Cat Little.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Simon P. Madden". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Simon Madden
Director of Propriety & Ethics