



Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
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William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and
Constitutional Affairs Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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30 June 2021

Dear William,

Commissioner for Public Appointments

Thank you for your letter of 15 June. I am grateful to the Committee for their continued engagement on this important appointment and for proposing a pre-appointment hearing date with the Commissioner's successor on 8 July. I have considered carefully whether it is possible to meet the Committee's request.

The Prime Minister's preferred candidate is currently carrying out an independent review due to conclude at the end of September. We would therefore like to schedule the final steps of this appointment closer to that point. Taking into account Parliamentary recess over the summer, I would like to propose a hearing date of 14 September, subject to the Committee's planned agenda for that date. I appreciate that the Committee will then be working hard to publish its report before conference recess, and I would like to assure you that the Government will of course give full and proper consideration to the report.

I will write again to the Committee in mid-July providing the candidate's name and officials will, in parallel, provide the Committee clerks with further information, including the candidate's CV. This will allow time to prepare the briefing that the Committee needs before the hearing.

First Civil Service Commissioner

We are finalising the details to launch the competition for the First Civil Service Commissioner, and I will write to the Committee shortly providing further information, in line with the agreed process. In order to ensure that pre-appointment scrutiny runs as smoothly as possible, we will seek to agree at an early stage a suitable autumn date to work towards for the Committee's scrutiny of the candidate.

With every good wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael Gove". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" and the last name "Gove" clearly distinguishable.

**Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
and Minister for the Cabinet Office**



PACAC (Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee)

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Rt Hon Michael Gove MP
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
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15th June 2021

Dear Michael,

Pre-appointment Hearing: Commissioner of Public Appointments

As you are aware, the Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE is due to step down as the Commissioner of Public Appointments on 30th September this year. We have previously exchanged letters regarding the appointment of his successor in this role.

In view of the limited time remaining until the current Commissioner's term lapses, the Committee will hold the pre-appointment hearing for his successor on Thursday 8th July, with the exact time to be confirmed closer to the day of the hearing. I would be grateful if the relevant policy team could make all the necessary arrangements with the Government's preferred candidate and could also submit all necessary background information (including an up to date CV) relating to the candidate to the Committee Clerk as soon as possible.

Evidently, this will require the identity of the successful candidate to be made public in advance of the hearing. However, given that you indicated in your letter of 3rd May that interviews for the Commissioner's replacement took place in January of this year, the Committee presumes that this will not be an issue.

As I am sure you agree, it is imperative that Select Committee pre-appointment hearings take place in a timely manner, allowing the relevant Committee to properly scrutinise the preferred candidate's suitability for the role and to make its report to Parliament.

With this in mind, and further to your letter of 3rd May which noted that the current First Civil Service Commissioner's term is also due to expire in September this year, I would appreciate any update you can provide on the process for recruiting and appointing Sir Ian

Watmore's successor, so that the Committee can schedule the relevant pre-appointment hearing before the end of the incumbent's term.

I am copying this letter to the Commissioner of Public Appointments and will place a copy of this letter and your response in the public domain.

Yours,

Will

William Wragg MP
Chair, Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee